2014 PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

EXPANSION GRANT APPLICATION

CFDA 84.419B

Submitted by:

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Governor

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"If we make high-quality preschool available to every child, not only will we give our kids a safe place to learn and grow while their parents go to work, we'll give them the start that they need to succeed in school, and earn higher wages, and form more stable families of their own. In fact, today, I'm setting a new goal; By the end of this decade, let's enroll 6 million children in high-quality preschool. That is an achievable goal that we know will make our workforce stronger."
— U.S. President Barack Obama, October 2, 2014

"One of the best ways to make sure our children can be successful in life is to make sure that all of them have access to a high-quality early learning experience."
— Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy, May 5, 2014

A. **Executive Summary (10 points)**

Connecticut will use the Preschool Development Grant – Expansion Grant to build on the strong infrastructure of our existing State Preschool Program. This strong foundation has translated into high national rankings for Connecticut. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation criteria and process are utilized as an indicator of quality among many states with state-funded preschool programs. Connecticut ranks as third in the nation for the total number of NAEYC-accredited programs in a state, coming in just under California and Massachusetts, two states with much larger populations than ours. And Connecticut is *fir*st in the nation when it comes to the number of NAEYC-accredited programs per capita. The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) also ranks Connecticut as third in the nation for investment in early care and education programs and third in the nation for providing access to early care and education. Connecticut is very proud of these rankings, but as a state that values continuous quality improvement, we know we can do even better for our young children and families.

We see this grant as an unparalleled opportunity to invest in areas that will greatly enhance the quality of our existing State Preschool Programs. Connecticut's ambitious and achievable plan will build off our existing strong state preschool infrastructure to expand access to high-quality State Preschool Programs for 428 children and to improve the quality

of State Preschool Programs for another 284 children, for a total of 712 four-year-olds who are at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line in 14 high-need communities.

In addition, Connecticut's plan will enhance quality in areas the state has longed to improve. Connecticut will use this grant to improve quality by:

- offering comprehensive services in our State Preschool Programs;
- offering teacher compensation equal to K-12 teachers;
- deepening family engagement practices at the local level;
- forging a seamless birth-through-third-grade continuum at the local level; and
- enhancing our professional development system to offer more targeted and individualized coaching, mentoring and consultation designed to meet the unique needs of programs and teachers within those programs.

Having a strong infrastructure of State Preschool Programs that has successfully expanded access twice in the last two fiscal years will allow us to place children in high-quality preschool programs quickly and efficiently. The state has identified communities in which high-quality preschool programs, as defined by the grant, will be ready for eligible children in September of 2015. The state will devote January – September 2015 doing the following:

- finalize Memoranda of Understanding with Subgrantees, as required under this grant;
- support local communities as they establish Memoranda of Understanding or contracts between State Preschool Program early learning providers and providers of comprehensive services, as defined in this grant;
- hire a family engagement/community outreach specialist who will work with communities to design meaningful, culturally appropriate family engagement approaches and practices that meet their individual needs;
- hire a grant accountability, quality and reporting coordinator to coordinate monitoring, professional development and reporting under this grant;

- work with high-need communities to identify the family child care providers, center-based providers, IDEA Part B Section 619 and Part C providers and home visitors serving infants and toddlers, as well as public elementary schools in the selected high-need communities to assess current relationships and collaborations that provide for a birth-through-third-grade continuum. The assessment will be used to identify any gaps in data, resources and information and how to address them;

- ensure that an appropriate array of professional development is available for Subgrantees to purchase for instructional staff covered under this grant;

- increase full-time equivalents of school readiness liaisons for each Subgrantee.

The remainder of the four years will be spent implementing the plans found below and in sections C – G.

(1) Build on the State's progress to date as demonstrated in selection criteria (B); Connecticut's State Preschool Program

Our existing program expectations align quite well with the stated purposes of this grant. The Connecticut General Statutes articulate the state's expectations for all communities participating in the State Preschool Program:

(a) provide open access for children to quality programs that promote the health and safety of children and prepare them for formal schooling;

(b) provide opportunities for parents to choose among affordable and accredited programs;

(c) encourage coordination and cooperation among programs and prevent the duplication of services;

(d) recognize the specific service needs and unique resources available to particular municipalities and provide flexibility in the implementation of programs;

(e) prevent or minimize the potential for developmental delay in children prior to their reaching the age of five;

(f) strengthen the family through: 1) encouragement of parental involvement in a child's development and education; and 2) enhancement of a family's capacity to meet the special needs of the children, including children with disabilities;

(g) reduce educational costs by decreasing the need for special education services for school age children and avoiding grade repetition;
(h) assure that children with disabilities are integrated into programs available to children who are not disabled; and
(i) improve the availability and quality of school readiness programs and their coordination with the services of child care providers.

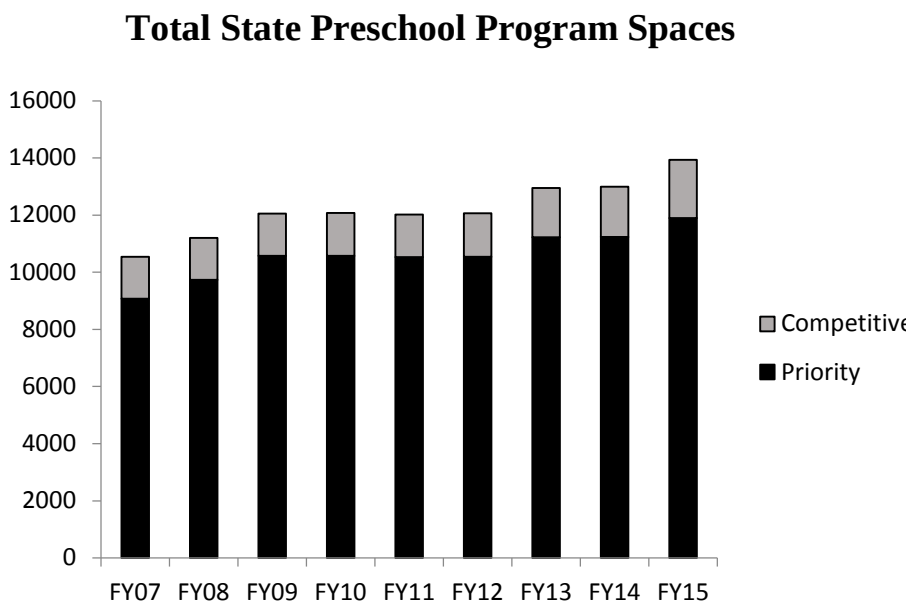
Investments

Connecticut has made a strong commitment to the young children of the state for many years. The clearest testament to this commitment came with the creation of the Office of Early Childhood in 2013 by Executive Order, and put into statute in the 2014 legislative session with passage of Public Act 14-39. This cabinet-level agency has complete statutory and budgetary authority over state early childhood programs and services, including the State Preschool Programs, the child care subsidies from the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), licensing, and the majority of home visiting services. Already in its second year of operation, the Office of Early Childhood has made changes to its CCDBG plan to better align our policies to the needs of our most vulnerable children and families. It has also shifted policies to provide greater opportunity for the early education workforce to enhance their skills through higher education and high-quality professional development. See Appendix #1 – Office of Early Childhood Table of Organization.

Financial Investment

Since 1997, Connecticut has made considerable state investment in its high-quality State Preschool Programs for three- and four-year-olds – now budgeted at $104 million per year in state Fiscal Year 2015. The state increased the number of State Preschool Program spaces five times since State Fiscal Year 2007. In the most recent expansion, the Governor proposed and the legislature approved, expanding State Preschool Programs by 1,020 spaces. That brings the current total of spaces to 14,425 (including those spaces that are used as wrap-around or extended day). See the table below. The Governor has proposed expanding by an additional 3,000 spaces by 2019 at an additional investment of

nearly $40 million. According to the 2013 NIEER "State Preschool Yearbook", Connecticut ranked third behind only the District of Columbia and New Jersey in spending per child for state preschool programs. Section B (2) offers more detailed information about how spaces have been allocated to two types of communities: Priority and Competitive.



Legislation

Along with financial investment has been the active support of our General Assembly in passing legislation, as described in Section B (3). Two major legislative accomplishments of 2014 were the enactment of the Office of Early Childhood into law and the establishment of a 10-year Smart Start initiative to expand the number of state-funded public school preschool programs.

Early Learning and Development Standards

As described throughout many sections of this application, the Office of Early Childhood developed the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) which

set forth what children from birth to age five should know and be able to do across eight domains of development and learning. These standards are intended to inform families, teachers, caregivers and other professionals about common developmental and learning progressions so that they can work together to better support children's early learning and growth. The standards, organized by domain, contain sub-categories within each domain which articulate a series of skills and abilities that build upon each other as children grow and learn. Within each learning progression are indicators of what children should know or be able to do at the end of each of the age ranges. See Appendix #2 – CT Early Learning and Development Standards.

Quality

All State Preschool Programs must attain NAEYC accreditation or Head Start approval. New programs have three years after first receiving state funds to complete the accreditation process. In the meantime, they must complete a "School Readiness Preschool Program Evaluation" and Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale each year until they receive accreditation.

The Accreditation Facilitation Project, now administered by the Office of Early Childhood, has been instrumental in assisting programs, including programs for children supported by IDEA Part B preschool funds, to become NAEYC accredited. Moving forward, the state is building on the "quality" and "improvement" components of its Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) to include the development of a statewide professional development program for early childhood professionals, recently approved Core Knowledge and Competency (CKC) standards for other early childhood professional to complement the existing CKCs for teachers, increase in the frequency of licensing inspections, and funding to improve early childhood facilities detailed in Section B(4).

Our structure for implementing a quality improvement system will be issuing a Request for Proposals during Spring 2015 to contract with a single coordinating agency who will then subcontract for five "hubs" to deliver training and technical assistance aligned with

Connecticut's QRIS Standards, Criteria and Indicators (See Appendix #6 – QRIS Standards, Criteria and Indicators) to a wide variety of early childhood professionals, including State Preschool Program staff. When that structure is operational beginning July 2015 the Office of Early Childhood will ensure that high-quality professional development and NAEYC accreditation assistance for the Subgrantees and their early learning providers is available through the regional hubs and that the Subgrantees are prioritized for those professional development and technical assistance services.

Coordination of preschool programs and services

The Early Childhood Cabinet (this is also our State Advisory Council), chaired by the Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood, serves as a central point of coordination and communication regarding programs and services across the state. As described in Section B(5) many of these programs are now, or will soon be, housed within the Office of Early Childhood such as State Preschool, Head Start state supplement, the Child Care Development Block Grant, the Head Start Collaboration Office, and IDEA Part C and Part B Section 619. The Early Childhood Cabinet will concentrate on homeless families with young children this coming year, attempting to focus the efforts of multiple agencies around this very vulnerable population.

Coordination at the State and Local Levels with other sectors.

Connecticut has a long history of local collaborations for early childhood, starting in the 1980s with local Health-Education Collaboratives that predated IDEA Part C. In 1996, IDEA Part C legislation created the State Interagency Coordinating Council and local Interagency Coordinating Councils to advise and assist the IDEA Part C lead agency on issues related to children with disabilities from birth to age five. In 2000, the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund (WCGMF) established the Discovery Initiative, offering funding to 53 towns for early childhood planning and implementation. The state has contributed a match to that initiative for the past seven years which totals $750,000 annually. In 2006, the first Early Childhood Education Cabinet and Early Childhood Investment Council produced a blue print for Connecticut called "Ready by Five, Fine by Nine." In 2010, WCGMF initiated the "Right From the Start" initiative to bring together a

loosely knit network of 50 individuals and organizations to create their vision of what a Connecticut Early Childhood System that works for children and families and communities would look like. The WCGMF wanted to insure that community voices were lifted up in addressing key early childhood issues in the state. And, rather than concentrating on preschool, the network quickly adopted a motto of "Early is good, earlier is even better" and took a pre-natal to age five view of early childhood. Since its formation in 2013 and creation in statute in 2014, the Office of Early Childhood is engaged with many ongoing state collaboration initiatives as described in Section B(6) and our State Preschool Programs are required to have a plan for collaboration with other community programs and services which will be enhanced even further through this grant.

(2) Provide voluntary, High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children through subgrants to each Subgrantee in two or more High-Need Communities;

The Preschool Development Grant will allow the state to reach 712 more eligible children in 14 high-need communities.

Unique to the Connecticut State Preschool Program, are school readiness local councils. These school readiness councils, by state law, are comprised of the chief elected official for the town, the superintendent of schools, parents, and representatives from local early childhood programs such as Head Start, Family Resource Centers, nonprofit and for-profit early care and education centers, group child care homes, prekindergarten and nursery schools, and family child care providers, health care providers, and others in the community who provide services to young children. Each local council has received some quality enhancement funds each year to employ a full-time or part-time school readiness liaison to act as the single point of contact for the Office of Early Childhood and for the early learning providers in the administration of the State Preschool Program.

Since 1997, State Preschool funding has been allocated to school readiness councils in two types of high-need communities. Nineteen Priority Communities, such as Bridgeport, have received the largest percentage of the available funding. These are 19 communities with the highest rates of students receiving Free or Reduced School Meals,

lowest rates of maternal education, and lowest student state mastery test scores. The school readiness councils in these 19 Priority Communities now receive 86 percent of the funding that supports 13,935 three- and four-year-olds. The remaining 14 percent of the funding is granted to the school readiness councils in 49 other communities that are either among the 50 poorest towns in the state and/or who operate one or more schools in which at least 40 percent of the students are eligible for Free and Reduced School Meals and are referred to as "competitive" communities. This fiscal year, 2,042 three- and four-year-olds are supported with State Preschool Funding in these communities. The comparison of spaces between Priority and Competitive communities for the last five years is illustrated in the table below:

State Preschool Slots by Fiscal Year

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Priority Communities	**9,077**	**9,738**	**10,573**	**10,575**	**10,532**	**10,539**	**11,219**	**11,230**	**11,893**
Competitive Communities	**1,466**	**1,467**	**1,475**	**1,499**	**1,491**	**1,521**	**1,724**	**1,761**	**2,042**
Grant Total	**10,543**	**11,205**	**12,049**	**12,074**	**12,023**	**12,060**	**12,944**	**12,990**	**13,935**

Connecticut has selected 13 of these Competitive Communities and one Priority Community to receiving funding from this grant. The school readiness council in each of these communities will serve as the Subgrantees. Once the Competitive Communities were selected, we then decided to include our largest Priority Community, Bridgeport. Section D contains a profile of each of the 14 high-need communities selected for this grant, as well as information about how they were selected.

The Preschool Development Grant will allow Connecticut to provide more voluntary high-quality preschool programs in all of these communities – the 13 Competitive Communities whose increasing rates of childhood poverty have outpaced the state's current funding for State Preschool spaces and one of our Priority Communities which has consistently shown the greatest unmet need for additional State Preschool spaces.

(3) *Increase the number and percentage of Eligible Children served in High-Quality Preschool Programs during each year of the grant period through the creation of new and the improvement of existing State Preschool Program slots;*

Each year of this grant, Connecticut seeks to increase preschool spaces for 428 eligible four-year-olds and to improve 284 existing preschool spaces for eligible four-year-olds. (See Table A in the Excel spreadsheet). This represents an 8.5 percent increase in the percentage of eligible four-year-olds served in high-quality State Preschool Programs compared to all four-year-olds currently served in State Preschool Programs and a 5 percent increase compared to all three- and four-year-olds currently served in State Preschool Programs. Over the four years of the grant, 2,848 eligible four-year-olds will be enrolled.

(4) *Have all the characteristics specified in the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs;*

Connecticut will be able to address all characteristics of a high-quality preschool program required for eligible children to be served through expansion or improvement spaces funded through this grant. Those characteristics are:

a. *High staff qualifications*. Early childhood workforce legislation in Connecticut requires state-funded programs to designate one teacher per classroom as meeting the educator requirement. TAs of July 2015, 50 percent of these teachers in State Preschool Programs must have a bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood or a bachelor's degree with the state's Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) or public school certification with a preschool endorsement. There are two routes to the ECTC; the traditional full early childhood concentration degree path or the individual review path for those with other bachelor degrees but with rich experience working in the field of early childhood. A recent analysis of our workforce registry indicates that the 51 percent of teachers now hold appropriate qualifications. By July, 2020 each classroom in every State Preschool Program must have a qualified teacher meeting the bachelor's degree requirement as described above. **All preschool classrooms funded by this grant will have teachers who**

hold a bachelor's degree in early childhood or hold the appropriate public school certification endorsement or have a bachelor's degree and the ECTC. This will assist in accelerating our 2020 target. This federal grant will advance the quality of our workforce even further by requiring compensation commensurate with K-12 teachers.

b. *High-quality professional development*. High-quality early childhood professional development in Connecticut is designed, delivered, and evaluated based on adult learning theories, current research, and models. Core components foundational to effective professional learning include:

- Building on what educators already know to enhance their knowledge, skills, and perceptions about teaching and learning.
- Aligning the content to the needs of the learner and the goals of the setting in which children are served.
- Designing experiences that allow for active engagement, metacognition, application, self-assessment of skills, opportunities to engage in ongoing feedback and ongoing support.
- Providing for practical application in a job-embedded opportunity to learn from and collaborate with others such as peers, coaches, and mentors through modeling, reciprocity in a feedback, and goal setting.
- Assessing personal learning through self-assessment of competency development as well as actively engaging in evaluative assessment with program leadership.

The design, delivery, and assessment of professional learning must be rooted in core competencies and delivered by approved facilitators that hold the competencies needed to address learning needs. High-quality professional development is a cornerstone to a high-quality professional development system that has quality assurance measures to ensure effectiveness at the individual level as well as ensures the facilitator and the content is appropriate. Section B (4) contains more detailed information on Connecticut's workforce development design.

Included in our high-quality plan for this grant is ensuring that each Subgrantee will be able to purchase professional development for all personnel who will be participating in this grant to include at least three full days of training in topics such as the CT Early Learning and Development Standards, social-emotional development, Scientifically Based Interventions (response to intervention), and special education assessment and referral. These intentionally designed professional development modules will be followed by seven three-hour sessions of on-site coaching and mentoring for each classroom to maximize effect. The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and the Core Knowledge and Competencies for early childhood teachers will be the foundation for our professional development. See Appendix #3 – Core Knowledge and Competencies.

Initial training in 2015 will be arranged through the state's regional educational service centers or other professional development providers. The plan for the second through fourth years of the grant will be to shift the locus of that training and technical assistance to the five regional quality improvement hubs.

c. *Child to instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1.* Connecticut licensing regulations requires a ratio of 10 to 1 and the Office of Early Childhood recommends our State Preschool Programs maintain a ratio of 9 to 1 for current State Preschool Programs. The MOUs with the Subgrantees of this grant will specify no more than a 9 to 1 instructional staff ratio.

d. *Class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher with high staff qualifications.* Connecticut licensing regulations require a class size of no more than 20 and the Office of Early Childhood recommends our State Preschool Programs maintain an even lower class size of 18 for current State Preschool Programs. The MOUs with the Subgrantees of this grant will specify class sizes of no more than 18.

e. *Full-Day program*. 85 percent of State Preschool spaces are currently full-day, as defined by this grant (a school day, minimum 5 hours of instruction.) In fact, 67

percent of State Preschool Programs already exceed this requirement by offering a 10-hour day and year-round programs. All preschool spaces funded under this grant, whether expansion or improved, will meet or exceed the grant definition of full-day. Plans from our Subgrantees indicating that 63 percent of the new and improved spaces under this grant will offer 10-hour days and operate year-round. Year-round, 10-hour day programming matches the needs of Connecticut's working families and also helps to prevent summer learning loss.

f. *Inclusion of children with disabilities.* State Preschool Programs currently coordinate locally with preschool special education coordinators. Connecticut General Statutes 10-16o (9) requires that the State Preschool Program "assure that children with disabilities are integrated into programs available to children who are not disabled". A directive issued by the state in 2005 helps local State Preschool Programs understand how to best blend State Preschool funding with local and state special education funding to accomplish this type of inclusion. The directive requires that all State Preschool local councils establish a local policy to implement the requirements of the state law and the guidance provided. For purposes of this grant, we would ensure, through our MOUs, that our Subgrantees and their early learning providers (some of which are local districts) work closely with their local preschool special education coordinators to offer at least 6.9 percent of expansion spaces (the state's current percentage) but no more than 10 percent to eligible four-year-olds with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This would mean that children with disabilities would be included in natural proportions.

g. *Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula, and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards.*
State-funded preschool programs in Connecticut are required to adhere to program quality standards that address developmentally appropriate practice, cultural and linguistic responsiveness, the use of standards-driven evidence-based curricula, and rich learning environments. These quality assurance requirements including

achieving NAEYC accreditation or status as a Head Start approved program and an annual ECERS-R for programs in the process of achieving accreditation. In addition, all State Preschool Programs are required to implement curricular approaches that align to the state's early learning and development standards.

Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) for children ages birth to five were widely distributed to all early learning programs including school districts and preschool special education programs in the summer of 2014. The CT ELDS, along with our Core Knowledge and Competencies for early childhood teachers, will be the foundation for all professional development, as described in B(1).

h. *Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities.* As described in subsection "A(4)(i)" above, State Preschool Programs are required to implement developmentally appropriate practices which, by their nature, are individualized for children who are performing at varied developmental levels. Connecticut State Preschool Programs are typically a mix of three- and four-year- olds which further requires individualizing instruction across ages and developmental levels. Children with disabilities and health issues that do not require special education or related services do frequently need accommodations. This includes children with physical disabilities, diabetes, mild hearing loss, or other health conditions. All State Preschool Programs are required to provide such accommodations and formal 504 plans (under the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act) are also required in any preschool program receiving federal funding. These plans delineate the modifications and accommodations that will be needed for these students to have an opportunity perform at the same level as their peers. Therefore, any Subgrantee receiving funding from this grant will be required, under their MOU with the Office of Early Childhood, to ensure that children needing accommodations have a 504 plan developed between the program staff and the child's parents. Any child who is

eligible for special education and related services would receive those supports included on their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

i. *Instructional staff salaries comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff*. Currently, on average, the annual salary for teachers in our State Preschool Program $34,000 compared to the average starting salary of $47,165 for the state's K-12 teachers with a BA degree. **This grant will give Connecticut an unprecedented opportunity to increase teacher compensation for all teachers funded by this grant comparable to their colleagues in K-12.** Because this grant encourages mixed-age classes of three- and four-year-olds, as does Connecticut, and because Connecticut also encourages classes in which not all children's families are below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line, **the state will use its own funds to make up the difference between the portion of each teacher's salary increase that is covered by the federal grant and the portion that is not in improved classrooms**.

j. *Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement*. Continuous quality improvement is an ideal process to ensure that preschool programs are systematically and intentionally improving services and increasing positive outcomes for children. Connecticut is already using such a system in our state home-visiting program that includes quarterly meetings with all programs to address issues raised by researchers, to interpret data, and to inform policy and practice. This ongoing assessment results in individual program improvement plans and site visits to monitor and provide training and technical assistance.

With the hiring of a grant accountability and reporting coordinator within the Office of Early Childhood under this grant and additional funding to the Subgrantees to increase the full-time equivalents of their local school readiness liaisons, we will pilot a continuous quality improvement process that works well for all State Preschool Programs. We will use the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to provide comprehensive data that will further effective classroom

practices. CLASS Observation Training and the CLASS Train-the-Trainer Program is included in our high-quality professional development plan to be funded under this grant. In addition, the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP), an organization that will be providing behavioral health supports to all of the classrooms funded under this grant as an enhancement of the comprehensive services to be provided, already makes use of this tool extensively in their classroom consulting approach.

k. *On-site or accessible comprehensive services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development*.

Connecticut is a state of strong early childhood collaborations at the local level. Eleven of the fourteen communities selected to participate in the grant are Discovery Communities, a public-private partnership supported by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and the Office of Early Childhood that engages community partnerships and collaborations around young children's early development, including health and early literacy. Examples of those community plans are included in Appendix #4 – Discovery Community Plans. We will use the grant to build on the strength of those local level partnerships and plans and will assist those communities that have not been participating in the Discovery Initiative to develop their own plans in collaboration with local stakeholders.

Currently, State Preschool Programs collaborate with community providers that deliver comprehensive services as described in B(6). Eligible children served under this grant will be offered additional comprehensive services including screenings for hearing, vision, dental, health (including mental health), and development as well as referrals and assistance obtaining services, when appropriate; culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement opportunities (taking into account home language) and leadership opportunities such as a Parent Advisory Committee. Developmental screenings are available through Connecticut's Statewide Help Me Grow program administered by the United Way of Connecticut and funded by the

Office of Early Childhood. They will score, monitor, and track results from both the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Social Emotional (ASQ-SE).

The Office of Early Childhood will provide sufficient funding to those Subgrantees and the early learning providers funded under this grant so that they may partner, coordinate, or even contract with local Head Start grantees or other community agencies in order to ensure quality comprehensive approaches and services. **In programs in which there are classrooms that include eligible children as well as children not eligible under this grant, the Office of Early Childhood will provide additional state funding to cover enhanced comprehensive services for the non-eligible children in improved classrooms.**

A major strength of this grant is that the Office of Early Childhood will require that Subgrantees purchase behavioral health consultation services from the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP), a statewide, evidence-based, mental health consultation program designed to meet the social and emotional needs of children birth to five in early care and education settings. The ECCP program builds the capacity of caregivers at the individual, family, classroom, or program-wide level, as described in Section E (5).

l. *Evidence-based health and safety standards*. According to Child Care Aware's 2013 publication "Ranking of State Child Care Center Regulations and Oversight", Connecticut child care licensing regulations address nine of ten basic health and safety standards. By July 1, 2015 Connecticut will hire 16 more child care licensing inspectors and two additional licensing supervisors in order to provide annual inspections of all licensed programs. We will work toward annual inspections of license-exempt programs accepting state child care subsidies by July 1, 2016. For the past year, Connecticut has worked with the National Association of Regulatory Authorities (NARA) to evaluate Connecticut's licensing regulations and processes and the state is revising its licensing regulations over the next 12 months to ensure

that all 10 areas of health and safety standards are addressed and that only evidence-based standards, i.e. those that are most effective in ensuring child health and safety, are retained.

(5) Set expectations for the school readiness of children upon kindergarten entry;

Connecticut's expectations for the school readiness of children upon kindergarten entry are defined by the state's Birth to Age Five Early Learning Development Standards across eight domains of development:

- cognition;
- social and emotional;
- physical and health;
- language and literacy;
- creative arts;
- mathematics;
- science; and
- social studies.

A more descriptive version of expected child outcomes for school readiness was developed by a large number of early childhood stakeholders in 2013 and adopted by the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet. This document states: "When families, communities, and schools work together to support school readiness, Connecticut's children will:

- Communicate their thoughts and feelings through words and actions
- Be attentive to their surroundings
- Learn by exploring
- Show curiosity
- Have positive relationships with children and adults and learn how to make friends
- Play, including pretend and interactive games
- Feel safe and valued
- Show respect for self and others
- Solve problems and resolve conflicts

- Make progress across all areas included in Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards: physical health and motor development; language and literacy; social and emotional development; creative arts expression; cognitive and general knowledge including science, mathematics and social studies; and approaches to learning."

(See Appendix #15 – What is School Readiness in CT?)

In terms of measuring child outcomes, Connecticut's current kindergarten entry inventory documents kindergarten teachers' opinions of children's skills in six domains:

- Language;
- Literacy;
- Numeracy;
- Physical/Motor;
- Creative/Aesthetic; and
- Personal/Social.

Teachers determine for each domain whether children demonstrate emerging skills, inconsistently demonstrate the skills, or consistently demonstrate the skills. As described fully in Section C, Connecticut is working with a consortium of states to develop a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) that will align with the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards. That new KEA will be ready for piloting in September 2105 with census administration planned for September 2016.

(6) Be supported by a broad group of stakeholders, including Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and, if applicable, State and local early learning councils;

It is a strength of Connecticut's State Preschool Program that each high-need community selected for this grant has already established a school readiness local council. Connecticut is a state of 169 contiguous towns with no county or regional government structures. Local control over early childhood and education programs is extremely important in our state.

In addition to the local school readiness councils, described more completely in Section E, plans for expansion and improvement of State Preschool programs is broadly supported by a large number of stakeholder organizations, as evidenced by the letters of support included in this grant. These include:

- Parent and advocacy organizations such as: CT Voices for Children, Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Connecticut Parent Power, Connecticut Association for Human Services, and Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance;
- The Early Childhood Cabinet (our State Advisory Council);
- Philanthropic organizations such as the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund;
- Connecticut Business and Industry Association;
- 2-1-1 Child Care our state's child care resource and referral program operated by United Way of Connecticut;
- Educational Organizations such as the Connecticut Health and Education Facilities Authority, Connecticut Education Association, Family Resource Center Alliance, and Connecticut chapter of CASE (Council of Administrators of Special Education);
- State Early Childhood organizations such as Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children;
- Legislative committees and commissions such as the Human Services Committee, Education Committee, Children's Committee, Appropriations Committee, the Poverty and Prevention Council, and the Commission on Children.

A list of support letters are found in the Appendix #5 – Letters of Support List.

Another strength of Connecticut's early childhood system is a public-private partnership with the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund (WCGMF). Eleven of our 14 high-need communities are community partners of the WCGMF Discovery Initiative that includes 61 communities. In these cities and towns, Discovery communities establish a collaborative structure for inclusive local decision making in which families are engaged as full partners. Members of the local collaborative table have access to an array of capacity building resources to support them in the development of a local early childhood plan. Through this process, community members develop the capacity to measure progress and identify the necessary stakeholders that must be engaged to ensure school success for every child.

(7) Allocate funds between infrastructure and Subgrantees;

This grant allocates no less than 95 percent of the funding directly to Subgrantees. We will use this opportunity to focus on 13 of our Competitive Communities as well as one of our Priority Communities to assist them in expanding access to high-quality State Preschool Programs for eligible four-year-olds and to improve the quality of existing state preschool spaces for eligible four-year-olds by increasing teacher qualifications and compensation, ensuring comprehensive services, and providing high-quality personnel development. Specifically, the grant seeks to expand by 428 preschool spaces for eligible four-year-olds and to improve 284 existing preschool spaces for eligible four-year-olds. (See Table A in the Excel spreadsheet.)

The Subgrantees that will be awarded funding for this grant will be school readiness councils of Priority and Competitive Communities, building upon the existing processes used for school readiness funding. Since funding to Connecticut municipalities does not require state agencies to procure services through a competitive bid process, funding will be awarded more efficiently and preschool services provided more quickly to children in need. Each school readiness council will then direct funding to selected early learning provider programs in their community. Start-up funding for new slots will be directed to the Subgrantees no later than July 1, 2015 and funding for expansion spaces will begin no later than September 1, 2015 or the start of the school year, whichever is earlier. Funding for improved spaces may begin as early as July 1, 2015 at the request of the Subgrantees. Funding for professional development for all Subgrantees will begin by July 1, 2015.

Five percent of the grant will be used for additional state infrastructure, including:

- One grant accountability and reporting coordinator within the Office of Early Childhood to oversee the continuous quality improvement activities as well as monitoring of all Subgrantees and accountability of all grant-funded programs and activities;
- One family engagement/community outreach specialist within the Office of Early Childhood to 1) support the communities with culturally and linguistically appropriate

outreach and communication efforts in order to ensure that all families in the communities including those who are isolated or otherwise hard to reach, are informed of the opportunity and encouraged to enroll their children and continue to be engaged in their children's preschool education; and 2) to support the communities in deepening their collaboration with other early childhood and human service providers in their communities by conducting a needs assessment and facilitating four networking meetings per year in each community around effective family engagement strategies. Additional state funding will be directed to the Subgrantees for the purpose.

- The Office of Early Childhood will contract with a third-party evaluator for purposes of this grant. The plan is for a statistically valid number of eligible children enrolled in expansion or improved preschool spaces under this grant to be compared to an equal number of eligible four-year-olds in existing but unimproved State Preschool programs. Depending on the final enrollment numbers, a statistically significant sample size will be determined. The evaluation will include a September 2015 baseline assessment of the selected children in the areas of language, literacy, mathematics, and social skills; a mid-year observation of all children involved in the study; and a post-assessment in the late spring of 2015. We will seek to answer the question about whether eligible children in the expansion or improved spaces made more gains across those developmental domains than the eligible children in the existing State Preschool spaces. This evaluation will be funded by both this grant and by the Office of Early Childhood quality enhancement funding.
- CLASS Observation Training for school readiness council liaisons and other early learning providers as well as further training to enable five individuals to become CLASS trainers and affiliate with our five regional quality improvement hubs in 2015.

AMBITIOUS AND ACHIEVABLE PLAN: SECTION A

(Broad highlights of the plans in sections C through G and Competitive Priority 2. See those sections for rationales and timelines.)

Key Goal

Expand access to High-Quality Preschool Programs

Key Activities

To achieve the key goals of the plan, the state will be completing these activities:

KEY STATE ACTIVITIES:

1. Complete MOUs with Subgrantees; issue grant awards; initiate payments
2. Assist Subgrantees in establishing contracts or MOUs for additional comprehensive services
3. Conduct media and outreach campaign to assist Subgrantees in reaching out to all parents of eligible children living in their communities
4. Coordinate with the Department of Children and Families and the local McKinney-Vento coordinators in each community to ensure that eligible homeless children and children living in foster homes are given priority for improved and expanded preschool slots
5. Assist Subgrantees to coordinate with the LEAs' preschool special education coordinators to ensure that children with disabilities are included in all classrooms with new or improved preschool slots
6. Issue an RFP and contract for a third-party evaluation
7. Hire two additional staff for the Office of Early Childhood for family engagement/community outreach and accountability and reporting
8. Arrange CLASS training for school readiness liaisons and others identified by the Subgrantees
9. Initiate Continuous Quality Improvement process with Subgrantees
10. Initiate community collaboration and family engagement process with Subgrantees

To achieve the key goal of the plan, the Subgrantees will be completing these activities

KEY SUBGRANTEE ACTIVITIES:

1. Complete MOUs with the Office of Early Childhood
2. Use local process to finalize selection of early learning providers and issue sub-awards
3. Use start-up funding to ensure that classrooms will be prepared for September, 2015
4. Ensure new staff are hired and trained prior to September, 2015
5. Arrange contracts or MOUs for additional comprehensive services including the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership for mental health prevention and intervention supports.
6. Conduct local outreach to all families of eligible children to ensure that they are aware of the opportunities
7. Arrange transportation (six Subgrantees only) for eligible children
8. Ensure new staff are hired and trained prior to September, 2015
9. Enroll school readiness liaisons and others in CLASS training
10. Provide ongoing monitoring and supervision of all classrooms of new and improved slots
11. Participate in continuous quality improvement process with the Office of Early Childhood; ensure implementation by local early learning provider programs participating in this grant
12. Participate in community collaboration activities with the Office of Early Childhood
13. Participate in family engagement activities with the Office of Early Childhood; ensure implementation by local early learning provider programs participating in this grant

Financial Resources

In-kind: State salaries and fringe of Office of Early Childhood and State Department of Education staff assigned to all key state activities

State funding for State Preschool Improvement Slots

State funding for portion of Third-Party Evaluation

Grant funding: See budget narrative and budget tables for state infrastructure funds and Subgrantee funds.

Needs of Eligible Children

High-Need Children: The Office of Early Childhood will address the needs of all eligible children under this grant in the following ways:

1. 10-hour days and year-round programming for over 60 percent of eligible children to meet families' needs and to offer a higher dosage of enrichment activities and prevent summer learning loss;
2. Transportation will be provided in those communities that indicated it was necessary to reach isolated families;
3. Comprehensive services for early identification of remediable health or development concerns; and
4. Availability of the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, a nationally-recognized statewide consultation model for early childhood mental health prevention and intervention.

Homeless children: The Early Childhood Cabinet will concentrate on homeless families with young children this coming year, attempting to focus the efforts of multiple agencies around this very vulnerable population. Particular focus will be on ensuring that these children have access to high-quality preschool. This area of concern was identified through discussions with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. To move this effort forward, the Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood has met with nonprofit housing organizations to discuss the specific needs of homeless families with young children. The Commissioner is also an Advisory Committee Member of Secure Jobs, a two-year demonstration pilot designed to increase the income of families transitioning from homelessness to housing by connecting them to the education, training and supports, including early care and education, the need to secure and maintain stable, competitive employment.

In recent years, Connecticut's early childhood programs have made conscientious efforts in outreach to homeless families and families at-risk of homelessness. Collaborative work continues through communities, homeless shelters and transitional housing staff, the Connecticut Coalition

to End Homelessness (CCEH), United Way of Connecticut, Care 4 Kids (Child Care Subsidy Program), Office of Early Childhood, Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the state Departments of Housing, Social Services, Office of Early Childhood, and Children and Families, to provide early care and education opportunities to homeless children, in ways to allow for consistent, safe and comprehensive care.

In Connecticut, during Fiscal Year 2013, the CCEH Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) had an unduplicated count of 1,113 children, ages birth to five years, served by Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing programs. Of the 14 Subgrantee communities represented in this grant proposal, five have shelters that served 21 percent of this population, as reported in HMIS. The five communities are Bridgeport, Killingly, Shelton, Torrington and Vernon. Please note that children in shelters represent only a percentage of homeless children in the state. Many homeless families double-up with friends and relatives, find other temporary shelter, or live on the streets.

The impact of homelessness on a child's success in school and in life may be devastating. By providing high-quality preschool education to children, we establish a consistent place to learn and thrive and help support the child and their family in preschool and through the transition to kindergarten through third grade.

Children in child welfare: The Office of Early Childhood will collaborate with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families to develop a plan to identify children in foster care who currently are not enrolled in high-quality preschool and make sure they are enrolled a high-quality State Preschool Program or Head Start program, pursuant to Special Act 14-22. Currently there is no mechanism in place to ensure that all foster children in Connecticut are enrolled in a high-quality preschool. This plan will create that mechanism.

Dual language learners: The Office of Early Childhood is working with the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Training and Research (UCEDD) to focus on the use of the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners. UCEDD will focus groups and a survey with home-based and center-based preschool programs to gain feedback about what would be most helpful

to providers and parents to aid them in using the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners.

Children with disabilities and delays: Statutory and budgetary authority for Part C and section 619 of Part B of IDEA will move from the State Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services, respectively, to the Office of Early Childhood July 2015 to better align and coordinate policies, programs and services for children with disabilities and delays with all the policies, programs and services for young children in Connecticut managed by the Office of Early Childhood, including home visiting and State Preschool Programs.

B. **Commitment to State Preschool Programs (20 points)**

The extent to which the State has demonstrated commitment to develop or enhance the State Preschool Program infrastructure and its capacity to deliver and increase access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children, as evidenced by -

(1) *State Early Learning and Development Standards;*

Connecticut is now implementing comprehensive Birth to Age 5 Early Learning Development Standards (CT ELDS) following their release in the Spring of 2014. These standards, aligned with our state K-12 core standards, were developed through the work of the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet (Connecticut's State Advisory Council) and its Early Learning Standards Work Group. More than 100 state and national experts participated during the development process, helping to ensure a strong and comprehensive set of Early Learning and Development Standards. The National Accreditation for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) facilitated a rigorous content validation study of our CT ELDS. Our standards are not only comprehensive and rigorous, but also developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate for children from birth to age 5. See Appendix #2 – CT Early Learning and Development Standards.

The CT ELDS set forth what children from birth to age 5 should know and be able to do across domains of development and areas of learning. For children ages three to five years old, there are eight domains: Cognition, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language and Literacy, Creative Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The ELDS are designed to provide a foundation and common language to help families, communities and schools work together to support children's early learning and growth. The learning progressions within the CT ELDS promote:

- Equity for all children, through the setting of high, but appropriate expectations;
- High-quality early learning experiences, by providing clear goals and trajectories of learning;
- Provision of individual support, based on each child's growth and development;
- Families' understanding of what their children are learning and how they can support them;

- Teachers' understanding of age-appropriate content and approaches to children's learning; and
- Communication across sectors, based on the common goals for children.

As part of the development of the CT ELDS, Connecticut undertook an intensive, multi-step process to document the alignment between sets of learning standards, including the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, the state's K-12 Common Core Standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts, the 2011 National Research Council's Framework for K-12 Science Education and the National Council on Social Studies' 10 curricular themes. Additionally, a supplementary Dual Language Learning Framework is included within the CT ELDS to support professionals working specifically with children acquiring multiple languages.

The Office of Early Childhood is currently working with the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Training and Research (UCEDD) to focus on the use of the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners. UCEDD is conducting focus groups and a survey with home-based and center-based preschool programs to gain feedback about what would be most helpful to providers and parents to aid them in using the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners.

The Office of Early Childhood is also partnering with the Center for Early Childhood Education (CECE) at Eastern Connecticut State University to develop web-based videos and related guidance on the CT ELDS to increase access and to support professional development, staff training, and workforce preparation. The guidance and related policies will address use of the CT ELDS as part of a cycle of intentional teaching involving aligned assessment tools, developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction, and culturally and linguistically responsive practices.

The CT ELDS were created with the intent to provide information beyond standards and to address guidance for best practice. The Guidance Documents on evidence-based

strategies for children with disabilities and the supplemental Dual Language Learner Framework already included in the standards document will support teachers' thinking about challenging practices.

In addition to the Office of Early Childhood recently publishing and distributing copies of the CT ELDS, family action guides have been published with more general information about supporting children's development across domains and about the importance of screening. Posters have also been developed and printed, which include information from the CT ELDS. To date, the Office of Early Childhood has distributed approximately 21,800 CT ELDS books, 15,344 posters and 75,785 family guides to early childhood programs, family and community providers, public school special education directors, Section 619 Part C Birth to Three providers, libraries, institutes of higher education, and pediatrician's offices. In addition, support around using these resources to promote positive outcomes for children was provided through webinars reaching 750 live participants, and professional learning opportunities that reached approximately 500 early care and education providers, 85 early childhood program directors and consultants and 30 higher education faculty. The webinars are available on-demand on the Office of Early Childhood website and YouTube page with nearly 1,400 views.

(2) *The State's financial investment, if any, and the estimated number and percentage of children, including if known, the estimated number and percentage of Eligible Children, served in State Preschool Programs over the last four years;*

Connecticut's legacy of providing center-based child care services dates back to the late 1960s with the establishment of our Child Day Care Centers, which are supported with state funds and federal funds. In 1997, landmark legislation established the state-funded School Readiness preschool program. School Readiness and Child Day Care Centers are Connecticut's two major State Preschool Programs. Currently, they are two separate funding streams. Work is underway to align policies, implementation, and quality, with the plan to integrate them into a single program. The Office of Early Childhood will soon contract with a consultant to undergo a 12-month process to integrate our early care and education programs. See Appendix #16 – RFP Overview: Creating a Better System

of Early Care and Education for Connecticut. **This grant will refer to both programs as our State Preschool Program.**

Connecticut has expanded State Preschool Program spaces five times since Fiscal Year 2007. Spaces were expanded by 1,001 in Fiscal Year 2007, by 834 in Fiscal Year 2008, 932 in Fiscal Year 2009, and by 1,000 in Fiscal Year 2013. In the fifth expansion, this Fiscal Year 2015, the Governor proposed and the legislature approved expanding State Preschool by 1,020 spaces. The 1,020 were allocated to 46 of the state's lowest-income cities and towns.

Our Governor is committed to expanding State Preschool Program by an additional 3,000 slots by 2019 to achieve universal access to preschool in our poorest and highest-need areas of the state, at an additional investment of nearly $40 million.

In 2014 alone, Connecticut has invested deeply in early childhood. The Governor and Legislature included the following initiatives in the state budget:

- Expanded access to State Preschool Programs by **1,020 spaces** in our high-need communities. The annualized cost is $8,767,920.
- Increased funding of $2.3 million for **preschool start-up costs**.
- Launched a $**205 million 10-year initiative to expand preschool in public schools.** This Smart Start initiative is a $205 million, 10-year investment in public preschool: $100 million in operating costs drawn from the federal Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund ($10 million each year) and $15 million in bonding for classroom renovations ($15 million in year one, and $10 million in years two through ten). The legislation directs the Office of Early Childhood to administer these new public school preschool programs. The legislation also builds on quality by requiring that programs be NAEYC accredited within three years of the initial grant award, as is already required by our existing State Preschool Programs. Once operational, these public school preschools will also be considered part of our State Preschool Programs.

- Dedicated $15 million in grants-in-aid for **minor capital improvements for our State Preschool Program facilities,** which builds on the $11.5 million and $10 million in the previous fiscal years for this purpose, respectively.
- Increased **State Preschool Program rates** by 3 percent for a cost of $3.6 million to address quality and the cost of care.
- Increased **Care4Kids rates** by $2.8 million for licensed early care and education centers accepting the child care subsidy. Rates will increase rates by 3 percent each year over a four-year period for a total increase of 12 percent.
- Increased funding of $8.5 million for a **collective bargaining agreement with licensed family child care providers and unlicensed family, friend and neighbor**. This agreement only applies to those who accept Care4Kids. The new funding covers a Care4Kids 3 percent rate increase for licensed family child care providers, a wage increase for unlicensed family, friend, and neighbor, professional development opportunities, and other incentives. Care4Kids rates for licensed family child care providers will increase by 3 percent each year over a four-year period for a total increase of 12 percent.
- Expanded licensing staff by 27 to allow for **annual inspections** of centers, group and family child care homes and to increase the capacity to **process timely background checks** for a cost of $1,373,400.
- Increased funding by $1.3 million for new **quality enhancements** and to support public schools seeking National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation.
- Funding of $1.1 million for **community preschool planning grants**.
- Funding of $450,000 for the Office of Early Childhood to develop a **plan to achieve universal preschool.**

Through these ongoing investments, Connecticut has laid a solid foundation to enhance our capacity to provide high-quality early learning and development services and to increase the number of high-needs children served by State Preschool Programs.

See Table B below and in the Excel spreadsheet for evidence of Connecticut's financial investment over the past four years in our State Preschool Programs and the number of Eligible Children (four-year-olds whose families have incomes at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line).

(3) *Enacted and pending legislation, policies, or practices that demonstrate the State's current and future commitments to increasing access to High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children;*

This continuum of investments and alignment culminated in the 2014 legislative session with passage of Public Act 14-39, which formally established the Office of Early Childhood, a separate cabinet-level agency that has full statutory and budgetary authority of early childhood programs formerly residing in the Departments of Education, Social Services, Public Health, and the Board of Regents. By bringing early childhood programs under one agency and looking not only at the structural features of high-quality programs but also examining the process of high-quality programming, Connecticut has a unique opportunity to focus on our youngest children and build a better trajectory for their lifelong success.

This new state agency, which has strong support from providers, business, philanthropy and other stakeholders, allows Connecticut to accomplish the following:

- Improve outcomes for young children through better access and quality
- Provide intentional outreach and streamlined information to families.
- Coordinate early childhood program and services.
- Align efforts to promote all aspects of child development.
- Avoid duplication and provide better value.
- Be accountable for quality and results.

The Division of Early Care and Education within the Office of Early Childhood oversees all of our State Preschool Programs, State-Funded Head Start, Care4Kids (our child care subsidy program), Workforce Development, Program Improvement, and Standards, Instruction, and Assessment. In addition, the Office of Early Childhood now oversees

licensing of preschool centers, family child care, group home care, and youth camps, as well as family support services and home visiting programs serving young children and their families.

Below is a history of major early childhood legislation.

CT Major Early Childhood Legislation		
Topic	**Year**	**Description**
Governance-Office of Early Childhood	2014	Statutorily establishes the **Office of Early Childhood** as a separate, cabinet-level agency, incorporating early childhood programs from the Departments of Education, Social Services, Board of Regents, and Public Health. Programs under the Office are: School Readiness, Child Day Care Centers, Care4Kids, State-Funded Head Start, Head Start Collaboration Office, Licensing, Children's Trust Fund, Charts a Course, 211 Child Care, Even Start, and Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting. Part C, our Birth to Three program, is anticipated to move in FY16. (P.A. 14-39)
Preschool Expansion	2014	Expands **School Readiness preschool slots** by 1,020 for 3- and 4-year- olds. (P.A. 14-39 and P.A. 14-47)
Public Preschool Expansion	2014	Requires the Office of Early Childhood to design and administer a competitive grant program to allow for **public schools to create or expand preschool opportunities** for 3- and 4-year-olds. (P.A. 14-41) Bonding of $105 million over 10 years for classroom renovations. (P.A. 14-98). Funding of $100 million over 10 years for operations (P.A. 14-217).
Plan for Universal Preschool	2014	Requires the Office of Early Childhood to develop a **plan to achieve universal access to preschool**. (P.A. 14-39). Funding provided to carry out the plan. (P.A. 14-47)
Quality & Accreditation	2014	Increases funding by $1.3 million for **quality enhancements** and to support licensed centers secure **NAEYC accreditation**. (P.A. 14-47)
Preschool Rate Increases	2014	Increases **School Readiness rates** from $8,346 to $8,670 to improve quality, increase **Child Day Care Center rates** by 3 percent to improve quality, and increase **Care4Kids child care subsidy rate** for licensed centers by 3 percent to improve quality. (P.A. 14-47)
Health and Safety	2014	Expands licensing staff by 27 to **improve health and safety monitoring** by moving to annual inspections and increase capacity to process background checks. (P.A. 14-47)
Preschool Facilities Improvement	2014	Grants-in-aid for **facility and minor capital repairs** for School Readiness and Child Day Center preschool programs: $15 million for Fiscal Year 15. (P.A. 14-98)
Pre-K to Grade 3	2014	Allows the Office of Early Childhood to offer a competitive grant, in collaboration with the State Department of Education, for up to three

Continuum		School Districts to develop and implement a strategy to promote the **social and emotional well-being and health of children from age three to third grade**. The program must focus on instructional tools and **family engagement**. (P.A. 14-172)
Preschool and Foster Care	2014	Requires the Department of Children and Families, in consultation with the Office of Early Childhood, to adopt policies and procedures that **maximize enrollment of children, who are placed in out-of-home care by DCF, in eligible preschool programs** serving 3- and 4- year-olds. (P.A. 14-22)
Governance-Office of Early Childhood	2013	Governor's Executive Order #35 was issued on June 24, 2013, creating the **Office of Early Childhood** as a separate, cabinet-level agency, incorporating early childhood programs from the Departments of Education, Social Services, Board of Regents, and Public Health.
Preschool Facilities Improvement	2013	Grants-in-aid for **facility and minor capital repairs** for School Readiness and Child Day Center preschool programs: $11.5 million for FY 14. (P.A. 13-239)
Kindergarten Transition	2013	Specified that the literacy training requirement for early childhood care and education providers working with children up to age five must include transition plans relating to **oral language and pre-literacy proficiency for children between preschool and kindergarten.** (P.A. 13-245)
Preschool Early Childhood Teacher Credential	2012	Allowed for implementation of the **Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC)**, an alternative pathway to meet staff qualifications. (P.A. 12-50 – See also P.A. 11-54 and 05-245)
QRIS	2012	Incorporated a **quality rating and improvement system** for early childhood programs, developed by the State Department of Education, into the coordinated system of early care and education and child development. It also required the State Department of Education , with the Early Childhood Education Cabinet, to develop information-sharing system between preschool and kindergarten about **childrens' proficiency in oral language and pre-literacy**. (P.A. 12-116)
Information Data Systems	2012	Created the Information Technology Capital Investment Program. The Bond Commission approved $6 Million for an **Early Childhood Information System** on June 21, 2013. (P.A. 12-189)
Preschool Facilities Improvement	2012	Grants-in-aid for **facility and minor capital repairs** for School Readiness and Child Day Center preschool programs: $10 million. (P.A. 12-189)
Governance Planning	2011	Required CT to **establish a coordinated system of early care and education and child development** by July 1, 2013. Required hiring a Planning Director to research and develop a recommended plan of action. The March 21, 2013 report led to the creation of the Office of Early Childhood. (P.A. 11-181)

Workforce Requirements	2011	Strengthened the **educational requirements early care and education teachers** in settings that receive public funding, requiring that by 2015, 50 percent should either be certified teachers or have a Bachelor's degree with a concentration in early childhood, child study, child development, or human growth and development from an institution of higher education. The remaining 50 percent would have Associate's degrees. By 2020, 100 percent of early care teachers in settings that receive public funding would have to meet the Bachelor's degree or certification requirement. (P.A. 11-54)
Governance Reforms	2011	Child Day Care program and Head Start Collaboration Office were transferred from the Department of Social Services to the Department of Education. This created the first opportunity for school readiness, state-funded child care centers, and the Head Start Collaboration Office to all be a part of the same agency, **setting the stage for bringing those programs together under one set of rules and state funding**. (P.A. 11-44)
Early Childhood Education Cabinet	2009	**Early Childhood Education Cabinet** was reconstituted to align with the Federal Head Start Act of 2007. (P.A. 09-06)
Early Childhood Education Cabinet	2007	Early Childhood Education Cabinet expanded its responsibilities to encompass such issues as a **workforce development plan and data sharing agreements** between state agencies. (P.A. 07-03)
School Readiness Facilities Expansion	2007	Funds appropriates for the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) and State Department of Education to develop a **School Readiness expansion plan for Connecticut, focused specifically on facilities.** (P.A. 07-03)
Early Childhood Education Cabinet	2005	The establishment of the **Early Childhood Education Cabinet** created important new opportunities for all of the state's early childhood education stakeholders to plan and consult with one another. (P.A. 05-245)
Workforce Development	2005	Raised **minimum qualifications for school readiness staff** beginning July 1, 2015. Each school readiness classroom must have someone with the minimum qualifications: 1) a credential from an SDE-approved organization and 12 credits in early childhood education and child development from an accredited higher education institution; 2) an associates or bachelor's degree from the accredited institution plus 12 credits; and OR 3) a teaching certificate with an early education or special education endorsement. By 2015, each classroom must have a teacher with either 2) of 3). (P.A. 5-245. Also see P.A. 11-54 and 12-50)
Kindergarten Assessment	2005	Required the State Department of Education to develop and implement a statewide, developmentally-appropriate **kindergarten assessment tool**. (Public Act 05-245)
Workforce	2004	Created a **workforce development system** for early care and

Development		education professionals. (P.A. 04-212)
Child Care Facilities Loan Fund	1997	The Connecticut Child Care Facilities Loan Fund (CCFLF) was established to **finance the construction and quality of child care facilities**. (P.A. 97-259)
School Readiness	1997	Connecticut enacted **School Readiness state preschool** legislation changing the landscape for high-quality preschool programs in our most high-need communities. (P.A. 97-259)

All of the above is evidence that Connecticut is committed to high-quality preschool and the young children of our state, and that our Governor is committed to continue this expansion moving forward. **This grant will augment Connecticut's ambitious goal to achieve greater access to high-quality preschool for our highest need children**.

(4) *The quality of existing State Preschool Programs, as evidenced by policies and program data that demonstrate the State's commitment to the components of a High-Quality Preschool Program; compliance with Program Standards; and support for program monitoring and improvement, which may be accomplished through the use of a TQRIS;* Connecticut is committed to delivering high-quality preschool through our State Preschool Programs and continues to drive quality to produce better outcomes for children. The following quality components are foundational to our State Preschool Programs:

High Staff Qualifications

Workforce legislation requires state-funded programs to designate one teacher per classroom as meeting the educator requirement. By 2015, 50 percent of these teachers must hold a bachelor's degree in early childhood and 50 percent must hold an associate's degree in early childhood. In 2020, 100 percent of these teachers must hold a bachelor's degree in early childhood. Connecticut is on track to meet the 2015 benchmark with 51 percent of individuals in programs currently holding a bachelor's degree and meeting staff qualifications. (The Smart Start initiative in the public schools will require that teachers have a bachelor's degree and be certified.)

Connecticut has developed the Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC) using the NAEYC professional preparation standards as the foundation for aligning two-year and four-year institutions' early childhood planned program of study. The ECTC also is an alternate path for individuals that currently hold a bachelor's degree in a non-early childhood concentration and can demonstrate competency as evidenced in a portfolio of practice. Thirteen Connecticut higher education institutions have been approved to offer the ECTC with several applying for approval this year. The ECTC has enhanced the design and delivery of higher education early childhood programs by modifying coursework and key assessments to support student competency development over time instead of by course. To date, 175 early childhood professionals have secured the ECTC with more in the pipeline. After July 2015, individuals can meet the educator requirements by holding an ECTC or an appropriate public school certification endorsement.

High-Quality Professional Development

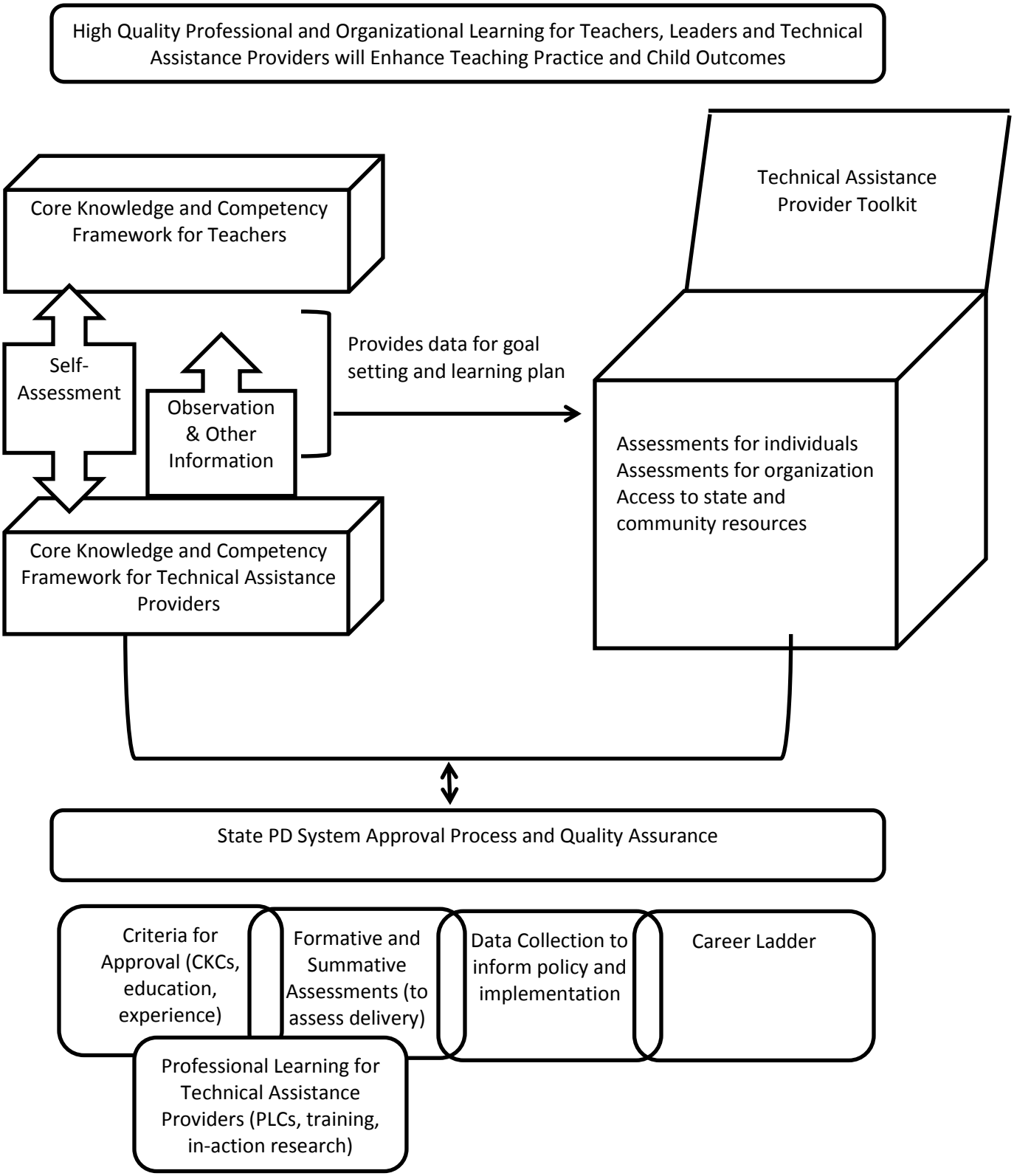
Over the past three years, Connecticut has reviewed plans to revise its current professional development system through the lens of effectiveness, meeting educator needs, and connecting to our new CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework (CKCs) for teachers. We have learned that Connecticut has some structural and process elements of a professional development system that can provide a good foundation for renovating the system. The following plan will better address the needs of our workforce to choose appropriate professional learning experiences, provide for effective technical assistance from coaches, mentors, and consultants, and ultimately enhance teaching practices. For example:

- Creating policies that guide the renovation and implementation of the Connecticut Professional Development System is critical. Connecticut will use the NAEYC Workforce Blueprint as the seminal resource for this work.
- The Professional Registry provides a mechanism for the early childhood workforce to store professional development information as well as a resource for the State to examine data about the workforce and progress toward competency, credentialing, and degree goals. As the transfer of the Professional Registry is

embedded in the Early Childhood Information System (ECIS), technical upgrades will be implemented for ease of use by consumers and the state.

- The career ladder currently has 15 rungs. Simplifying the ladder to align with credential and degree progressions as well as structure lattices that outline the Core Knowledge and Competency Frameworks for Teachers and for Technical Assistance Providers will provide a realistic benchmarking system for individuals to plan goals and track progress.
- Building a training and technical assistance approval system with quality assurance is critical to measuring effectiveness of the implementation of the professional development system. Critical to this effort is the use of our Core Knowledge and Competency Frameworks and the inclusion of tools within the framework for self-reflection as well as tools that link technical assistance to providers. The ultimate goal is to provide teaching staff with high quality professional development in conjunction with supporting leadership with the skills and knowledge to build and sustain an organizational learning environment.

The following schematic illustrates how CT's professional development system renovation will provide for high-quality professional learning for educators serving our young learners.



Child to instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1

Connecticut licensing regulations requires a child to instructional staff ratio of 10 to 1 and the Office of Early Childhood recommends that its State Preschool Programs maintain a ratio of 9 to 1.

Class size of no more than 20 with, at a minimum, one teacher with high staff qualifications

Connecticut licensing regulations requires a class size of no more than 20 and the Office of Early Childhood recommends that its State Preschool Programs maintain a class size of no more than 18.

Full-Day program

85 percent of State Preschool spaces are currently full-day, as defined by this grant (a school day, minimum 5 hours of instruction.) Since it better matches families' schedules and eliminates summer learning loss, 67 percent of State Preschool Programs already exceed this requirement by offering a 10-hour day and year-round programs.

Inclusion of children with disabilities

State Preschool Programs currently coordinate locally with preschool special education coordinators. Connecticut General Statutes 10-16o (9) requires that the State Preschool Program "assure that children with disabilities are integrated into programs available to children who are not disabled". A directive issued by the state in 2005 helps local State Preschool Programs understand how to best blend State Preschool funding with local and state special education funding to accomplish this type of inclusion. The directive requires that all State Preschool local councils establish a local policy to implement the requirements of the state law and the guidance provided.

Developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curricula, and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards

State-funded preschool programs in Connecticut are required to adhere to program quality standards that address developmentally appropriate practice, cultural and

linguistic responsiveness, the use of standards-driven evidence-based curricula, and rich learning environments. These quality assurance requirements including achieving NAEYC accreditation or status as a Head Start approved program and an annual ECERS-R for programs in the process of achieving accreditation. In addition, all State Preschool Programs are required to implement curricular approaches that align to the state's early learning and development standards.

Connecticut has developed the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS), which set forth what children from birth to age five should know and be able to do across domains of development and areas of learning. The Office of Early Childhood is now training early childhood teachers and providers on how to effectively use the CT ELDs (for more information, see B(1)).

Core Knowledge and Competencies (CKCs) for teachers have been developed by the Connecticut Early Childhood Workforce cross-sector work group. CKCs for teachers define what early care educators need to know (content) and be able to do (skills) while working with and/or on behalf of young children and their families. See Appendix #3 – Core Knowledge and Competencies.

Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities

State Preschool Programs are required to implement developmentally appropriate practices which, by their nature, are individualized for children who are performing at varied developmental levels. Connecticut State Preschool Programs are typically a mix of three- and four-year- olds which further requires individualizing instruction across ages and developmental levels. Children with disabilities and health issues that do not require special education or related services do frequently need accommodations. This includes children with physical disabilities, diabetes, mild hearing loss, or other health conditions. All State Preschool Programs are required to provide such accommodations and formal 504 plans (under the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act) are also required in any preschool program receiving federal funding. These plans

delineate the modifications and accommodations that will be needed for these students to have an opportunity perform at the same level as their peers.

Instructional staff salaries comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff
Currently, on average, the annual salary for teachers in our State Preschool Program $34,000 compared to the average starting salary of $47,165 for the state's K-12 teachers with a BA degree. **This grant will give Connecticut an unprecedented opportunity to increase teacher compensation for all teachers funded by this grant comparable to their colleagues in K-12.**

Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement
Our State Preschool Programs are required to complete an annual individual program report, known as the School Readiness Preschool Program Evaluation. The purpose is to ensure that a consistent statewide system is used for program to look objectively at program, measure compliance with program requirements, and identify the program's strengths and areas that need improvement. . The evaluation also measures parent satisfaction as well as quality components including: Collaboration, Parent involvement, Education and outreach, Referrals for Health Services, and Nutrition Services. A fundamental role of the school readiness liaison is program monitoring and improvement. The OEC's Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP) provides technical assistance to support program achieve NAEYC accreditation and maintain program standards after securing accreditation.

On-site or accessible comprehensive services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development
Connecticut is a state of strong early childhood collaborations at the local level. Eleven of the fourteen communities selected to participate in the grant are Discovery Communities, a public-private partnership supported by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and the Office of Early Childhood that engages community partnerships

and collaborations around young children's early development, including health and early literacy.

Currently, State Preschool Programs collaborate with community providers that deliver comprehensive services as described in later B(6).

Evidence-based health and safety standards

In the 2014 legislative session, the state budget included funding for 18 additional licensing staff to conduct annual inspections in efforts to improve health and safety in preschools and improve quality. Previously, state law only required the inspection of licensed child care facilities every two years for centers and three years for family child care homes. In addition, the state budget included funding for nine new positions to increase the capacity to handle background checks in a timely manner.

The Office of Early Childhood is in the process of implementing the recommendations from a needs assessment conducted by the National Association for Regulatory Administration (NARA). The three-stage needs assessment identified the strengths and weaknesses of Connecticut's child care licensing system. The needs assessment was conducted between August and December of 2013. It included: 1) an on-line survey of providers, parents of children in child care settings (center- and home-based), and licensing staff; 2) on-site forums with child care providers; and 3) qualitative interviews with survey participants. The NARA recommendations addressed strengthening training programs for licensing staff and providers, improving inter-rater reliability of licensing staff, and changing regulatory requirements. Examples include:

- Conduct annual inspections of each licensed settings, at a minimum
    - Since this report was completed the Office of Early Childhood is in the process of hiring additional licensing staff to accomplish annual inspections.
- Develop a written policy and procedures manual for inspectors
    - This manual is now complete.
- Train licensing staff on compliance with the new policy and procedure manual.

- Training is about to commence on the new manual.

Program Standards

All State Preschool Programs must be either NAEYC-accredited or secure Head Start approval. Connecticut ranks third in the country for the overall number of programs accredited by NAEYC and first in the nation per capita. Our State Preschool Programs make up 65 percent of all accredited programs.

The OEC's Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP) provides technical assistance to support programs in securing NAEYC accreditation. This year, AFP assisted 50 programs in *achieving* accreditation and supported 143 programs *seeking* accreditation. AFP will be available for programs funded under this grant that will be up for re-accreditation or are in need of technical assistance

Quality Improvement System

As part of our quality improvement efforts, Connecticut is currently building the "quality" and "improvement" components of its Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). **Connecticut Quality Improvement System (QIS) Standards, Criteria and Indicators have been developed and approved and serve as the basis for our QIS system. All of our QIS work is aligned with these standards.** The cross-sector Quality Improvement System, or QIS, will focus on improving quality in early care and education settings by creating a comprehensive professional development system through training, technical assistance, coaching and mentoring for early childhood providers. Once programs are adequately supported to improve quality, Connecticut will then institute the rating system as a vehicle to measure quality and inform parent choice. See Appendix #6 – Quality Rating and Improvement System (QIS) Standards, Criteria and Indicators.

In the 2013 legislative session, $6 million in bond funds were dedicated for quality improvement and an agency-wide team was convened to design a comprehensive system. A high-level plan has been developed outlining the structure of the QIS and the delivery of professional development services. The plan includes using a centralized coordinating

agency and five regional "hubs" of quality improvement activity to better serve early childhood providers throughout the state. This system is expected to be operational by July 2016. The rating component will follow 18 to 24 months after QIS implementation.

Facilities Improvement

In Fiscal Year 2014, the state awarded more than $8 million in grant-in-aid funds for facility improvements and minor capital repairs. These funds help address building and site deficiencies, and promote the health, safety and learning of children in appropriate environments. Examples of improvements include: repurposing space to add new preschool classrooms, building age-appropriate bathrooms, replacing boilers, replacing phone systems, installing security systems, improving ventilation systems, and replacing windows and doors. Under the new Smart Start initiative, policy leaders designated $105 million in state bonding over 10 years ($15 million in Fiscal Year 2015 and $10 million per year thereafter) for facilities renovations in public school settings for preschool expansion.

(5) *The State's coordination of preschool programs and services, in partnership with its Early Learning Advisory Council, with other State and Federal resources that may be used to serve preschool-aged children, including, if applicable, programs and services supported by title I of ESEA, part C and section 619 of Part B of IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), and the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.);*

Connecticut's Early Childhood Cabinet (which also serves as the State Advisory Council) serves as a central point of coordination and communication regarding program and services including Title I of ESEA, Part C and Section 619 Part B of IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care Development Block Grant. Early childhood professionals representing Part C, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care Development Block Grant are statutory members of the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet and work to coordinate preschool programs and their respective programs. In the 2015 legislative session, legislation will be introduced to add members representing Section 619 of Part B of IDEA, State Title 1 Director, state coordinator of

education for homeless children and youth, and the State Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services.

Child Care Development Block Grant

The Office of Early Childhood is the state agency responsible for the Administration of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and the Care4Kids, our child care subsidy program. This lead agency status was transferred from the Connecticut Department of Social Services, effective October 1, 2014.

Now that the early childhood programs and services from five state agencies are under one roof, we can fully align the Office of Early Childhood vision, mission and goals to the federal Office of Child Care (OCC) strategic framework and major goals in order to work collaboratively across systems and sectors to establish innovative solutions and systems that produce the best possible outcomes for children.

The CCDBG state administrator for Connecticut is also the Director for the agency's Division of Early Care and Education, overseeing all state-funded early care and education programs, workforce development, and standards and assessment implementation. Under her leadership, the agency has initiated an intensive, systemic review of existing CCDBG polices to ensure they are child-focused, family-friendly and fair to providers, while ensuring program integrity.

The Office of Early Childhood is implementing a new union contract for all family child care providers receiving child care subsidy funding. In an effort to allow for family choice, child care subsidies are available for low- to moderate-income families who may choose for their child to be cared for by a family child care provider including both licensed providers and license-exempt Family, Friends, and Neighbors. The union contract seeks to pair rate increases with required increases in quality, and for the first time, mandatory orientation sessions for all family child care providers receiving a child care subsidy. The orientation session brings providers together to receive important health and safety information, learn about the CT ELDS, and receive safety equipment.

We hope that these sessions also serve as a learning community for providers who work in isolation.

IDEA Part C Program

Connecticut's IDEA Part C program is called the Birth to Three System. Serving approximately 9,500 eligible infants and toddlers and their families, each year, its mission is to strengthen the capacity of Connecticut's families to meet the developmental and health-related needs of their infants and toddlers who have delays or disabilities. All services are delivered in the child's natural environment which includes home and child care settings and each family is assigned a service coordinator to assist them in accessing any community, state, or federal resources outside of the Birth to Three System. Early Intervention services are delivered by a network of 40 contracted local agencies including school districts, regional educational service centers, and for-profit and not-for-profit community agencies. Local Birth to Three providers are in at least weekly face-to-face contact with families and child care providers as they coach caregivers on how to embed intervention techniques into a child's daily routines and to modify those techniques as children grow and develop.

The Birth to Three System, planned for transition to the Office of Early Childhood in 2015, works closely with other state agencies and organizations to ensure that all potentially eligible children are referred. That includes the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention program, the Immunization Registry, and the Family Health section at the Department of Public Health; the Department of Children and Families for children substantiated for abuse or neglect; the Department of Education and local districts for transition planning at age 3; United Way's Child Development Infoline; the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center; the Family Support Network; the Infant Mental Health Association; and Early Head Start programs. Birth to Three staff and providers have participated on several Office of Early Childhood initiatives such as development of the CT ELDS, the Quality Improvement System, and the Early Childhood Information System. The Birth to Three Director attends weekly Leadership Team meetings at the Office of Early Childhood.

Homeless Children

The Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood now serves as the chair of the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet. Under her leadership, the Cabinet will take a thematic approach to its early childhood policy work. Addressing the needs of homeless families with young children, including access to preschool, has been identified as a major focus for the Cabinet moving forward. This area of concern was identified through discussions with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. To move this effort forward, the Commissioner has met with nonprofit housing organizations to discuss the specific needs of homeless families with young children.

As one example of a specific program working with homeless children, Thames Valley Council for Community Action (TVCCA) works with local homeless shelters to provide support for young children who are residents of these shelters. Through the use of state Head Start funds, TVCCA supports Head Start staff who work with both shelter staff and directly with young children to support their learning and developmental progress.

(6) *The State's role in promoting coordination of preschool programs and services at the State and local levels with other sectors that support the early learning and development of children including child health, mental health, family support, nutrition, child welfare, and adult education and training.*

The Office of Early Childhood is committed to ensure high levels of state and local coordination across sectors that support the early learning and development of children. These other sectors can include mental health, child health and development, family support, nutrition, child welfare, and adult education and training. Our State Preschool Programs partner with many other community programs and services and provide documentation of such coordination and collaboration.

Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-16q(a) requires that each school readiness program include a plan for collaboration with other community program and services and for coordination of resources in order to offer 10-hours days and year-round child care

and education programs for children of working parents and parents in education or training programs. The plan also must address the following:

- parent involvement, parenting education and outreach;
- referrals for health services, including appropriate immunizations and screenings;
- nutrition services;
- referrals to family literacy programs that incorporate adult basic education; and
- provide for the promotion of literacy through access to public library services.

Our State Preschool Programs document their processes to collaborate with other community agencies, including: social services, mental health, health centers, recreation departments, public library, adult education, and employment and training centers.

Below are specific examples of the state's role in promoting cross-sector collaboration with our State Preschool Programs.

Mental Health

The 20 children and six adults who lost their lives in the Sandy Hook tragedy shook the nation. This horrific event put children's mental health needs front and center in our communities and at our State Capitol. After months of discussions among parents, community leaders, mental health experts, and policy makers, it became clear that that children's behavioral health needs were not being met and our mental health system must be restructured and strengthened.

In response, Public Act 13-178 required the Department of Children and Families, in collaboration with many stakeholders, to develop a "comprehensive implementation plan, across agencies and policy areas, for meeting the mental, emotional and behavioral health of all children in the state, and preventing or reducing the long-term negative impact of mental, emotional and behavioral health issues on children." A 37-member Advisory Committee was created to guide the process and drafting of the implementation plan; the Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood is a member of this Advisory Committee. See Appendix #7 – Public Act 13-178.

The Department of Children and Families, contracting with the Connecticut Health and Development Institute (CHDI), undertook an extensive community engagement process to better understand the needs and gaps of children with mental, emotional and behavioral health needs. This community engagement included 26 "Network of Care Community Conversations" attended by 339 family members and 94 youth, open forums held in six locations attended by 232 individuals, facilitated discussions on 12 topic areas attended by 220 individuals, and input on the Plan4Children.org website by 60 individuals and groups.

A comprehensive implementation plan was released in September 2014. The plan is organized around seven themes: System Organization, Financing and Accountability; Health Promotion, Prevention and Early Identification; Access to a Comprehensive Continuum of Care; Pediatric Primary Care and Mental Health Integration; Disparities in Access to Culturally Appropriate Care; Family and Youth Engagement; and Workforce Development. **The importance of early identification and meeting the needs of our youngest children is a major theme running throughout the report.** Two major goals address early screening and the need to work closely with early childhood providers:

- All children will receive age-appropriate periodic standardized screening for developmental and behavioral concerns as part of a comprehensive screening, assessment, and referral services.
- Ensure that all providers and caregivers who work with young children and youth demonstrate competency in promoting the social and emotional development in partnership with families, recognizing risk factors and early signs of socio-emotional problems and mental illness, and connecting all children to services appropriate for their stage in development.

The plan will serve as implementation guide in building a comprehensive system for children. The next phase of this effort (October 2014 – October 2019) will involve: refinement of the plan in response to legislature, stakeholder, and consumer feedback; collaboration with the General Assembly to develop an implementation plan; biennial

progress reports; ongoing consultation and technical assistance to assist in efforts to implement the plan and develop a behavioral health system that is in alignment with the goals and provisions of Public Act 13-178.

The comprehensive behavioral health plan will build on Connecticut's current efforts to support preschool programs in working with children with mental, emotional and behavioral health needs. Below are selected examples.

Early Child Care Partnership (ECCP) Under this federal grant, the Office of Early Childhood will provide funding to the Subgrantee so the early learning providers can contract with ECCP to provide comprehensive direct services to State Preschool Programs funded by this federal grant, as described in Section E(5).

As referenced in other sections of this grant, Connecticut has invested in the Early Child Care Partnership, (ECCP) a statewide, evidence-based, mental health consultation program designed to meet the social and emotional needs of children birth to 5 in early care and education settings. ECCP, funded by the Department of Children and Families, works directly with preschool programs to build the capacity of caregivers at an individual, family, classroom, or program-wide level. It provides support, education, and consultation to caregivers in order to promote enduring and optimal outcomes for young children. ECCP has three program goals:

a) Reduce the risk factors associated with early childhood suspension/expulsion.
b) Build the capacity of early child care providers and families to understand and promote healthy social-emotional development and to more effectively address the social and emotional needs of children ages birth to five.
c) Engage and/or develop community, regional and statewide partnerships on an ongoing basis to support capacity building in the area of healthy social and emotional development for young children.

Center for Early Childhood Education The Office of Early Childhood has partnered with the Center for Early Childhood Education at Eastern Connecticut State University (ECSU) to develop a series of videos that provide information to early childhood

providers concerning children's mental health needs. ECSU will host a Connecticut Early Childhood Higher Education Learning Community with the purpose of engaging early childhood higher education faculty in shared learning in the areas of children's mental, emotional, and behavioral health challenges relevant to the preparation of early childhood professionals.

Connecticut Health and Development Institute The Office of Early Childhood is also partnering with the Connecticut Health and Development Institute (CHDI) to develop training tools for child health and child care providers on infant mental health and maternal depression and to provide direct training to early care and education providers. Two modules on infant mental health and maternal depression are under development to be shared with pediatricians as part of CHDI's EPIC program. Educating Practices in the Community (EPIC) provides training to pediatricians right in their own offices about healthy child development.

Child Health and Development

- Help Me Grow, a program under the Office of Early Childhood's Family Support Services Division, is a prevention program that provides parents and early childhood providers access to a variety of community resources that address a child's behavioral or developmental needs. Its contractor, Child Development Infoline (administered by the United Way of Connecticut), connects callers with care coordinators trained to listen and ask questions about a child's development to help identify resources for the caller. If a child is facing behavioral, learning or other developmental difficulties, child development community liaisons will link the family to resources, sometimes making up to 12 calls to community agencies to find the right program or service.

  Help Me Grow also offers the Ages & Stages monitoring program, which helps parents better understand and track children's developmental milestones. Help Me Grow trains hundreds of preschool providers annually in the use of the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, including healthy child development and social and emotional development, enabling providers to identify developmental concerns in the preschool classroom.

The Help Me Grow program staff regularly host community networking breakfasts across the state that bring together service providers, including preschool providers, to identify gaps and barriers in service. More than 60 agencies and providers attend these gatherings to share information, learn about new initiatives, and develop solutions to challenging family issues.

- The United Way of Connecticut, in partnership with the Office of Early Childhood, was awarded a three-year planning grant from the federal Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) to build Connecticut's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS). Connecticut is using this grant as an opportunity to develop a universal screening and referral system for young children, and to improve developmental screening in early care and education settings, and coordinate training and screening results between pediatricians and early care and education programs. The Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood co-chairs the ECCS Advisory Board with Dr. Paul Dworkin, founder of Help Me Grow.

- Connecticut's child care licensing system requires that each preschool program contract with a health consultant. The health consultant:
  - conducts annual reviews of health policies and procedures;
  - conducts quarterly site visits;
  - must be available for consultation via phone, email, and on-site;
  - act as a resource for staff and parents;
  - reviews health and immunization records of children and staff;
  - reviews indoor and outdoor environments for health and safety; and
  - reviews policies and procedures for medical administration for children with special needs and disabilities.

- The State of Connecticut and philanthropy and the Head Start Collaboration Office have invested in the development and delivery of a system of medication administration training for early care and education providers. The Yale School of Nursing developed the Connecticut Medication Administration Training in Early

Education and Child Care Settings curriculum, which includes two videos entitled General Principles of Medication Administration and Oral, Topical and Inhalant Medications, and Anaphylaxis and Emergency Medications. The Train-the-Trainer program will train up to 100 nurse and child health providers in teaching medication administration in early care and education programs. Connecticut is in the process of creating a consortium of Connecticut Schools of Nursing to serve as regional training and resource centers to organize and coordinate medication administration training to early care and education providers.

- In an effort to provide guidance to parents and caregivers of young children, the Office of Early Childhood has partnered with the Connecticut Health and Development Institute (CHDI) to update, print and disseminate thousands of handbooks, one addressing healthy child development, and the second addressing health and safety. "Caring for Connecticut's Children: Promoting Health Development" provides six sections: Foundations of Health Child Development, Infant Development, Toddler Development, Preschoooler Development, Special Topics, and Resources/References/Glossary. "Caring for Connecticut's Children: Promoting Health Development" provides nine sections: Foundation of Children's Wellness, Understanding Children's Sleep, Understanding Infant Crying Behavior, Feeding and Nutrition, Children's Physical Health, Children's Safety, Children's Mental Health, Children with Special Health Care Needs, and Resources/Glossary/References. The handbooks are also available online.

Nutrition

- Connecticut's State Preschool Programs receive a wealth of information and guidance on nutrition and physical activity in the "Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies." The guide was published in 2010 by the Connecticut State Department of Education, which at the time oversaw Connecticut's early care and education programs. This guide addresses comprehensive nutrition and physical activity policies to promote healthy environments for infants and preschool-age children in child care settings. The Action Guide includes best practices for

promoting healthy eating and physical activity based on current science, public health research, and national recommendations and standards.

Development of the Action Guide benefited from cross-sector support and guidance from a total of 45 entities, including state agencies, community-based organizations, professional organizations, parent organizations, and higher education institutions.

- The Connecticut State Department of Education, with the Department of Public Health (DPH), offers early childhood programs the opportunity to participate in the award-winning I am Moving, I am Learning Partnership (IMIL). IMIL is a proactive approach for addressing childhood obesity in young children. The goals of IMIL are to:
  - increase the quantity of time spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity during daily routines to meet national guidelines for physical activity;
  - improve the quality of structured movement experiences intentionally facilitated by adults, and
  - promote healthy nutrition choices every day.

  Each year over a period of five years, 20 different early childhood programs will be recruited to participate in the IMIL partnership. Programs receive team training and materials for implementing IMIL combined with guidance and technical assistance from an assigned mentor.

Family Support

- The Office of Early Childhood provides home visiting through its Family Support Services Division. Home visiting services are delivered across the state through the Nurturing Families Network model and through the Maternal, Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) federal grant. The Nurturing Families Network and the three models under MIECHV, Parents as Teachers, Child First, and Early Head Start home-based services are evidence-based. The MIECHV competitive grant is scheduled to transfer from the Department of Public Health to the Office of Early

Childhood, effective October 15, 2014. MIECHV staff and the formula grant have already transferred to the Office of Early Childhood.

- The Office of Early Childhood's Family Support Division launched the Triple P CT Program (Positive Parenting Program) in May 2014. A public awareness campaign included community kick-offs, radio ads, and development of a website, brochures, posters and billboards. More than 140 practitioners have been trained and accredited in Triple P. These practitioners work with many providers, including preschool teachers. The Office of Early Childhood is partnering with the Institute for Child Success to conduct a feasibility study to replicate the program statewide.

- Connecticut has a long-standing investment in integrating family support and resources in our high-need public schools. The State Department of Education funds 74 Family Resource Centers (FRCs) that are housed in public school settings; nine of our 14 communities under this grant have FRCs. FRCs promotes comprehensive, integrated, community-based systems of family support and child development services, based on the "Schools of the 21st Century" concept developed by Dr. Edward Ziegler at Yale University. FRCs provide access, within a community, to a broad continuum of early child and family support services offering: parent education and training, adult education, family support, preschool, school-age child care, positive youth development services, and family child care training. FRCs collaborate with many resources in the community, including State Preschool Programs.

Child Welfare

- The Office of Early Childhood and the Department of Children and Families are partnering to ensure that preschool-age children in foster care are enrolled in high-quality preschool programs. In response to legislation, Special Act 14-22, the two agencies are embarking on a project to identify foster children needing high-quality preschool, map where these children reside and the proximity of preschool programs, and make recommendations regarding a strategy to ensure the children

have access to high-quality preschool services. See Appendix #8 – Special Act 14-22.

- For over 15 years, Head Start in Connecticut, including Head Start grantees that receive the State Head Start Fund Supplement, have worked to align and coordinate preschool and infant toddler services with child welfare services through the Department of Children-Head Start Partnership. Originating from a collaborative pilot effort of both Head Start and Child Welfare representatives at the ACF Region I and state levels, the Partnership has grown to include active statewide participation of representatives from local communities from Department of Children and Families, Head Start, Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (mental health consultant network), and Supportive Housing for Families. More recent networks integrated into this Partnership are Part C and Child First (intensive clinical home visiting) providers, and two State Preschool Programs have been a regular member on two of the 14 local teams.

  The DCF-Head Start Partnership aims to increase enrollment and consistent attendance of all children served by DCF, including children in foster care, in high-quality early care and to align services that support children and families. DCF staff has been out-posted to many of these early childhood sites. DCF and Head Start work closely to identify families and regularly staff cases so that service plans can be coordinated and resources can be shared, e.g., dental exams. With recent support from the Children's Bureau, DCF and Head Start staff together received extensive training in infant mental health and reflective supervision, further enhancing their collaborative work with families. Staffing and meeting support is provided by the Head Start State Collaboration Office which is located in the Office of Early Childhood.

- Over the past three years, the Department of Children and Families has been working with Head Start to increase the capacity of early childhood and child welfare to address the special needs of children in the child welfare system in a coordinated way. Opportunities for reflective supervision and training on a

variety of topics, e.g., trauma and loss, visitation, and infant observation, first offered through a federal ACF Children's Bureau grant have continued to be offered using private funding. This summer a four-day early childhood training series was piloted and will now become part of the DCF Training Academy core training for all child welfare staff. New staff under the proposed expansion programs will have the opportunity to partner with child welfare staff with an enhanced understanding of the needs of young children and as a result of recent legislation, Special Act 14-22, will be seeking to enroll all preschool aged children in foster care in an accredited preschool or Head Start approved program.

C. **Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs (30 Points)**

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to ensure program quality, including a description of how the State will:

(1) *Use no more than five percent of the funds received over the grant period for State Preschool Program infrastructures and quality improvements at the State Level*

Connecticut plans to use no more than five percent of the funds received over the grant period for State Preschool Program quality infrastructure. It will use these funds in conjunction with existing state funds to build a high-quality preschool infrastructure.

Plan for additional quality infrastructure using no more than five percent of grant funds

Connecticut plans to use no more than five percent of grant funds to enhance the quality of the State Preschool Programs overseen by our Subgrantees in the following four ways:

Hire a family engagement/community outreach specialist who will:

- (i.) deepen local family engagement practices by working with Subgrantees to design meaningful, culturally appropriate family engagement approaches and practices that meet their individual needs;
- (i.) work with early learning providers to engage parents in decisions about their children's education and development, help families build protective factors and help parents support their children's learning at home; and
- (j.) forge a seamless birth-through-third-grade continuum at the local level by identifying the family child care providers, center-based providers, 619 and Part C providers and home visitors serving infants and toddlers, as well as public elementary schools in the selected high-need communities. This full-time state employee will assess current relationships and collaborations that provide for a birth-through-third-grade continuum. The assessment will be used to identify any gaps in data, resources and information and how to address them.

See Appendix #9 – Family Engagement/Community Outreach Specialist

Hire a grant accountability and reporting coordinator who will:

- (d.) coordinate the efforts of the local school readiness liaisons;
- (f.) coordinate professional development for the Subgrantees and their early learning providers; and
- (k.) be responsible for all monitoring, supervision, data collection, accountability, and federal reporting under this grant.

See Appendix #10 – Grant Accountability and Reporting Coordinator

Enhance the quality of child-teacher interactions through use of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS).

- (f.) Grant funds will be used to train 36 school readiness liaisons and early childhood program administrators in the selected high-need communities in use of the CLASS. Grant funds will also be used to send five individuals for further "train-the-trainer" CLASS coursework to ensure that eventually all teachers in the Subgrantees early learning programs can receive CLASS training and to ensure sustainability of this training beyond the grant period. We would then extend use of the CLASS throughout all State Preschool Programs, in coordination with training already provided through the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership funded by the CT Department of Children and Families and the Head Start Training and Technical Assistance system.

Conduct a third-party evaluation comparing child outcomes for eligible children funded by this grant in State Preschool Programs to children in State Preschool Programs not funded by this grant.

- (k.) The evaluation would include pre- and post- assessments of children served under this grant in both "expansion" and "improved" slots with children enrolled in existing State Preschool Programs as well as use of a mid-year CLASS observation tool by the evaluator.
- (k.) The Office of Early Childhood would use state funds to supplement the grant funding for the third-party evaluation. That evaluation is described in more detail in Section (A)(7).

Budget details for each of these four activities are available in Section G.

Connecticut currently has a robust early childhood infrastructure with a recently established Office of Early Childhood that has already produced many of the examples listed in (a) through (j) of this section including: the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards, program standards, upgrading workforce requirements, ongoing work toward a statewide longitudinal data system, a statewide quality improvement system, a comprehensive early learning assessment system and a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (described in great detail in (3) below). The state will continue to enhance this infrastructure using existing state funds.

(2) *Implement a system for monitoring and supporting continuous improvement for each Subgrantee to ensure that each Subgrantee is providing High-Quality Preschool Programs*

(a) *Has the capacity to measure preschool quality including parent satisfaction measures and provide performance feedback to inform and drive State and local continuous program improvement efforts;*

Currently, all school readiness programs must complete a "Connecticut School Readiness Preschool Program Evaluation System" which, in addition to collecting demographic information, measures compliance with quality indicators for programs that are not yet NAEYC accredited or Head Start approved and measures parent satisfaction with the program. The evaluation also measures parent satisfaction as well as quality components including:

- Collaboration;
- Parent involvement;
- Education and outreach;
- Referrals for Health Services;
- Nutrition Services;
- Family Literacy;
- Admissions Policy;

- Transition Plan;
- Professional Development;
- Annual Program Evaluation; and
- Serving Children with Disabilities;

Parent satisfaction is also measured by either the NAEYC survey forms or the Head Start survey form.

The Office of Early Childhood requires each local school readiness council to monitor their early learning provider programs to ensure programmatic and fiscal responsibility, accountability for children services and implementation of the 11 quality components under Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-16q as described in Section A(4) of this application. To ensure that each Subgrantee has this capacity, the Office of Early Childhood will provide the Subgantees with sufficient grant funds to expand their school readiness liaison to either half-time or full-time (based each Subgrantee's number of expansion and improved slots funded under this grant) to implement these responsibilities. In our state's largest community Bridgeport, grant funding will be provided to employ a second full-time school readiness liaison for the purpose of monitoring and ensuring program accountability since they are proposing to include 270 children in this grant in 18 classrooms.

The additional state staff member funded through the infrastructure portion of this grant will convene a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team composed of the school readiness liaisons and representatives from parent advisory committees from each of the Subgrantees. Regular CQI team meetings will provide a vehicle for thoughtful and consistent discussions between Office of Early Childhood staff, school readiness liaisons, parents and training and technical assistance providers. CQI discussions will result in policy and practice recommendations along with current research and practice thereby developing a collective understanding of high-quality preschool programs, implementation issues, and potential areas of growth for the early learning programs participating in this grant.

(b) *State Longitudinal Data System to track student progress from pre-K through third grade.*

The Office of Early Childhood is in year two of a four-year process to develop Connecticut's Early Childhood Information System (ECIS). The ECIS will link to the existing State Longitudinal Data System for K-12 giving the state the ability to track a child's academic progress from preschool through secondary school.

The Office of Early Childhood is currently working with the State Department of Education on creating a new State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) manager to ensure that children are not issued multiple identifiers by community and public school programs, increasing accuracy when tracking outcomes of children from preschool through secondary school. With the new SASID manager, a child will be assigned one SASID, whether attending a community-based or public preschool program, and that SASID will follow that child throughout his or her academic career and through secondary school. This solves an issue that was created in 2007 when a separate data collection and SASID assignment processed was instituted only for children receiving State Preschool Programs in community agencies as opposed to the local public schools.

As the ECIS is further developed, Common Education Data Standards will be used when possible to align data fields between the ECIS and the state's K-12 longitudinal data system. In addition to child and family demographics, the data collected will include child developmental information. After Fall 2016, Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) data will be available from the Department of Education and those aggregate results will be provided to each State Preschool Program to assist them in improving the quality of instruction as it relates to the readiness of their previous preschool students.

(c) *Clearly specifies the measureable outcomes, including school readiness, to be achieved by the program.*

The Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) will include the domains of Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts and Physical Development. Each domain will include a sub score. Connecticut is beginning the development process now on the KEA and may in the future develop cut scores that indicate "readiness" or may choose to establish only cut scores that indicate that the child needs substantial support or intensive intervention. It is premature in the KEA development process to have been able to have these discussions with educators, parents, policy makers, and stakeholders prior to the field-testing of the KEA in Fall 2015. When these discussions are held before the census administration of the KEA in Fall 2016, they will need to be revisited after the results of that administration are available.

For purposes of this grant, we will supplement KEA results with results from a third-party evaluator (using a portion of infrastructure grant funds and covering the remaining portion with state funds.) That evaluation will measure children's development from early fall to late spring in in the areas of language, literacy, mathematics, and social skills. By Fall 2016, we will be able to analyze any correlation between the pre- and post-assessments and the KEA data.

(3) *Measure the outcomes of participating children across the five Essential Domains of School Readiness during the first few months of their admission in kindergarten using an assessment or assessments such as a Kindergarten Entry Assessment, to achieve the purposes for which the assessment was developed and that conform with the recommendations of the National Research Council report on early childhood assessments. (12 points)*

Connecticut has joined a multi-state consortium supported by federal funds, to develop a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA), aligned to Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards, addressing all essential domains of school readiness. Information from this assessment system will inform communities and schools as they prioritize resources and plan improvement efforts in State Preschool Programs.

In 2013, Connecticut joined a consortium of seven states to develop a new Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) system, which will be aligned to our new ELDS and to the Common Core State Standards. This consortium is led by Maryland serves as fiduciary for the Enhanced Assessment Grant to support this work. The Consortium is collaborating on the development of a joint KEA, based upon a prior version developed by two of the member states through their RTT-ELC grants (Maryland and Ohio). This new KEA will be an improvement over Connecticut's current Kindergarten Entry Inventory due to the multiple means of administration, the use of technology and targeted professional development. This tool will provide information on each child's learning and development across the essential domains of school readiness (Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Fine Arts and Physical Development.) This information will lead to better instruction and more informed decision-making which will lead to more effective strategies to reduce achievement gaps.

Several guiding partners are supporting the Consortium. WestEd's Assessment and Standards Development Services program is providing project management services. As partnering organizations to the Consortium, Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education is assisting with technology and professional development and the University of Connecticut's Measurement, Evaluation, and Assessment program (UConn MEA; assisting with research) will work closely with the WestEd staff. In addition, the Council of Chief State School Officers is facilitating annual meetings of a technical advisory committee consisting of 12 national experts in child development and assessment. Representatives from each Consortium State, WestEd, Johns Hopkins University Center for Technology in Education, and UConn MEA will form the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, under the advisement of the Technical Advisory Committee will make decisions regarding the development process.

The purpose of the new KEA is to provide information to stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels about how prepared children are for kindergarten.

- *Student Results*. Families and teachers will learn about each student's skills, learning, and developmental needs, so that they can identify strengths and

weaknesses of each student, resulting in individualized plans of instruction and any necessary interventions.

- *Group Results*. School, local district, and state leaders will earn about students' levels of preparedness for kindergarten, which will facilitate programmatic decision-making at the school, district, and state levels.

The KEA will not be designed as a tool for teacher evaluation, program evaluation, or to determine an individual child's eligibility for kindergarten.

KEA Administration

The new KEA will be administered by trained teachers in the first eight weeks of school. While Connecticut's current Kindergarten Entry Inventory relies solely upon teacher's global ratings, the new instrument will use multiple methods of assessment, including items where students are asked to select the appropriate response (selected-response items), performance tasks, and observational rubrics that are consistent with nationally recognized technical standards, research, and best practices to assess all children upon entry to kindergarten. Reporting will be available online for teachers, administrators, early-childhood educators, and families as well as for export to Connecticut's longitudinal data system.

Teacher Training for Reliability

Comprehensive teacher training will also help ensure valid and reliable KEA data. Training, developed by John Hopkins University in collaboration with the Consortium, will be available online and will allow individuals to work through the materials at their own pace. KEA performance tasks will have well-defined rubrics that clearly differentiate student performance by score point. The observational rubrics will be further supplemented with anchor papers that exemplify each of the score points. In addition, training sets will provide supplementary support for the application of the rubrics to student work. The training materials will also include examples of student work that does not clearly align to the anchors to support teachers in scoring the full range of student work. Before teachers are allowed to score operational student work, they must demonstrate their ability to accurately score student work by achieving a level of

accuracy (to be determined) in which adjacent, but not discrepant, scores will be allowed. The industry standard is a minimum of 80 percent exact agreement, but this standard will be vetted with the TAC before implementation.

Technical Assistance

The Consortium offers access to high-quality technical assistance including training on the administration of the KEA and the use of the resulting data. Opportunities for early childhood educators and administrators to share instructional resources and to develop a shared knowledge base will be incorporated in the new KEA through an engaging professional learning community that integrates features of popular social-media tools. The enhanced learning community will incorporate features of social-networking services, in order for individuals to easily post, collect, and organize resources and ideas as well as to "follow" individuals and topics. The resources will be tagged and then recommended to teachers based on their personal profiles and their interests and needs.

Valid decisions for all students

Validity evidence will be based on the Joint Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, & NCME, 1999). Validity evidence within the Standards is characterized by validity evidence based on: test content, internal structure, response processes, and test consequences.

Implementation Plan

The Office of Early Childhood, in collaboration with the Department of Education, will build a network of district and regional educators to serve as Kindergarten Entry Coordinators. These coordinators will facilitate the ongoing training of kindergarten teachers utilizing the technical assistance developed by John Hopkins University. In addition, the coordinators will oversee district and regional administration and data submission to the Department of Education.

The Office of Early Childhood has established a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Education to coordinate implementation of the new KEA. The agreement between these agencies specifies the responsibilities to sustain the work of the KEA:

- Maintain administration of KEA data collection
- Include KEA data in the State Longitudinal Data System
- Maintain portal to share results of KEA
- Provide technical assistance to coordinators on KEA administration and any modifications
- Provide periodic recalibration and training for coordinators

AMBITIOUS AND ACHIEVABLE PLAN: SECTION C

Key Goal

To ensure program quality in preschool programs.

Key Activities & Rationale

To achieve the key goal of the plan, the state is committed to the following key activities:

KEY ACTIVITY 1: Hire a family engagement/community outreach specialist using no more than five percent of grant funds for State Preschool Program infrastructure and quality improvements at the state level. This full-time State employee will be responsible for designing and overseeing implementation of culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement strategies at the community level and to work with high-need communities to forge a seamless birth-through-third-grade continuum. The rationale for hiring a family engagement/community outreach specialist is that Connecticut recognizes it must improve its family engagement practices at the state and local level, as well as ensure high-need communities have seamless transitions along the birth-through-third-grade continuum, if it is to achieve its goal of providing high-quality preschool to children.

Timeline: July – September 2015

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood Quality Rating and Improvement Manager

Supporting Evidence: See Appendix #9 – Family Engagement/Community Outreach Specialist

Performance Measures: New staff hired

KEY ACTIVITY 2: Hire a grant accountability and reporting coordinator using no more than five percent of grant funds for State Preschool Program infrastructure and quality improvements at the state level. This full-time State employee will be responsible for coordinating the efforts of local school readiness liaisons, coordinating professional development for Subgrantees and their early learning providers, and for all monitoring, supervision, data collection, accountability, and federal reporting under this grant.

One full-time employee is needed to effectively coordinate all professional development efforts as well as adequately monitor the program for all matters of accountability.

Timeline: July – September 2015

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood Quality Rating and Improvement Manager

Supporting Evidence: See Appendix #10 –Grant Accountability and Reporting Coordinator

Performance Measures: New staff hired

KEY ACTIVITY 3: Train 36 school readiness liaisons and early learning program administrators in the selected high-need communities on the use of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and attend the CLASS Observation Training program. Five of the 36 people trained will then go on to attend the CLASS Train-the-Trainer program to ensure that all teachers in the Subgrantee early learning programs can receive CLASS training. The CLASS is widely used in other states both as a tool to measure the quality of teacher-child interactions and to guide teachers as they work to improve their interactions with children. We know from years of research that quality teacher-child interactions lead to improved child outcomes. The rationale for using no more than five percent of grant funds for State Preschool Program infrastructure and quality improvements at the state level toward CLASS training is that it will allow Connecticut to support teachers to improve their teacher-child interactions and their instructional practices.

Timeline: August 2015 – Two-day CLASS Observation Training;
August 2016 – Three-day CLASS Train-the-Trainer program

Party or Parties Responsible: School readiness liaisons and early learning program administrators in selected high-need communities

Supporting Evidence: n/a

Performance Measures: School readiness liaisons and early learning program administrators receive CLASS Observer Certification and/or CLASS Train-the-Trainer Certification.

KEY ACTIVITY 4: Select a contractor to conduct third-party evaluations of child outcomes. The evaluation will include pre- and post-assessment of eligible children's development in the expansion and improved slots as well as pre- and post- assessment of children in existing, unimproved, State Preschool Slots. We will use the evaluation to answer the question of whether eligible children in the expansion or improved spaces made more gains across those developmental domains than the eligible children in the existing State Preschool spaces.

Timeline: September 2015 – June 2019

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood staff member hired as monitoring and accountability coordinator, Office of Early Childhood QRIS Manager, school readiness liaisons in the 14 selected communities.

Supporting Evidence: RFP issued, contractor selected, report submitted on results of pre- and post assessments and mid-year observation completed each year.

Performance Measures: Eligible children in high-quality State Preschool Programs funded under this grant make more developmental progress than their peers in state-funded State Preschool Programs.

KEY ACTIVITY 5: Create a new State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) manager to ensure that children are not issued multiple identifiers by community and public school programs. The new SASID manager will issue unique identifiers for all young children in State Preschool Programs, which will increase accuracy when tracking outcomes of children from preschool through secondary school.

Timeline: In process now. Schedule to be completed December 2014.

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood and State Department of Education

Supporting Evidence: n/a

Performance Measures: Unique SASIDs issued for all children in State Preschool Programs.

KEY ACTIVITY 6: Convene a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Team made up of school readiness liaisons and representatives from parent advisory committees from each of the Subgrantees. Regular CQI team meetings will result in changes in policies and practice in pursuit of the continuous improvement of our high-quality State Preschool Programs.

Timeline: Ongoing September 2015 – August 2019

Party or Parties Responsible: Grant Accountability and Reporting Coordinator and school readiness liaisons

Supporting Evidence: n/a

Performance Measures: Improved policies and changes leading to higher quality of our State Preschool Programs

KEY ACTIVITY 7: Implement Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA). The Office of Early Childhood will continue to work with University of Connecticut and the Education Assessment Grant (EAG) consortium in the development of KEA 2.0. A field test will be conducted in chosen communities and census administration of KEA in Fall 2016. The purpose of the new KEA is to provide information to stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels about how prepared children are for kindergarten. Families and teachers will learn about each student's skills, learning, and developmental needs, so that they can identify strengths and weaknesses of each student, resulting in individualized plans of instruction and any necessary interventions. School, local district, and state leaders will earn about students' levels of preparedness for kindergarten, which will facilitate programmatic decision-making at the school, district, and state levels. The KEA will not be designed as a tool for teacher evaluation, program evaluation, or to determine an individual child's eligibility for kindergarten.

Timeline: September 2015 – Field Test; Fall 2016 – Census administration

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood, University of Connecticut, State Department of Education and EAG Consortium

Supporting Evidence: n/a

Performance Measures: Census administration of KEA in Fall 2016

Financial Resources

In-kind: State salaries and fringe of OEC staff assigned to key activities 1 through 7.

State bond funds for Early Childhood Information System

State funds for University of Connecticut work on KEA

Grant funding: 20 percent of salary and fringe of OEC accountability and reporting coordinator: $33,917 (year one) and $35,081 (year 2); $36,246 (year 3); and $37,409 (year 4). Total $142,653

CLASS Training: $42,400

Third-party evaluation contractor: $328,076 (year 1); $178,251 (year 2); $189,444 (year 3); and $177,820 (year 4). Total is $873,591.

Needs of Eligible Children

High-Need Children: The Office of Early Childhood will address the needs of all eligible children under this grant in the following ways:

1. 10-hour days and year-round programming for over 60 percent of eligible children to meet families' needs and to offer a higher dosage of enrichment activities and prevent summer learning loss;
2. Transportation will be provided in those communities that indicated it was necessary to reach isolated families;

3. Comprehensive services for early identification of remediable health or development concerns; and
4. Availability of the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, a nationally-recognized statewide consultation model for early childhood mental health prevention and intervention.

Homeless children: The Early Childhood Cabinet will concentrate on homeless families with young children this coming year, attempting to focus the efforts of multiple agencies around this very vulnerable population. Particular focus will be on ensuring that these children have access to high-quality preschool. This area of concern was identified through discussions with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. To move this effort forward, the Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood has met with nonprofit housing organizations to discuss the specific needs of homeless families with young children. The Commissioner is also an Advisory Committee Member of Secure Jobs, a two-year demonstration pilot designed to increase the income of families transitioning from homelessness to housing by connecting them to the education, training and supports, including early care and education, the need to secure and maintain stable, competitive employment.

In recent years, Connecticut's early childhood programs have made conscientious efforts in outreach to homeless families and families at-risk of homelessness. Collaborative work continues through communities, homeless shelters and transitional housing staff, the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), United Way of Connecticut, Care 4 Kids (Child Care Subsidy Program), Office of Early Childhood, Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the state Departments of Housing, Social Services, Office of Early Childhood, and Children and Families, to provide early care and education opportunities to homeless children, in ways to allow for consistent, safe and comprehensive care.

In Connecticut, during Fiscal Year 2013, the CCEH Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) had an unduplicated count of 1,113 children, ages birth to five years, served by Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing programs. Of the 14 Subgrantee communities represented in this grant proposal, five have shelters that served 21 percent of this population, as reported in HMIS. The five communities are Bridgeport, Killingly, Shelton, Torrington and

Vernon. Please note that children in shelters represent only a percentage of homeless children in the state. Many homeless families double-up with friends and relatives, find other temporary shelter, or live on the streets.

The impact of homelessness on a child's success in school and in life may be devastating. By providing high-quality preschool education to children, we establish a consistent place to learn and thrive and help support the child and their family in preschool and through the transition to kindergarten through third grade.

Children in child welfare: The Office of Early Childhood will collaborate with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families to develop a plan to identify children in foster care who currently are not enrolled in high-quality preschool and make sure they are enrolled a high-quality State Preschool Program or Head Start program, pursuant to Special Act 14-22. Currently there is no mechanism in place to ensure that all foster children in Connecticut are enrolled in a high-quality preschool. This plan will create that mechanism.

Dual language learners: The Office of Early Childhood is working with the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Training and Research (UCEDD) to focus on the use of the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners. UCEDD will focus groups and a survey with home-based and center-based preschool programs to gain feedback about what would be most helpful to providers and parents to aid them in using the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners.

Children with disabilities and delays: Statutory and budgetary authority for part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA will move from the State Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services, respectively, to the Office of Early Childhood July 2015 to better align and coordinate policies, programs and services for children with disabilities and delays with all the policies, programs and services for young children in Connecticut managed by the Office of Early Childhood, including home visiting and State Preschool Programs.

D. **<u>Expanding High-Quality Preschool Programs in Each High-Need Community (60 points)</u>**

(1) *The State has selected each Subgrantee and each High-Need Community that will be served, including a description of each High-Need Community and its geographic diversity, such as whether the community is located in a rural or tribal area and whether it is located in a federally designated Promise Zone.*

Connecticut has selected 14 High-Need Communities for this grant. In Connecticut we define High-Need Communities as those communities:

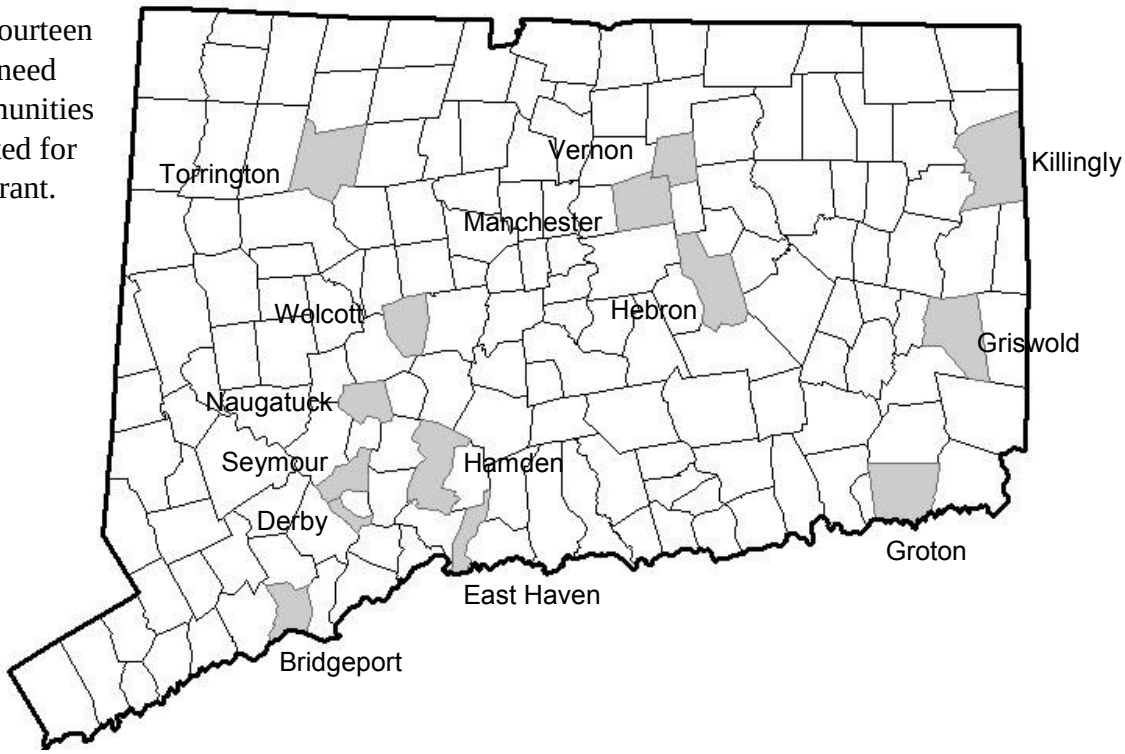
(a) with the highest rates of students receiving Free or Reduced School Meals, lowest rates of maternal education, and lowest student state mastery test scores. The school readiness councils in these 19 "Priority Communities" now receive 86 percent of the funding that supports 13,935 three- and four-year-olds; or

(b) are either among the 50 poorest towns in the state and or who operate one or more schools in which at least 40 percent of the students are eligible for Free and Reduced School Meals and are labeled "Competitive" Communities.

We began by looking at all of the "competitive communities" and narrowed our initial search to 21 of them before finally settling on 13. We also chose to look at our priority communities (the 19 poorest cities or towns) and began with three of them before ultimately selecting Bridgeport – our largest city based on their need for more State Preschool spaces than we could offer during the Fiscal Year 2015 expansion of the State Preschool Program. (See D (3) for a description of the selection process.)

In each community, the local school readiness council will be the Subgrantee. The fiduciary organization for each council (a municipality, a school district or a Regional Educational Service Center will be the actual recipient of the funding. While none of these communities is located in a tribal area or federally designated Promise Zone and none of them meet the definition of rural, we made a conscious effort to include communities that cover six of Connecticut's seven counties.

The fourteen high-need communities selected for this grant.



(2) *Each High-Need Community is currently underserved, including number and percentage of four-year-olds in State Preschool Programs and other publically funded preschool programs.*

The data below represents all four-year-olds in publicly-funded preschool programs in these selected communities.

Four-Year-Olds in Selected High-Need Communities

Community	In State Preschool Programs	In Head Start Programs	In Preschool Special Ed. Programs	% of four-year-olds in Publicly Funded Preschool Programs
Bridgeport	965	527	111	71%
Derby	35	30	10	56%
East Haven	23	0	18	14%
Griswold	28	0	9	31%
Groton	51	0	26	13%
Hamden	49	122	35	32%
Hebron	10	0	*	21%
Killingly	47	18	12	41%
Manchester	48	64	16	15%
Naugatuck	45	66	17	34%
Seymour	8	0	6	9%
Torrington	48	140	34	58%
Vernon	65	47	14	37%
Wolcott	12	0	*	13%
Total	1,435	1,014	317	43%

*Suppressed cell size less than 6. Suppressed numbers are included in totals and percentages.

Each community is further described in the following profiles that display data that we reviewed in making our selections. As the profiles depict, the communities vary in size as well as diversity but all represent high-need communities as defined by this grant. Connecticut defines an underserved community as one with a significant number of three- and four-year-olds without access to high-quality State Preschool Programs. This number is reflected in the following series of high-need community profiles as "Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014."

The data sources used in the profiles are listed on the page following the last profile.

Bridgeport

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ Fairfield County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) I** [1]
- ☑ Ranks **166th** by Wealth[2]
- ☑ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	75	0.36%
Asian American	577	2.79%
Black	7,774	37.54%
White	2,091	10.10%
Hispanic	10,081	48.68%
Pacific-Islander	21	0.10%
Two or more races	91	0.44%
Total Students Enrolled	**20,710**	**100%**

Demographics	Bridgeport	Connecticut
Total Population, 2013[3]	147,216	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[4]	$19,743	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[5]	25.0%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[6]	7.4%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	4,374	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (MIECHV & Nurturing Families)
- Early Head Start & Head Start
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14) [9]	**1,629**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**1,070**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Bridgeport	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2008-2012[11]	**23.6%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**62.2%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**1,406**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) [14]	**2,261**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**40.8%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**12.8%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**541**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs [18]	**4.8%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**12.8%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma 2008-12[20]	**26.1%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[21]	**$39,822**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**10.6%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**2,085**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**28,358**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**100%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English[26]	**13.8%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14 [27]	**1,853**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**62.5%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment [29]	**0.4%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13.[30]	**21.3%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Derby

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ New Haven County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) H**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **149th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	-	0%
Asian American	33	2.2%
Black	236	15.74%
White	811	54.10%
Hispanic	368	24.55%
Pacific-Islander	7	0.47%
Two or more races	44	2.94%
Total Students Enrolled	**1,499**	**100%**

Demographics	Derby	Connecticut
Total Population, 2013[3]	12,801	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[4]	$26,797	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[5]	21.0%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[6]	6.2%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	261	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (MIECHV & Nurturing Families)
- Head Start
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14) [9]	**58**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**103**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Derby	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2008-2012[11]	**13.3%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**41.0%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**55**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) [14]	**134**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**14.5%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**0.6%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**28**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**7.6%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**12.9%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma, 2008-2012[20]	**14.0%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[21]	**$54,561**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**8.3%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**110**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**1,397**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**53.2%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English[26]	**6.6%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14 [27]	**122**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**59.1%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment [29]	**0.0%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13.[30]	**46.4%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

East Haven

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ New Haven County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) G** [1]
- ☑ Ranks **141st** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	*	*
Asian American	136	4.45%
Black	94	3.08%
White	2,120	69.39%
Hispanic	652	21.34%
Pacific-Islander	*	*
Two or more races	45	1.47%
Total Students Enrolled	**3,055**	**99.74%**

Demographics	East Haven	Connecticut
Total Population, 2010[3]	29,257	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[4]	$30,618	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[5]	22.9%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[6]	5.7%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	524	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (MIECHV & Nurturing Families)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14) [9]	**39**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**209**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	East Haven	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2008-2012[11]	**9.3%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**33.0%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**93**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) [14]	**283**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**13.5%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**2.6%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**62**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**4.9%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**12.9%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma 2008-12[20]	**11.9%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[21]	**$63,574**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**7.4%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**152**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**2,432**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**43.9%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**6.6%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14 [27]	**227**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**63.8%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment [29]	**0.0%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**39.5%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Griswold

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ New London County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) F**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **151st** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	*	*
Asian American	31	1.58%
Black	58	2.95%
White	1,644	83.66%
Hispanic	107	5.45%
Pacific-Islander	*	*
Two or more races	101	5.14%
Total Students Enrolled	**1,965**	**98.78%**

Demographics	Griswold	Connecticut
Total Population[37]	11,907	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[33]	21,196	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[38]	21.0%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[39]	6.5%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	230	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (MIECHV & Nurturing Families)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**47**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**44**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Griswold	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2011[34]	**7.9%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**23.4%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**28**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**118**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**2.5%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**0.0%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**33**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**8.4%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**14.2%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma, 2000[31]	**17.3%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[34]	**$66,303**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**7.1%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**53**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**1,160**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**31.2%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English[26]	**0.9%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**148**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**91.0%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.4%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**50.9%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Groton

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ New London County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) G**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **107th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	45	0.97%
Asian American	296	6.36%
Black	475	10.20%
White	2,710	58.19%
Hispanic	832	17.87%
Pacific-Islander	11	0.24%
Two or more races	288	6.18%
Total Students Enrolled	**4,657**	**100%**

Demographics	Groton	Connecticut
Total Population, 2013[3]	9,348	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[4]	$30,243	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[5]	21.6%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[6]	7.4%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	1,221	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (Nurturing Families Network)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**86**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**133**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Groton	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2008-2012[11]	**12.7%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**31.0%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**184**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**592**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**7.7%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**2.5%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**143**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**4.4%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**15.0%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma[20]	**12.2%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[21]	**$51,833**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**7.8%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**239**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**2,594**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**42.6%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**2.3%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**458**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**71.7%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.3%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**54.8%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Hamden

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ New Haven County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) G**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **116th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	*	*
Asian American	466	8.11%
Black	1,686	29.35%
White	2,388	41.57%
Hispanic	968	16.85%
Pacific-Islander	*	*
Two or more races	227	3.95%
Total Students Enrolled	**5,745**	**99.83%**

Demographics	Hamden	Connecticut
Total Population[37]	60,735	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[33]	$26,039	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[38]	19.3%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[39]	5.2%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	1,247	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (Nurturing Families Network)
- Early Head Start & Head Start
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**82**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**327**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Hamden	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2011[34]	**7.7%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**24.7%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**157**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**637**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**14.7%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**2.4%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**134**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**4.7%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**13.1%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma, 2000[31]	**11.0%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2011[35]	**$67,955**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**6.9%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**341**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**3,964**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**40.1%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**4.4%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**420**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**78.6%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.1%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**52.9%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Hebron

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ Tolland County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) C**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **115th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☐ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	*	*
Asian American	14	1.61%
Black	*	*
White	796	91.81%
Hispanic	35	4.04%
Pacific-Islander	0	0%
Two or more races	17	1.96%
Total Students Enrolled	**867**	**99.42%**

Demographics	Hebron	Connecticut
Total Population[37]	9,649	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[33]	$30,797	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[38]	27.6%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[39]	5.7%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	134	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (Nurturing Families Network)
- Early Head Start & Head Start
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**18**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**88**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Hebron	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2011[36]	**2.3%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**5.1%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**4**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**72**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**0.8%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**0.0%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**18**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**9.8%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**11.3%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma, 2000[31]	**N/A**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2011[35]	**$107,807**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**5.3%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**17**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**319**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**6.2%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English[26]	**0.1%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**88**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**98.9%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.0%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**77.5%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Killingly

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ Windham County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) G**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **154th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	23	0.87%
Asian American	66	2.50%
Black	58	2.20%
White	2,210	83.68%
Hispanic	150	5.68%
Pacific-Islander	0	0.0%
Two or more races	134	5.07%
Total Students Enrolled	**2,641**	**100%**

Demographics	Killingly	Connecticut
Total Population[37]	17,345	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[33]	$19,779	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[38]	21.7%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[39]	5.3%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	378	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (MIECHV & Nurturing Families)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**79**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**73**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Killingly	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2008-2012[11]	**10.3%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**27.3%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**51**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**187**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**4.4%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**0.0%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**61**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**6.5%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**15.9%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma, 2000[31]	**25.8%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[35]	**$54,446**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**8.5%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**134**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**1,864**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**42.6%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**2.2%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**161**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**60.9%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**1.8%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**53.9%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Manchester

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ Hartford County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) G**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **133rd** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	*	*
Asian American	507	8.16%
Black	1,364	21.96%
White	2,505	40.34%
Hispanic	1,537	24.75%
Pacific-Islander	*	*
Two or more races	271	4.36%
Total Students Enrolled	**6,210**	**99.95%**

Demographics	Manchester	Connecticut
Total Population, 2010[3]	30,577	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[4]	$29,533	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[5]	21.9%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[6]	6.0%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	1,566	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (Nurturing Families Network)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**80**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces[40]	**178**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Manchester	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2008-2012[11]	**9.9%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**35.4%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**290**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**818**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**14.0%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**2.3%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**190**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**3.0%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**12.7%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma 2008-12[20]	**10.8%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[21]	**$55,426**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**6.8%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**519**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**5,950**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**54.2%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**5.4%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**564**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**72.1%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.0%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**46.4%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Naugatuck

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ New Haven County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) G**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **157th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	6	0.14%
Asian American	135	3.11%
Black	314	7.23%
White	2,845	65.49%
Hispanic	845	19.45%
Pacific-Islander	6	0.14%
Two or more races	193	4.44%
Total Students Enrolled	**4,344**	**100%**

Demographics	Naugatuck	Connecticut
Total Population, 2013[3]	31,707	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[4]	29,789	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[5]	23.2%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[6]	5.9%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	739	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (Nurturing Families Network)
- Head Start
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**76**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**193**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Naugatuck	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2008-2012[11]	**8.6%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**26.2%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**100**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**380**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**12.5%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**1.0%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**81**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**4.8%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**13.4%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma 2008-12[20]	**12.9%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[21]	**$62,574**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**8.2%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**198**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**3,210**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**46.0%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**4.3%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**314**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**65.7%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.0%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**43.3%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Seymour

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ New Haven County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) F** [1]
- ☑ Ranks **127th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☐ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	*	*
Asian American	84	3.66%
Black	98	4.27%
White	1,855	80.79%
Hispanic	232	10.10%
Pacific-Islander	*	*
Two or more races	22	0.96%
Total Students Enrolled	**2,296**	**99.79%**

Demographics	Seymour	Connecticut
Total Population[37]	16,487	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[33]	$24,056	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[38]	21.9%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[39]	4.5%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	294	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (Nurturing Families Network)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14) [9]	**13**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**137**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Seymour	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2011[35]	**5.2%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**13.2%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**20**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) [14]	**149**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**8.2%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**0.6%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**36**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs [18]	**3.5%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**10.8%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma, 2000[31]	**15.3%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2011[35]	**$75,482**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**7.0%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**9**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**1,119**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**26.1%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**2.7%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**184**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**83.9%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment [29]	**0.2%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**45.6%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Torrington

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ Litchfield County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) G**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **152nd** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	10	0.23%
Asian American	145	3.4%
Black	180	4.23%
White	2,928	68.73%
Hispanic	859	20.16%
Pacific-Islander	7	0.16%
Two or more races	131	3.08%
Total Students Enrolled	**4,260**	**100%**

Demographics	Torrington	Connecticut
Total Population, 2013[3]	35,611	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[4]	$27,762	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[5]	21.1%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[6]	5.7%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	753	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (MIECHV & Nurturing Families)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**81**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**204**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Torrington	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2008-2012[11]	**11.2%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**33.1%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**126**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**381**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**17.1%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**3.2%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**103**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**6.3%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**16.4%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma 2008-12[20]	**13.8%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2008-2012[21]	**$50,548**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**7.4%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**221**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**3,825**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**46.9%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**7.2%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**346**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**76.7%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.9%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**59.8%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Vernon

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ Tolland County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) G**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **144th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☑ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	8	0.24%
Asian American	169	5.09%
Black	426	12.83%
White	2,225	67.00%
Hispanic	421	12.68%
Pacific-Islander	0	0%
Two or more races	72	2.17%
Total Students Enrolled	**3,321**	**100%**

Demographics	Vernon	Connecticut
Total Population[37]	29,188	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[33]	$25,150	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[38]	17.9%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[39]	5.5%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	687	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (MIECHV & Nurturing Families)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Family Resource Center
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9] **108**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10] **163**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Vernon	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2011[36]	**8.5%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**29.5%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**99**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**337**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**6.0%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**2.8%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**94**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**4.6%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**13.5%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School Diploma, 2000[31]	**15.1%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2011[35]	**$62,115**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**7.0%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**234**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**2,553**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**36.6%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**2.1%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**257**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**82.0%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.5%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**50.0%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

Wolcott

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

- ☑ New Haven County
- ☑ School District Reference Group **(DRG) F**[1]
- ☑ Ranks **126th** by Wealth[2]
- ☐ Priority School District
- ☑ School Readiness Council & Liaison
- ☐ Discovery Initiative Community

School District Student Race/Ethnicity 2013-14[8]	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	*	*
Asian American	45	1.81%
Black	51	2.05%
White	2,141	86.23%
Hispanic	166	6.69%
Pacific-Islander	*	*
Two or more races	79	3.18%
Total Students Enrolled	**2,483**	**99.96%**

Demographics	Wolcott	Connecticut
Total Population[37]	16,638	3,596,080
Per Capita Income[33]	$25,018	$37,807
Persons under Age 18[38]	22.5%	22.9%
Children under Age 5[39]	3.3%	5.7%
Children Ages 3&4[7]	233	73,496

COMMUNITY ASSETS AND SERVICES

- Birth to Three (IDEA Part C)
- Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, §619)
- Help Me Grow & Child Development Infoline
- Home Visiting (Nurturing Families Network)
- Care4Kids Child Care Subsidy
- HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP)
- SNAP – Supplemental Nutrition
- Temporary Family (Cash) Assistance
- Women Infants and Children (WIC)

State Preschool Spaces (ages 3&4, Sep'14)[9]	**20**
Unmet Need for Preschool Spaces, 2014[10]	**90**

Characteristics and Risk Factors	Wolcott	Connecticut
Persons below federal poverty level (FPL), 2011[36]	**3.3%**	**10.0%**
Children living in families with incomes below 200% of the FPL[12]	**10.6%**	**27.7%**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth) in Families w /Income <200% FPL[13]	**13**	**12,188**
4 Year Olds in 2015 (2011 Birth)[14]	**121**	**37,272**
Students in homes where the primary language is not English[15]	**5.8%**	**21.2%**
Children 5-17 in Non-English Speaking Households, 2008-2012[16]	**1.8%**	**4.2%**
Children Served by CT's Birth to Three System (IDEA Part C) in SFY 2013[17]	**27**	**9,345**
Children Served by Preschool Special Education (IDEA, Part B, §619) and related services in pre-k through local education orgs[18]	**2.9%**	**4,447 (5.6%)**
Overall Special Education Prevalence 2013-14 (CSDE) data.ct.gov[19]	**8.8%**	**12.4%**
Percent of Adults (Age 25+) without a High School, 2000[31]	**13.2%**	**11.0%**
Median Household Income, 2011[35]	**$80,529**	**$69,519**
Unemployment Rate, May 2014[22]	**6.7%**	**6.9%**
Children in Families Receiving Care4Kids Child Care Assistance April, 2014[23]	**41**	**20,896**
Children Enrolled in HUSKY (Medicaid & SCHIP) July 2014[24]	**836**	**310,593**

Indicators of Educational Need	School District	Connecticut
School children eligible for free or reduced priced meals '12-13 (185% FPL)[25]	**21.6%**	**33.7%**
K-12 Students who are Not Fluent in English.[26]	**1.4%**	**5.8%**
Children Enrolled in Kindergarten 2013-14[27]	**126**	**38,219**
Children Enter Kindergarten with Preschool Experience[28]	**69.5%**	**79.3%**
Homeless - % of Public School Enrollment[29]	**0.0%**	**0.3%**
3rd Grader demonstrate Reading proficiency at on the Connecticut Mastery Test, CMT, 4th Generation, % Goal, 2012-13[30]	**75.5%**	**56.9%**

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, October 2014

ENDNOTES – COMMUNITY PROFILES

[1] Connecticut State Department of Education, 2014
[2] Connecticut State Department of Education, www.sde.ct.gov
[3] U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), September 18, 2014 release
[4] U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), September 18, 2014 release
[5] U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), September 18, 2014 release
[6] U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), 2008-2012 & Sept 2014 release
[7] Connecticut Department of Public Health, Registration Report, Births, 2011 & 2012
[8] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[9] Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, School Readiness+Child Day Care Slot Grids, 2014-15
[10] Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, School Readiness Draft Study, August 2014
[11] U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), 2014
[12] Connecticut Voices for Children, August, 2014 – Source: U.S. Census ACS, 2008-12 Est.
[13] Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, Est. Births 2011 (DPH) x 200% FPL (CT Voices)
[14] Connecticut Department of Public Health, Registration Report, 2011
[15] State Dept. of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13 & U.S. Census for State 21.2%
[16] Connecticut Voices for Children, 2014 Source: U.S. Census ACS, 2008-12 Est.
[17] Connecticut Birth to Three System, Annual Report, 2013
[18] CT State Department of Education, Special Education Application and Collection, Oct. 1, 2012. The Office of Early Childhood calculated the percent from the SEDAC # of 3 & 4 yr. old students with disabilities in Pre-K, divided by 2008 + 2009 Births, by Residence (DPH).
[19] Connecticut State Department of Education, www.data.ct.gov, 2014
[20] U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), September 18, 2014 release
[21] U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), 2014
[22] Connecticut Voices for Children, August, 2014 – Source: CT Department of Labor
[23] Connecticut Voices for Children, August, 2014 - Source: CT Department of Social Services
[24] Connecticut Voices for Children, August, 2014 - Source: CT Department of Social Services
[25] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[26] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[27] Connecticut State Department of Education, 2014
[28] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[29] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[30] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[31] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[32] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[33] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[34] Connecticut State Department of Education, Strategic School Profiles, 2012-13
[35] CERC Town Profile, 2013 for Town #s & U.S. Census ACS, 9/18/14 release for State #s
[36] CERC Town Profile, 2013 for Town #s & U.S. Census ACS, 9/18/14 release for State #s
[37] U.S. Census, ACS, 2008-2012 for Town #s & U.S. Census ACS, 9/18/14 release for State #s
[38] U.S. Census, ACS, 2008-2012 for Town #s & U.S. Census ACS, 9/18/14 release for State #s
[39] U.S. Census, ACS, 2008-2012 for Town #s & U.S. Census ACS, 9/18/14 release for State #s
[40] Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, Estimate of Unmet Need - Manchester calculated as 2011 Births x 35.4%, < 200%FPL, less 60% (represent 4 yr. olds) of SR, CDC & HS Pre-K.

* Suppressed cell size less than 6

(3) *The State conducted outreach, including consultation with tribes if applicable, to potential Subgrantees and the process used in selecting each Subgrantee.*

Connecticut considered the following elements when deciding which high-need communities, across Connecticut's 49 competitive communities and 19 priority communities, would be best suited for this grant:

- served by a MIECHV home visiting program because it was identified in a 2010 Title V community need survey as an at-risk community without many resources;
- served by a state home-visiting program focused on abuse prevention;
- homeless population;
- percentage of IDEA Part C and Part B Section 619 enrollment;
- offered full-day kindergarten to all age-eligible children;
- demonstrated an unmet need for additional State Preschool Program spaces, using information from a Fiscal Year 2014 unmet needs report completed by the OEC and information gathered when we were expanding spaces by 1,020 in Spring 2014.

We began with 24 potential Subgrantees – 21 Competitive and 3 Priority Communities. Information was sent to each school readiness liaison with a description of the grant and the requirements for funding. Phone calls were conducted the week of September 8, 2014. We asked each community to consider the number of expansion and improved spaces that they could develop for the 2015-2016 school year. The key decisions to be made by the communities we spoke with were: 1) did they have any physical space available in their town that would be suitable for expansion; 2) how they would handle personnel or collective bargaining issues when some preschool teachers are paid more than others for doing the same job; 3) would the teacher qualification requirements of a BA in 2015 (which exceeds the state's requirements of 50 percent by 2015 and 100 percent by 2020) cause them to terminate or demote staff in classrooms with improved spaces?

All but four of the 24 communities gave us preliminary numbers. We then met with the school readiness liaisons to give them more information on Connecticut's ambitious but achievable plan for this grant. We allowed them another week to send us more specific

information and provide a letter of support that would serve as a preliminary Memorandum of Understanding. We conducted two conference calls on September 26 and 29 so that other interested stakeholders in each community could receive the latest information on our plan for this grant and ask questions. As a result of many conversations among stakeholders in the targeted communities and many e-mails and phone calls to the Office of Early Childhood, six communities decided that the grant is not a good fit for them. Our final number of high-need communities is 14. We are confident that our Subgrantees will be able to serve the targeted number of children listed in the Table in D(4) and, in addition to being able to expand State Preschool spaces by 428 and improve 284 existing spaces, we see this as a tremendous opportunity for the state to pilot and evaluate those elements of quality such as comprehensive services, teacher compensation, and high-quality professional development. See Appendix #11 – Subgrantee Letters of Support.

(4) *The State will subgrant at least 95 percent of the Federal grant award to its Subgrantees to implement and sustain voluntary, High-Quality Preschool Programs in two or more High-Need Communities and -*

(a) *Set ambitious and achievable annual targets for the number and percentage of additional Eligible Children to be served during each year of the grant period; and*

(b) *Incorporate in their plan;*

(i) *Ambitious expansion of the number of new slots in State Preschool Programs that meet the definition of High—Quality Preschool Program; and*

(ii) *Ambitious improvement of existing State Preschool Program slots to bring them to the level of a High-Quality Preschool Program by extending programs from half-day to Full-day, limiting class size and decreasing child to staff ratios; employing and compensating a teacher with a bachelor's degree; or providing Comprehensive Services.*

The 14 high-need communities, represented by their school readiness council Subgrantee, have committed to expansion and improvement (or both) during each year of the grant period as listed in Table D(4) and Table A in the Excel spreadsheet.

The table below not only reflects the expansion and improvement numbers, but includes the types of improvements that will be made to existing State Preschool Program spaces. Most communities will need to increase teacher compensation, all will need to expand comprehensive services to meet the definition of the grant, all will enhance their professional development, and five will increase part-time State Preschool Slots to full-day (minimum 6 hours)/school year. Class size and child to staff ratios already meet (or exceed) the requirements of the grant and therefore, no improvements are needed in those areas.

Targets for each year of the Preschool Development Grant

	Eligible Children to be served each year of the grant		**Percent increase of State Preschool Program Spaces**		**Types of Improvements** (for improved spaces only)			
Community	**Expansion spaces**	**Improved spaces**	**Of four-year-olds only***	**Of three- and four-year olds***	**Teacher Comp.**	**More Hours**	**Comp. Services**	**Prof Dev.**
Bridgeport	180	90	35%	17%	√	√	√	√
Derby	17	18	126%	60%	√		√	√
East Haven	18	18	192%	92%	√		√	√
Griswold	12	21	146%	70%	√	√	√	√
Groton	0	15	36%	17%	√		√	√
Hamden	18	0	46%	22%	**NA**	NA	**NA**	**NA**
Hebron	9	9	208%	100%			√	√
Killingly	18	18	95%	46%		√	√	√
Manchester	36	20	146%	70%	√		√	√
Naugatuck	43	0	118%	57%	**NA**	NA	**NA**	**NA**
Seymour	5	13	288%	138%	√		√	√
Torrington	42	38	206%	99%	√	√	√	√
Vernon	21	15	69%	33%	√	√	√	√
Wolcott	9	9	188%	90%	√		√	√
Totals	428	284	58%	28%				

*Total number of new and improved spaces divided by state preschool slots in that community.

(5) *The State, in coordination with each Subgrantee, intends to sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs after the grant period, including any non-Federal support that the State or each Subgrantee commits to contribute.*

Connecticut is firmly committed to sustaining the High-Quality State Preschool Programs after the grant period ends in December 2019 and all funds are liquidated by June 30, 2020. **The Office of Early Childhood will reallocate available state funding in State Fiscal Year 2021 for State Preschool Programs to ensure that the 428 expansion and 284 improved spaces in these 14 communities continue.** In the meantime, Connecticut will find ways to further improve our existing 13,935 State Preschool spaces as we also seek to expand by another 3,000 spaces over the next three years plus implement a Connecticut Smart Start program of funding for local school districts to serve three- and four-year-olds with certified teachers in programs operated by the local Boards of Education. The $205 million Smart Start initiative funded over a 10-year period has the potential to expand the State Preschool Program by another 2,000 slots. Bond funding for capital improvements ($15 million this year) begins in Fiscal Year 2015 and operating funding begins as early as July, 2015 for Fiscal Year 2016. A Request for Proposals will be issued by the Office of Early Childhood by November, 2014.

Our plan is that through the state's expansion funding in the next four years, and with the expertise of a consultant group that will be contracted this fiscal year to complete a 12-month study of how best to blend and streamline the many different state and federal preschool funding streams to maximize funding we are currently managing, we will be able to sustain and expand high-quality preschool programs as defined by this grant for high-need three- and four-year olds in Connecticut. We realize that the current annual rates of $6,000 per child for a school-day/school year and $8,670 per child for a 10-hour day/year-round are inadequate to achieve the level of quality we want for our children. We propose rates in this grant of $12,800 for school day and $18,200 for a 10-hour day, year-round and will monitor costs and expenditures by our Subgrantees to determine whether those are appropriate rates for purposes of planning universal access for all high-need three- and four-year-olds. (See Appendix #16 – RFP Overview Creating a Better

System of Early Care and Education in Connecticut. And see Section F High Quality Plan for additional detail.)

AMBITIOUS AND ACHIEVABLE PLAN: SECTION D

Key Goal

Expanding High-Quality State Preschool Programs in 14 high-need communities.

Key Activities & Rationale

To achieve the key goal of the plan, the state is committed to the following key activities:

KEY ACTIVITY 1: Enter into Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the Office of Early Childhood and each of the 14 Subgrantees that specifies the roles and responsibilities in implementing the project plan. An MOU is needed to ensure program integrity, accountability and compliance.

Timeline: January – March 2015

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood Division of Early Care and Education (Harriet Feldlaufer, Division Director), Subgrantees and school readiness liaisons

Supporting Evidence: Memoranda of Understanding between Office of Early Childhood and school readiness councils

Performance Measures: Signed Memoranda

KEY ACTIVITY: 2: Issue grant award letters and final budgets to each Subgrantee after completion of signed Memoranda of Understanding. The current grant system used for State Preschool Programs requires a grant award letter and final budget prior to payment.

Timeline: April 2015 – June 2015

Party or Parties: Office of Early Childhood Division of Early Care and Education (Harriet Feldlaufer, Division Director), Subgrantees and school readiness liaisons

Supporting Evidence: Grant Award letters and budgets sent to Subgrantees

Performance Measures: First payments made

KEY ACTIVITY 3: Conduct a communication and outreach campaign with the 14 communities to ensure that parents of eligible four-year-olds are aware of the opportunities in these 14 communities. The Office of Early Childhood wants to ensure that all families in the selected communities, especially those that are isolated or hard to reach, are aware of these expansion and improved preschool spaces.

Timeline: April 2014 through August 2014 and then each year April through August.

Party or Parties: Office of Early Childhood Director of Communications (Diana LeJardi) and school readiness liaisons. The Office of Early Childhood will adapt its current communications campaign (entitled "The More You Know, The Better They Grow") to target hard-to-reach families in the 14 communities. Materials will be translated into languages needed in each community.

Supporting Evidence: Campaign materials for radio, social media and direct mail

Performance Measures: All expansion and improved slots filled by eligible four-year-olds in September of each year in each selected community.

KEY ACTIVITY: 4: Issue payments for start-up costs and ongoing services to allow Subgrantees to proceed with necessary improvements and expansions.

Timeline: July 2015 and quarterly thereafter

Party or Parties: Office of Early Childhood and State Department of Education fiscal staff, Office of Early Childhood's Early Care and Education Division (Harriet Feldlaufer, Division Director)

Supporting Evidence: Initial payments made and timely quarterly payments processed

Performance Measures: Payments are timely and accurate

Financial Resources

In-kind: state salaries and fringe of OEC staff assigned to key activities 1 through 4.

Needs of Eligible Children

High-Need Children: The Office of Early Childhood will address the needs of all eligible children under this grant in the following ways:

1. 10-hour days and year-round programming for over 60 percent of eligible children to meet families' needs and to offer a higher dosage of enrichment activities and prevent summer learning loss;
2. Transportation will be provided in those communities that indicated it was necessary to reach isolated families;
3. Comprehensive services for early identification of remediable health or development concerns; and
4. Availability of the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, a nationally-recognized statewide consultation model for early childhood mental health prevention and intervention.

Homeless children: The Early Childhood Cabinet will concentrate on homeless families with young children this coming year, attempting to focus the efforts of multiple agencies around this very vulnerable population. Particular focus will be on ensuring that these children have access to high-quality preschool. This area of concern was identified through discussions with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. To move this effort forward, the Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood has met with nonprofit housing organizations to discuss the specific needs of homeless families with young children. The Commissioner is also an Advisory Committee Member of Secure Jobs, a two-year demonstration pilot designed to increase the income of families transitioning from homelessness to housing by connecting them to the education, training and supports, including early care and education, the need to secure and maintain stable, competitive employment.

In recent years, Connecticut's early childhood programs have made conscientious efforts in outreach to homeless families and families at-risk of homelessness. Collaborative work continues through communities, homeless shelters and transitional housing staff, the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), United Way of Connecticut, Care 4 Kids (Child Care Subsidy Program), Office of Early Childhood, Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the state

Departments of Housing, Social Services, Office of Early Childhood, and Children and Families, to provide early care and education opportunities to homeless children, in ways to allow for consistent, safe and comprehensive care.

In Connecticut, during Fiscal Year 2013, the CCEH Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) had an unduplicated count of 1,113 children, ages birth to five years, served by Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing programs. Of the 14 Subgrantee communities represented in this grant proposal, five have shelters that served 21 percent of this population, as reported in HMIS. The five communities are Bridgeport, Killingly, Shelton, Torrington and Vernon. Please note that children in shelters represent only a percentage of homeless children in the state. Many homeless families double-up with friends and relatives, find other temporary shelter, or live on the streets.

The impact of homelessness on a child's success in school and in life may be devastating. By providing high-quality preschool education to children, we establish a consistent place to learn and thrive and help support the child and their family in preschool and through the transition to kindergarten through third grade.

Dual language learners: The Office of Early Childhood is working with the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Training and Research (UCEDD) to focus on the use of the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners. UCEDD will focus groups and a survey with home-based and center-based preschool programs to gain feedback about what would be most helpful to providers and parents to aid them in using the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners.

Children with disabilities and delays: Statutory and budgetary authority for part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA will move from the State Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services, respectively, to the Office of Early Childhood July 2015 to better align and coordinate policies, programs and services for children with disabilities and delays with all the policies, programs and services for young children in Connecticut managed by the Office of Early Childhood, including home visiting and State Preschool Programs.

E. **Collaborating with Each Subgrantee and Ensuring Strong Partnerships (50 points)**

The extent to which the State has an ambitious and achievable plan to ensure that each Subgrantee is effectively implementing High-Quality Preschool Programs, including a description of -

(1) *The roles and responsibilities of the State and Subgrantee in implementing the project plan.*

The role of the State and the Subgrantees will be based on the existing school readiness council infrastructure put forth by the State both in statute and in written internal policies and guidance. The Office of Early Childhood will oversee the Preschool Development Expansion program, having ultimate authority regarding finances, program quality, standards implementation, and compliance with all grant requirements.

The Office of Early Childhood will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the school readiness council in each community, which will serve as the Subgrantee. The fiduciary for the school readiness council is either the municipality, the local board of education or a Regional Educational Service Center (RESC). The school readiness council will subcontract with the early learning provider that will provide direct preschool service to eligible four-year-old children under this grant. The school readiness liaison serves as the central point of contact between the early learning provider and the Office of Early Childhood regarding program quality and accountability, monitoring and support, standards implementation, program evaluation, and finance.

Professional program staff within the Office of Early Childhood have a long comprehensive history of working collaboratively with school readiness councils identified in this grant. In turn, the school readiness councils have existing subcontracts with the early learning providers identified to provide services under this grant as part of Connecticut's quality State Preschool Programs. Therefore, the Office of Early Childhood, the school readiness councils and early learning providers have a solid and proven track record of working together to provide high-quality services that meet the needs of our youngest learners. This long-term relationship and history of providing

quality preschool places Connecticut in an ideal position to implement an ambitious and achievable plan designed to deliver high-quality services to eligible four-year-olds.

The Office of Early Childhood will fund two state positions to support high-quality preschool expansion and improvement under this grant. The grant accountability and reporting coordinator will be responsible for program administration, quality and accountability. The family engagement/community outreach specialist will be responsible for designing and overseeing implementation of culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement strategies at the community level, as well as working with communities to forge a seamless birth-through-third-grade continuum in high-need communities funded by the grant.

In addition, this Preschool Development Expansion grant will augment program monitoring, accountability, and evaluation of each preschool program by expanding the capacity and breadth of the school readiness liaison position. In communities with the greatest expansion, a new full-time position will be created; in communities with lesser expansion, the existing part-time position will be expanded to full time of half time depending on the number of new and improved classrooms. Increasing the scope and breadth of the school readiness liaison's role is a direct and immediate opportunity to advance quality, accountability, and child outcomes. All school readiness liaisons will meet on a monthly basis with the Office of Early Childhood coordinator for accountability and reporting who will be under the direct supervision of the Quality Rating and Improvement Manager.

(2) *How the State plans to implement High-Quality Preschool Programs, including the organizational capacity and existing infrastructure of the Subtrantee to provide High-Quality Preschool Programs, either directly or indirectly through an Early Learning Provider or Providers, and coordinate the delivery of High-Quality Preschool Programs.* Connecticut is well-poised to implement high-quality State Preschool Programs due to its strong organizational capacity and existing infrastructure of the school readiness councils. Each of our Subgrantees represent communities with a history of delivering

high-quality preschool services that have strong school readiness councils in place to coordinate existing resources, oversee program quality, and regularly monitor programs operations. These communities have strong relationships with their fiduciaries. In addition, these communities have a solid practice of collaborating with the public schools to maintain ongoing two-way communication and cross-sector professional development among kindergarten and preschool staff and program administrators to ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten.

The school readiness council, by statute (C.G.S. Section 10-16r), must be comprised of representative members, with the chief elected municipal official and school superintendent serving as co-chairs:
"The chief elected official of the town or, in the case of a regional school district, the chief elected officials of the towns in the school district and the superintendent of schools for the school district shall jointly appoint and convene such council. Each school readiness council shall be composed of: (1) The chief elected official, or the official's designee; (2) the superintendent of schools, or a management level staff person as the superintendent's designee; (3) parents; (4) representatives from local programs such as Head Start, family resource centers, nonprofit and for-profit child day care centers, group day care homes, prekindergarten and nursery schools, and family day care home providers; (5) a representative from a health care provider in the community; and (6) other representatives from the community who provide services to children. The chief elected official shall designate the chairperson of the school readiness council. SCRs may also consider the inclusion of local librarians as members of the SRC to assist in implementing the required collaborative agreement between local libraries and providers."

The specific duties of the school readiness councils are outlined in State Statute Section 10-16r(b). They include:

- fostering relationships among providers;
- assisting in identifying children not being served;

- partnering with the Office of Early Childhood for purposes of preschool program evaluation;
- identifying existing and prospective resources available to children and families; facilitating the coordination of the delivery of services to children and families;
- exchanging information with preschool and community organizations;
- making recommendations to school officials concerning transition to kindergarten, and
- encouraging public participation.

The school readiness liaison roles and responsibilities are defined in our General Policy 14-10. The liaison duties include:

- Staffing the school readiness council, including completing reports, maintaining membership, communicating information from the Office of Early Childhood, and reviewing and updating policy with the council;
- Providing outreach to the community to assist families with enrollment in State Preschool Programs;
- Meeting regularly with providers to provide an information and resource forum;
- Conducting regular site visits to monitor compliance and develop actions when appropriate;
- Collaborating local public schools and other preschool programs to develop and implement the local transition to kindergarten plan;
- Supporting the development and ongoing implementation of the community's early childhood plan;
- Overseeing grant application processes, following directives from the Office of Early Childhood and complying with bidding processes;
- Representing the school readiness council in the community and across the state; and
- Attending statewide liaison meetings to exchange information with the Office of Early Childhood.

See Appendix #12– Liaison Duties and Responsibilities.

As referenced in the Executive Summary, in addition to these local school readiness councils, a tremendous strength of Connecticut's early childhood system is a public-private partnership with the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund. The Discovery Initiative, supported by the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund since 2000, was designed to create an early childhood system that ensures early learning and school success for children, birth to age 8. The Discovery process supports collaboration with communities, statewide partners and government agencies to analyze child and community data, reflect on needs and gaps, and organize community action on behalf of young children and their families. The Discovery Initiative contributes to a common goal: Connecticut children of all races and income levels are ready for school by age 5 and are successful learners by age 9. Eleven of our 14 high-need communities selected for preschool expansion and improvement under this grant are members of the Discovery Collaborative Initiative, which includes 61 high-need communities across the state.

Each community has its local Discovery Collaborative that allows for inclusive local decision making. The Discovery Collaborative is comprised of parents and community members representing cross-sector areas such as early care and education, Kindergarten to Grade 3 instruction, special education, after school, dual language learners, literacy, health, mental health, nutrition, and child welfare. Other members of the council include municipal representatives such as librarians, police and fire chiefs, and parks and recreation officers.

A foundational piece of the Discovery Initiative is the development and implementation of Community Plans for Early Childhood, which include these core elements:

- **Population Result -** A population result reflects conditions of well-being for children birth to age eight.
- **Indicators -** Indicators are measures that help quantify the achievement of a population result.
- **Needs Assessment -** The needs assessment is an analysis of baseline data or the trend line of an indicator.

- **Strategies -** Strategies are coherent sets of actions that have a reasonable chance of improving results.
- **Performance Measures and Data Systems -** Performance measures can tell how well public and private programs and agencies are working and if children and families are better off.
- **Local Financing –** A financing strategy aligns existing state and local resources to the plan strategies, identifies funds for potential reallocation, and specifies the level of new investments needed to effect positive change.

The Office of Early Childhood contributes $750,000 annually to support Discovery community plans. See Appendix #4 – Discovery Community Plans.

(3) *How the State will ensure that each Subgrantee minimizes local administrative costs.*
Connecticut's school readiness council structure promotes efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the administration of preschool services. The fiduciary, a municipality or the local board of education, provides fiscal oversight and is in charge of allocating funds. Most often, these services are provided in-kind. The Office of Early Childhood requires that local administrative costs be no more than 10 percent of the total grant funding. This policy will also apply to State Preschool Programs funded by this grant.

(4) *How the State and Subgrantee will monitor the Early Learning Providers to ensure they are delivering High-Quality Preschool Programs.*
The school readiness liaison, under the auspices of the school readiness council, will be the designated person responsible for routinely monitoring early learning providers under this grant. The liaison will conduct regular site visits to monitor grant compliance with the program, conduct classroom observations, and develop corrective action plans when appropriate. The areas to be regularly monitored include:

- Fiscal
- Policy
- Staff qualifications
- Enrollment and attendance

- Standards, curriculum and assessment
- Accreditation and approval systems
- Health and Safety Licensing
- Professional development and training
- Program adherence to quality components

Under this grant proposal, the capacity of the school readiness liaison will be increased to ensure that expanded and improved programs will be provided robust training and technical support and on-site monitoring. In communities with greatest expansion, a new full-time position will be created; in communities with lesser expansion, a part-time position will be expanded to up to full-time or half-time depending on the number of new and improved classrooms. The liaisons will communicate regularly with Office of Childhood staff responsible for oversight of this federal grant and State Preschool Program.

(5) *How the State and Subgrantee will coordinate plans related to assessments, data sharing, instructional tools, family engagement, cross-sector and comprehensive services, professional development, workforce and leadership development.*

The Office of Early Childhood and State Preschool Programs have established ongoing and routine processes for sharing data and communicating administrative and operating procedures concerning staff qualifications, teacher-child ratios, child enrollment and attendance, family engagement practices, curriculum and assessment aligned to state early learning and development standards, and professional development plans related to workforce development needs. This policy will also apply to State Preschool Programs funded by this grant.

Due to the recent roll-out of new Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards, the Office of Early Childhood is currently revising policy and guidance related to monitoring practices related to curriculum, instruction and assessment. The revised policy and guidance is anticipated to be implemented by January 2015. This policy and

guidance will be shared with the school readiness liaison and early learning provider, and technical assistance will be provided.

Early learning providers share data through monthly reports to the Office of Early Childhood, which include data about number of children served, number of children with IEPs, amount of parent fees, child care subsidy funds collected, children with public or private health insurance, children with no health insurance, and family income. This policy will also apply to State Preschool Programs funded by this grant.

Under this grant, Office of Early Childhood proposes to hire two full-time staff. One, the family engagement/community outreach specialist, will design and implement family engagement strategies at the local level. The other, the grant accountability and reporting coordinator, will direct monitoring and continuous quality improvement activities with the Subgrantees, which include assessments; data; instructional tools; comprehensive services; professional, workforce and leadership development. See Appendices #9 – Family Engagement/Community Outreach Specialist and #10 – Grant Accountability and Reporting Coordinator.

As part of our strategy to provide comprehensive services, the Office of Early Childhood will require that Subgrantees purchase behavioral health consultation services from the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP), a statewide, evidence-based, mental health consultation program designed to meet the social and emotional needs of children birth to five in early care and education settings. The ECCP program builds the capacity of caregivers at the individual, family, classroom, or program-wide level.

Using the Center on the Social and Emotional Founds for Early Learning (CSEFEL) framework, ECCP provides support, education, and consultation to caregivers in order to promote enduring and optimal outcomes for young children. ECCP will provide both child-specific and core classroom services to the eligible children funded through this grant. Classroom services will include working with the instructional staff to enhance the overall social and emotional classroom environment by identifying teacher strengths,

providing prevention/early intervention strategies, building teacher's capacity to effectively respond to challenging behaviors and social emotional concerns and by facilitating supportive relationships. ECCP supports teachers in identifying and addressing the individual social and emotional needs of children and their families. Additionally, ECCP will work with the State Preschool Program local administrators and school readiness liaisons to develop support strategies they can use with the teaching staff as they implement ECCP strategies and positive changes in their work with children and families, and in their classroom environments.

When providing child-specific services to eligible children, ECCP will partner with families and teachers around the strengths and needs of an individual child. This is done through the development of prevention and early intervention strategies that support the child's social, emotional, and behavioral needs and the child's successes in the classroom and at home.

For this grant, we have included funding for high-quality professional development in the funds allocated to each Subgrantee for personnel in each classroom that includes eligible children as well as for the school readiness liaison for each school readiness council. The OEC will ensure that each Subgrantee will be able to purchase professional development for all personnel who will be participating in this grant to include at least three full days of training in topics such as the CT Early Learning and Development Standards, social-emotional development, Scientifically Based Interventions (response to intervention), and special education assessment and referral. These intentionally designed professional development modules will be followed by seven three-hour sessions of on-site coaching and mentoring for each classroom to maximize effect. The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and the Core Knowledge and Competencies for early childhood teachers will be the foundation for our professional development.

Initial training in 2015 will be arranged through the state's Regional Educational Service Centers or other professional development providers. The plan for the second through

fourth years of the grant will be to shift the locus of that training and technical assistance to the five regional quality improvement hubs.

(6) *How the State will coordinate, not supplant, delivery of high-quality preschool with existing services including, title I of ESEA, part C and section 619 of Part B IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care Development Block Grant Act.*

State Preschool Programs address the diverse needs of young children in their classroom, drawing on their own resources and expertise. When children need additional supports that go beyond their scope of work, State Preschool Programs reach out to other services and ensure they are used for their intended purposes. State Preschool Programs will coordinate, not supplant, delivery of services such as title I of ESEA, part C and section 619 of Part B IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care Development Block Grant Act.

As one example of coordination, Connecticut's Birth to Three (Part C), and preschool special education programs and State Preschool Programs work together to ensure a seamless transition between services. The Birth to Three System administration notifies each school district and the State Department of Education of every child enrolled in Birth to Three who is potentially eligible for special education at age 3. Electronic reports with contact information for each child are sent to the Department of Education's special education data system for school districts (SEDAC). Authorized personnel in each district can pull down the information for children living in their district and may contact those families if the children have not yet been referred for a special education evaluation. For children whose parents are seeking special education services at age 3, Birth to Three service coordinators are responsible for convening a transition conference with the family, the school district, and the child's Birth to Three provider(s) at least 90 days prior to the child's third birthday. Children with spring and summer birthdays require extra planning to ensure that they receive Free Appropriate Public Education by their third birthday. The Connecticut State Department of Education has reported 99+

percent success rate for that requirement on their annual performance report for the past five years.

For children whose parents are not seeking special education services, the service coordinator must also offer those parents a transition conference with appropriate community agencies, including State Preschool Programs and Head Start, to discuss any plans for that child when they exit the Birth to Three System at age 3. Regardless of whether the child will be attending special education or other programs at age 3, the child's Individualized Family Service Plan must include the steps that providers and parents will take leading up to the transition to ensure that everyone is comfortable with the process. In State Fiscal Year 2013, 2,892 children exited the Birth to Three System at age 3. Of that number, 71 percent were eligible for preschool special education.

As another example of inter-agency coordination, the State Department of Education's Early Childhood Special Education Program (IDEA 619), in collaboration with the Office of Early Childhood's Accreditation Facilitation Project (AFP), provides funds to support school districts and community programs providing special education preschool services in obtaining accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

(7) *How the State will integrate, to the extent practicable, High-Quality Preschool Programs for Eligible Children within economically diverse, inclusive settings, including those that serve children from families above 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.*
The Office of Early Childhood has a written policy that requires its State Preschool Programs to promote early care and education in diverse and inclusive settings. Our State Preschool Program must have an open admission policy to serve all children, including children with special needs and disabilities and children from diverse backgrounds.

Under this grant, improved spaces will be in classrooms of three- and four-year-olds representing economic diversity. Our state trend data shows that approximately 80

percent of families in our State Preschool Programs have incomes less than 50 percent of Connecticut's State Median Income (SMI), 10 percent with incomes between 50 and 75 percent of the SMI, and 7 percent with incomes over 75 percent of the SMI. As a comparison with the Federal Poverty Line (FPL), the income threshold at 50 percent SMI for a family of four is $51,586.60 compared to the income threshold of $47,700 at 200 percent of FPL for a family of four. The income threshold at 75 percent of SMI for a family of four is $77,379.75.

For improved spaces, the federal grant will pay for services for eligible children who are four years old who come from households with incomes under 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line. **The State of Connecticut will cover the portion of teacher salaries and comprehensive services costs for the 176 non-eligible children in the mixed classrooms.**

(8) *How the Subgrantee will deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children, including Eligible Children who may be in need of additional supports, such as those who have disabilities or developmental delays; who are English Learners; who reside on "Indian lands" as that term is defined by section 8013(7) of the ESEA; who are migrant; who are "homeless," as defined in subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act; who are in the child welfare system; who reside in rural or tribal areas; who are from military families; and other children as identified by the State.*

A major strength of our existing State Preschool Program is the diversity of children served in the classroom, many in need of additional supports. Teachers are prepared to work with diverse children who need additional supports, such as children with developmental delays, English learners, children whose families are homeless and residing in shelters, and children in the child welfare system. Teachers are required to take a course in diversity as a condition of their employment.

For children with disabilities or developmental delays, our State Preschool Programs collaborate with our Part C program, Birth to Three, to ensure a seamless transition of services and supports. **It is anticipated that the Birth to Three program will move**

into the Office of Early Childhood in July 2015, which will further enhance coordination.

Our State Preschool Programs collaborate with the Department of Children and Families to ensure that foster children are given priority for enrollment in preschool. Legislation passed in the 2014 session, Special Act 14-22, requires the Department of Children and Families, in consultation with the Office of Early Childhood, to develop a plan to ensure that all foster children are enrolled in a high-quality accredited or Head Start Approval preschool program. See Appendix #8 – Special Act 14-22.

Additionally, a supplementary Dual Language Learning Framework is included within the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) to support professionals working specifically with children acquiring multiple languages. The Office of Early Childhood is working with the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Training and Research (UCEDD) to focus on the use of the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners. See Appendix #2 – CT Early Learning and Development Standards.

(9) *How the State will ensure the Subgranteee implements culturally and linguistically responsive outreach and communication efforts to enroll children from families with Eligible Children, including isolated or hard-to-reach families; helps families build protective factors; and engages parents and families (e.g. builds capacity to support children's learning and development) as decision-makers in their children's education.* Family involvement, education and outreach are fundamental components of our State Preschool Program. State Preschool Program staff are trained in how to respect the cultural and linguistic diversity of each family in communications, classroom curriculum, and family activities. They provide information to parents about the importance of parental involvement in a child's academic and social-emotional development. Staff members assist parents with limited English proficiency with enrollment, program instruction, and how they can best support their children's development.

Each program establishes a parent governance board that involves parents in decision-making and policy development for the preschool. Programs provide parents with clear written policies so parents have a comprehensive understanding of their child's program. Families who are new to the program are offered an orientation session to the program. Programs have an open-door policy for families to visit their child's program at any time, and written communication is shared daily with families each day about their child's development. Under this grant, these provisions described in this section will apply.

(10) *How the State will ensure strong partnerships between each Subgrantee and LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, including a description of how the State will ensure that each Subgrantee -*

There is a built-in relationship between the Subgrantee (school readiness council) and the public schools as the chief elected officer and the school superintendent serve as co-chairs of the council. As the municipal and public school leaders, they convene the council and set the tone for collaboration and partnerships. These leaders often are active participants in the Discovery Initiative as well. A long-standing requirement of the school readiness councils is to have a written inter-agency agreement between the early learning providers and the public schools. The intent of the agreement is to promote continuity of services and effective transitions on behalf of children who participate in the State Preschool Program and the public school. The agreements articulate a set of guiding principles to create and maintain meaningful partnerships. In addition, these agreements set out a policy for shared governance around program plans and goals, annual program assessments, and evaluation.

The school readiness councils, early learning providers, and public schools work together, when applicable, to ensure the best outcomes for our preschool-age children who will enter the public school system. Our year-end program evaluation (referred to as Connecticut School Readiness Preschool Program Evaluation) outlines expected program components directly related to a partnership between early learning providers and public schools. Programs in the process of obtaining NAEYC accreditation complete this

evaluation. Programs that are already accredited adhere to the NAEYC program components related to partnerships between early learning providers and public schools.

(a) *Partners with LEAS and other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, to carry out activities that provide children and their families with successful transitions from preschool into kindergarten, and*

State Preschool Programs incorporate transition from preschool into kindergarten in its program, including:

(i) Preschool program provide orientation to the kindergarten registration process and the kindergarten curriculum for parents.

(ii) Preschool teachers and kindergarten participate in joint workshops and exchanging class visits, resources, and materials.

(iii) Preschool and kindergarten teachers collaborate to align curriculum with the Early Learning and Development Standards and the K-12 Common Core.

(iv) Preschool programs assist parents in registering their children for kindergarten, such as registration on-site, organizing a parent trip to kindergarten, assisting parents with paperwork, and providing assistance to non-English speaking parents.

(v) Activities are planned for children such as school bus ride and visiting a kindergarten class.

(vi) The preschool teacher, with a parent's permission, shares the developmental profile of a children entering kindergarten with the kindergarten teacher.

(vii) Preschool and kindergarten administrators provide opportunities for communication and exchange among preschool and kindergarten teachers.

The Office of Early Childhood in collaboration with will the State Department of Education Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services & Adult Education will develop an on-line toolkit on transition to kindergarten. Work with stakeholders on this toolkit will include the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team under this grant that includes the 14 school readiness liaisons and the Office of Early Childhood, the family engagement/community outreach staff member, and some selected districts that have

already implemented successful pre-K to kindergarten transition programs. The toolkit will be piloted in the 14 targeted communities under this grant before introducing it statewide to all State Preschool Programs.

(b) *Coordinates and collaborates with LEAs or other Early Learning Providers, as appropriate, in –*

(i) *Providing opportunities for early educators to participate in professional development on early learning and kindergarten standards, assessments, curricula and culturally responsive and linguistically responsive strategies to help families build protective factors, build parents' capacity to support their learning and development, and engage parents as decision-maker in their child's education.*

Connecticut is a leader in using a professional development model tied to standards, instruction and assessment. Since 2008, Connecticut has been implementing the cycle of intentional teaching that is composed of planning experiences to support children's development, gathering information about how they are progressing, and adjusting what is being done to support them based upon this information. The Response To Intervention model has been the foundational element of the cycle of intentional professional development initiative. Connecticut is in the process of calibrating the cycle of intentional teaching model to our new Birth to Age 5 Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS).

Under this grant, the Office of Early Childhood will hold joint training on the cycle of intentional teaching with our early learning providers and public school kindergarten teachers and specialists in the 14 selected communities. These opportunities will provide cross-age, cross-sector professional growth opportunities that allow professionals to engage with their peers to assess, reflect on and improve their own teaching practices.

The Office of Early Childhood provides early learning providers with funds for quality enhancement with a focus on collaboration and coordination of services,

professional development, and workforce preparation. These quality initiatives are inclusive of licensed and unlicensed providers, including the public schools.

A critical component of our professional development work is placing priorities on teacher, leaders, and all staff members in State Preschool Programs and public schools to understand the importance of and employ strategies for engaging families. As part of our development and implementation of our new ELDS, we recognized that families are primary partners in their children's learning and development. It brought attention to the need for authentic family engagement in curricular decisions, collaboration on teaching strategies, and partners in authentic assessment. Under this grant, the Office of Early Childhood will hire an individual to focus on family engagement strategies and work with local communities that will be provided with funding to implement family engagement work in the community.

(ii) *Providing family engagement, support, nutrition, and other Comprehensive Services and coordinating with other community partners to ensure families' access to needed supports.*

The Office of Early Childhood, school readiness liaisons, and early learning providers will work together to design a plan to deliver comprehensive services in the classroom. Though they may vary from community to community, formal agreements will be executed with local, regional or state entities to deliver these comprehensive services. For those high-need communities with Head Start programs, the Office of Early Childhood will encourage the Subgrantees to partner with Head Start programs to provide comprehensive services in the classroom. Subgrantees may also be able to tap into existing services provided by the LEA in their community.

(iii) *Supporting Full Inclusion of Eligible Children with Disabilities and Developmental Delays*

State Preschool Programs are committed to supporting full inclusion of children with disabilities and developmental delays. The program has a written policy that

articulates its commitment to serve children with disabilities with an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). The program partners with specialists from the school district to inform preschool staff and develop preventative strategies to support individual children. Preschool staff participates in training each year. The program also mechanisms to collaborate with school districts and Birth to Three (our Part C program) regarding referral, evaluation, and programming for children. With that, the program has a plan and process to ensure a smooth transition for children with disabilities into a preschool program and from a preschool setting into kindergarten. Finally, the program ensures that the teacher, family and therapist(s) consult on strategies to be implemented, ensure that the IEP goals and objectives are implemented in the classroom, and staff is knowledgeable about the process. These best practices will apply to State Preschool Programs participating in this grant.

(iv) *Supporting the inclusion of children who may be in need of additional supports, such as children who are English Learners, who reside on "Indian lands" at that term is defined by section 8013(7) of the ESEA; who are migrant; who are "homeless" as defined by subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act; who are in the child welfare system; who reside in rural areas; who are from military families; and other children as identified by the State.*

Our State Preschool Programs must articulate established channels of communication between Start Preschool Program staff and their counterparts in the schools including teachers, social workers, and public school liaison under the McKinney-Vento assistance act. Furthermore, early learning providers and the public school must set priorities for identifying and serving under-served populations of eligible children, including those who are English learners.

State Preschool Programs collaborate closely with the Department of Children and Families to ensure that children in the custody of that agency have access to spaces in the State Preschool Program. Legislation passed this year, Special Act 14-22, requires the Department of Children and Families, in consultation with the

Office of Early Childhood, to develop a plan to identify children in foster care who currently are not enrolled in high-quality preschool and ensure that they have access to accredited preschool or a program with Head Start Approval. See Appendix #8 – Special Act 14-22.

The Office of Early Childhood has also had discussions with the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), a statewide nonprofit membership and advocacy organization. CCEH receives modest funding from the state to pay for child care for young children who are homeless. The Office of Early Childhood and CCEH have agreed to partner on how to best use these funds in combination with funding within the Office of Early Childhood.

(v) *Ensuring that High-Quality Preschool Programs have age-appropriate facilities to meet the needs of Eligible Children;*

The Office of Early Childhood's licensing division has some of the most stringent health and safety requirements in the nation. Licensing standards require facilities to be appropriate for preschool-aged children. The Fiscal Year 2015 state budget increased licensing staff by 18 to allow for annual inspections to take place in efforts to continually ensure the health and safety of our early childhood settings, including preschool, family and group home care, and youth camps.

However, our public schools are exempt from licensing. For State Preschool Programs that are located in public school settings, the Office of Early Childhood requires classrooms to be age-appropriate. The Office of Early Childhood is partnering with the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) to conduct voluntary mock inspections in selected preschool programs in public school settings. The purpose of the mock inspections is to analyze any barriers or challenges for public schools to meet licensing standards as well as any misconceptions about the ability of public schools to meet these standards.

The Office of Early Childhood supports quality facilities by offering a grants-in-aid program to its State Preschool Programs for minor capital improvements. For the current fiscal year, $15 million is allocated for facilities improvement, which builds on the $11.5 million and $10 million in the previous fiscal years for this purpose, respectively.

(vi) *Developing and implementing a systematic procedure for sharing data and other records consistent with Federal and State law; and*

Development of Connecticut's Early Childhood Information System (ECIS) is well underway, with $6 million in bonding dedicated to this initiative. The ECIS will consist of multiple transactional data modules for use by preschool programs and administration in case management and program. The data will then feed into an early childhood data warehouse. The data warehouse will be linked to the State Longitudinal Data System, with other state agencies, and with the Preschool through 20 and Workforce Information Network (P20WIN). By linking the ECIS with the State Longitudinal Data System for K-12, Connecticut will be able to link preschool and elementary and secondary school unduplicated data, giving the state the ability to track a child's academic progress from preschool through secondary school. In additional child and family demographics, the data collected will include child developmental information.

After the fall of 2016, Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) data will be available from the Department of Education and those aggregate results will be provided to each State Preschool Program to assist them in improving the quality of instruction as it relates to the readiness of their previous preschool children. Data collected from the KEA by the Connecticut Department of Education will become part of the K-12 Longitudinal Data System, with the ability to link it with data collected in preschool through the ECIS.

(vii) *Utilizing community-based learning resources, such as libraries, arts and art education programs, and family literacy programs.*

Our State Preschool Programs are required to have collaborative agreements with libraries and family literacy programs. Connecticut has several robust partnerships between museums and State Preschool Programs. Stepping Stones Museum in Norwalk and Imagine Nation Museum in Bristol are co-located with a State Preschool Program. In other partnerships, the museum offers free visits to children in State Preschool Programs as well as offering professional development to preschool staff, such as the Connecticut Science Museum. The Office of Early Childhood will work with our early learning providers under this federal grant to build stronger partnerships with museums and arts institutions, based on these two models.

Several of the communities selected for this grant have Family Resource Centers (FRCS) in elementary schools. Our State Preschool Programs ensure that parents know about the FRCs so they are connected when their children transitions to kindergarten. FRCs promotes comprehensive, integrated, community-based systems of family support and child development services, based on the "Schools of the 21st Century" concept developed by Dr. Edward Ziegler at Yale University. FRCs provide access, within a community, to a broad continuum of early child and family support services offering: parent education and training, adult education, family support, preschool, school-age child care, positive youth development services, and family child care training.

Ambitious and Achievable Plan: Section E

Key Goal

To ensure that each Subgrantee is effectively implement high-quality preschool programs in the 14 selected communities.

Key Activities & Rationale

To achieve the key goal of the plan, the state is committed to the following key activities:

KEY ACTIVITY 1: Each Subgrantee establishes new, or amends existing, subcontracts with the early learning providers that will provide direct services to eligible four-year-old children. Contracts are needed to ensure program integrity, accountability and compliance.

Timeline: April – June 2015

Party or Parties Responsible: Subgrantees, school readiness liaisons and local early learning providers

Supporting Evidence: Contracts between School Readiness Councils and local early learning providers.

Performance Measures: Signed contracts

KEY ACTIVITY 2: Expand the capacity of school readiness liaisons in Subgrantee communities to augment and enhance the program monitoring, accountability and evaluation capabilities of early learning provider subcontractors. We know we need to improve our monitoring capabilities and are confident that expanding the capacity of school readiness liaisons, people who know the needs of the community well, is the best way to do this.

Timeline: July – September 2015

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood staff hired as grant accountability and reporting coordinator and Subgrantees

Supporting Evidence: See Appendix #12 - School Readiness Liaison Duties and Responsibilities

Performance Measures: Create full-time school readiness liaison positions or expand existing part-time school readiness liaison positions to full-time or half-time in Subgrantee communities. Provide CLASS Training to the School Readiness Liaisons.

KEY ACTIVITY 3: Require school readiness liaisons in Subgrantee communities to regularly monitor all early learning programs funded by this grant. Regular monitoring is a fundamental component to ensure quality and better child outcomes.

Timeline: Ongoing September 2015 – August 2019

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood staff hired as grant accountability and reporting coordinator and school readiness liaisons

Supporting Evidence: State-Funded Program General Policy 14-10

Performance Measures:

- Annual unannounced licensing inspection by Office of Early Childhood's Division of Child Care & Youth Camp Licensing
- Monthly meetings between Office of Early Childhood and school readiness liaisons
- Regular announced and unannounced site visits to early learning programs participating in the grant by school readiness liaison. Areas to be monitored include:
    - Fiscal; policy; staff qualifications; enrollment and attendance; standards, curriculum and assessment; accreditation and approval systems; health and safety; professional development and training; and program adherence to quality components

KEY ACTIVITY 4: Ensure all Subgrantees adhere to existing school readiness contracts, general policies and/or assurances as related to assessment, data sharing, family engagement, culturally and linguistically responsive strategies to help families, professional development, staff qualifications, age-appropriate facilities, title I of ESEA, part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA, transition from preschool to kindergarten, full inclusion of children with disabilities and developmental delays, collaborative agreements with libraries and family literacy programs. Our existing school readiness contracts, general policies and/or assurances ensure that our early

learning providers are responsive to the unique needs of the children in their care and allow them to meet the diverse needs of vulnerable families.

Timeline: September 2015- August 2019
Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood staff hired as grant accountability and reporting coordinator, Office of Early Childhood staff hired as family engagement/community outreach specialist, Subgrantees, school readiness liaison and early learning providers
Performance Measures: Monthly monitoring meetings with school readiness liaisons of Subgrantee communities and Office of Early Childhood

KEY ACTIVITY 5: Improve our existing school readiness contracts, general policies and/or assurances for Subgrantees funded by this grant to include teacher compensation commensurate with k-12 teachers in their community, comprehensive services, instructional tools, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act, children in child welfare system, English Learners, migrant children, and military families. Our existing school readiness contracts, general policies and/or assurances do not currently addresses these components of high-quality preschool. This grant is an opportunity to raise the quality of our State Preschool Programs by building on our existing system.

Timeline: September 2015 – August 2019
Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood's Early Care and Education Division (Harriet Feldlaufer, Division Director), Subgrantees, school readiness liaison and early learning providers
Supporting Evidence: See Appendix #13 – Statement of Assurances
Performance Measures: New policies developed, approved, implemented and monitored.

KEY ACTIVITY 6: Collaborate with the CT Department of Children and Families to develop a plan to identify children in foster care who currently are not enrolled in high-quality preschool and make sure they are enrolled a high-quality State Preschool Program or Head Start program, pursuant to Special Act 14-22. Currently there is no mechanism in place to ensure that all foster

children in Connecticut are enrolled in a high-quality preschool. This plan will create that mechanism.

Timeline: November 2014 – January 2015
Party or Parties Responsible: Department of Children and Families and Office of Early Childhood staff hired as family engagement/community outreach specialist
Supporting Evidence: See Appendix #8 – Special Act 14-22
Performance Measures: Plan developed, submitted to Connecticut General Assembly and implemented.

KEY ACTIVITY 7: Assure all Subgrantees adhere to school readiness policy that local administrative costs do not exceed 10 percent of the total grant funding. It is sound fiscal policy to minimize administrative costs to ensure that the majority of the funds go directly to services for eligible children and families.

Timeline: September 2015 – August 2019
Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood Fiscal staff, State Department of Education fiscal staff, Subgrantees and early learning providers
Supporting Evidence: School Readiness General Policy 09-03: Budget Guidance
Performance Measures: Monthly monitoring meetings with school readiness liaisons of Subgrantee communities and Office of Early Childhood

Financial Resources

In-kind: state salaries and fringe of Office of Early Childhood and State Department of Education staff assigned to key activities 1 through 7.

Grant funding:
School readiness liaison salaries and benefits for each year $533,550 for a total of $2,134,200. CLASS training $42,400.

40 percent of salary and fringe for Office of Early Childhood grant accountability and reporting coordinator: $67,834 (year 1); $70,161 (year 2); $72,492 (year 3); $74,817 (year 4) for a total of $285,305

40 percent of salary and fringe for Office of Early Childhood family engagement/community outreach specialist: $67,834 (year 1); $70,161 (year 2); $72,492 (year 3); $74,817 (year 4) for a total of $285,305

Needs of Eligible Children

High-Need Children: The Office of Early Childhood will address the needs of all eligible children under this grant in the following ways:

1. 10-hour days and year-round programming for over 60 percent of eligible children to meet families' needs and to offer a higher dosage of enrichment activities and prevent summer learning loss;
2. Transportation will be provided in those communities that indicated it was necessary to reach isolated families;
3. Comprehensive services for early identification of remediable health or development concerns; and
4. Availability of the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, a nationally-recognized statewide consultation model for early childhood mental health prevention and intervention.

Homeless children: The Early Childhood Cabinet will concentrate on homeless families with young children this coming year, attempting to focus the efforts of multiple agencies around this very vulnerable population. Particular focus will be on ensuring that these children have access to high-quality preschool. This area of concern was identified through discussions with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. To move this effort forward, the Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood has met with nonprofit housing organizations to discuss the specific needs of homeless families with young children. The Commissioner is also an Advisory Committee Member of Secure Jobs, a two-year demonstration pilot designed to increase the income of families transitioning from homelessness to housing by connecting them to the education,

training and supports, including early care and education, the need to secure and maintain stable, competitive employment.

In recent years, Connecticut's early childhood programs have made conscientious efforts in outreach to homeless families and families at-risk of homelessness. Collaborative work continues through communities, homeless shelters and transitional housing staff, the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), United Way of Connecticut, Care 4 Kids (Child Care Subsidy Program), Office of Early Childhood, Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the state Departments of Housing, Social Services, Office of Early Childhood, and Children and Families, to provide early care and education opportunities to homeless children, in ways to allow for consistent, safe and comprehensive care.

In Connecticut, during Fiscal Year 2013, the CCEH Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) had an unduplicated count of 1,113 children, ages birth to five years, served by Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing programs. Of the 14 Subgrantee communities represented in this grant proposal, five have shelters that served 21 percent of this population, as reported in HMIS. The five communities are Bridgeport, Killingly, Shelton, Torrington and Vernon. Please note that children in shelters represent only a percentage of homeless children in the state. Many homeless families double-up with friends and relatives, find other temporary shelter, or live on the streets.

The impact of homelessness on a child's success in school and in life may be devastating. By providing high-quality preschool education to children, we establish a consistent place to learn and thrive and help support the child and their family in preschool and through the transition to kindergarten through third grade.

Children in child welfare: See Key Activity 6.

Dual language learners: The Office of Early Childhood is working with the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Training and Research (UCEDD) to focus on the use of the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners. UCEDD will focus groups and a survey with home-

based and center-based preschool programs to gain feedback about what would be most helpful to providers and parents to aid them in using the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners.

Children with disabilities and delays: Statutory and budgetary authority for part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA will move from the State Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services, respectively, to the Office of Early Childhood July 2015 to better align and coordinate policies, programs and services for children with disabilities and delays with all the policies, programs and services for young children in Connecticut managed by the Office of Early Childhood, including home visiting and State Preschool Programs.

F. **Alignment within a Birth through Third Grade Continuum (20 points)**

Connecticut has made significant strides toward aligning its systems and programs that serve children from birth through third grade. This progress is helping children and their families transition across the developmental continuum and ensure that programs and systems are aligned to promote positive growth and development among young children. A major contribution to this work included aligning early childhood governance within the Office of Early Childhood, a new cabinet-level agency responsible for the administration, coordination, and improvement of early childhood services in the state. Our ambitious and achievable plan to build on and continue these alignment activities are described below.

(1) *For birth through age-five programs, these activities include—*

(a) *Coordinating with other early education and care programs and child care family service providers supported through Federal, State, and local resources to build a strong continuum of learning for children from birth through age five and their families that expands families' choices, facilitates or improves their access to programs and supports in their own communities and engages all families with Eligible Children, including isolated or hard-to-reach families that might not otherwise participate;*

The Office of Early Childhood facilitates the coordination of federal, state and local early education and care programs and services to expand family choice, improve access to programs and supports communities, and engage families in meaningful participation. Within the Office of Early Childhood, the four Division Directors overseeing a wide array of early childhood programs and services meet weekly to discuss all early childhood initiatives and look for additional opportunities for increased collaboration. These conversations have resulted in new agency initiatives that reach across divisions, better serving our state's young children, families, early childhood providers and other stakeholders. Cross-division initiatives underway now include developing the Request for Proposal for a Quality Improvement System contractor, creating a plan due to the General Assembly in January 2015 for the coordination of home visiting programs that will offer a continuum of services to vulnerable families with young children, and performing an organizational

assessment to better align our own workforce and agency structure to match the new work to be accomplished.

The Office of Early Childhood has begun a comprehensive reform of its State Preschool Program infrastructure to ensure access to high-quality programs, birth through the end of preschool. The Office of Early Childhood is in final contract negotiations with a nationally-recognized consulting firm to develop a detailed reform implementation plan that will include recommendations on improving legislation, polices and practices for all early care and education funding streaming including CCDF, State Head Start, three different funding streams for state-funded preschool programs and public school programs funded locally. The 12-month project has three goals:

1. to improve the experience of families whose children need early care and education;
2. to improve the regulatory experience of programs; and
3. to improve the Office of Early Childhood's administration and governance of the system.

This project is slated to be completed by November 2015 and will result in legislative changes, policy changes and process improvements across all early childhood programs birth through age five, and our State Preschool Programs in particular. See Appendix #16 – RFP Overview: Creating a Better System or Early Care and Education for Connecticut.

Collaborations at the local level are fostered by our Division of Family Supports. Four Help Me Grow program liaisons conduct regular (from 4-11 per year) regional community networking meetings in nine areas of the state for all early childhood organizations serving children birth to kindergarten. Stakeholders representing a full array of programs and services for children birth to age five meet face-to-face, typically at one of their sites, for topical information but, more importantly, to make connections within the community with their colleagues in other programs and agencies. These nine areas include all of the 14 targeted communities for this grant.

The Office of Early Childhood will ensure that the program liaisons include all Subgrantees and their early learning providers in these networking meetings to further alignment of programs and practices within the community level.

Under this grant, Office of Early Childhood will hire a family engagement/community outreach specialist to strengthen the work that our Divisions have just begun in the following ways:

- assist school readiness liaisons in outreach to isolated and hard-to-reach families for purposes of accessing expansion or improved State Preschool Slots;
- deepen family engagement practices at the local level by convening four meetings a year focused on best practices in family engagement as well as strategies tailored to the local needs of that community; and
- forge a seamless birth-to-eight continuum at the local level;

In listening to our targeted communities during the development of this grant, we heard from several that without transportation, many four-year-olds would never be able to access State Preschool Programs because their hard-to-engage families were unable to get their children to the program sites. Therefore, we built transportation funding into this grant for six of the communities and will be evaluating the effectiveness of that strategy in terms of their ability to engage those families compared to similar communities not able to provide transportation.

All of the programs under the purview of the Office of Early Childhood, including home visiting and child care providers, are now implementing the new Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS). See Appendix #2 – Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards. Copies of the CT ELDS and supporting materials were sent to early childhood professionals across the state including licensed and unlicensed child care providers, preschool and kindergarten classrooms, pediatricians, Family Resource Centers and institutions of higher education. Regardless of whether a family chooses to have their young child in a community,

school or family child care setting, all child care providers will be familiar with our state's standards and ways to help support the early learning and development of young children, making the transition into kindergarten an easier one.

In addition to work at the state level, the Office of Early Childhood is implementing a new union contract for all family child care providers receiving child care subsidy funding. In an effort to allow for family choice, child care subsidies are available for low- to moderate-income families who may choose for their child to be cared for by a family child care provider including both licensed providers and license-exempt family, friends, and neighbors. Many of the families who may be considered isolated or hard-to-reach often elect to have their child care provided through a license-exempt member of their family, a friend, or a neighbor. This may be for a number of reasons including mistrust of people outside of their family network, cultural or religious beliefs, language, or non-standard work hours. Wherever a child receives care, the Office of Early Childhood seeks to ensure that the setting is high quality. The union contract seeks to pair rate increases with required increases in quality, and for the first time, mandatory orientation sessions are required for all family child care providers receiving a child care subsidy. The orientation session brings providers together to receive important health and safety information, learn about the CT ELDS, and receive safety equipment. These sessions also serve as a learning community for providers who work in isolation.

(b) *Ensuring that the provision of High-Quality Preschool Programs will not lead to a diminution of other services or increased cost to families for programs serving children from birth through age five*;

There will be no diminution of other services to any child. Connecticut is committed to embedding the expansion and improvement spaces funded through this grant within our existing State Preschool Program structure. This grant will cover all allowable costs for the eligible children included in this grant. **In any classrooms of improved spaces where there is a mix of eligible and non-eligible children under this grant, the state is prepared to add state funding to existing State Preschool**

Slots for those non-eligible children to ensure that the entire classroom is able to benefit from added quality. If there are expansion classrooms serving both eligible and non-eligible children, the Subgrantee will be required, through the MOU, to ensure that local funds would cover the additional quality enhancements for any child not eligible for this grant who is in a mixed classroom with eligible children in expansion spaces. Although parents of children in State Preschool Programs (other than those in Head Start agencies) are required to pay on a sliding fee scale, the parents of children covered under this grant in expansion or improved spaces will not be required to pay. Therefore there will be no charge to these parents and the fees charged to the other parents of children enrolled in the State Preschool Program will remain the same.

(2) *For kindergarten through third grade these activities include—*

(a) *Ensuring that Eligible Children are well-prepared for kindergarten*;

With our Early Learning and Development Standards well-aligned to Connecticut's Core standards for K-12 (including the new K-3 Social and Intellectual Habits Standards) we anticipate sustaining gains and increasing collaboration across preschool to kindergarten and up through third grade. Just as State Preschool Programs do, programs serving eligible children funded through this grant will use the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) as the foundation for all learning. Professional development workshops and on-site coaching sessions will be provided to ensure that current and new instructional staff funded under this grant are well-versed in the CT ELDS and their implementation within the classroom. Kindergarten teachers have also been provided with these standards, allowing for alignment between preschool and kindergarten and continued growth and development along the continuum, resulting in increased rates of success in kindergarten.

The other critical component in development is a formative assessment tool, anticipated for use across the age span from birth to 72 months. While the KEA will help educators better understand children as they begin formal schooling, a formative process will be the foundation of the birth to age five portion of the assessment

system in Connecticut. Formative assessment is a collaborative practice between the educator and child designed to further, rather than evaluate, the learning process.

(b) *For kindergarten through third grade, these activities will include:*
Sustaining the educational and developmental gains of Eligible Children by—

(i) *Promoting collaboration between preschool and kindergarten teachers;* The School Readiness Preschool Program Evaluation provides specific recommendations to guide the transition to kindergarten. Transition to kindergarten will be included in the enhanced monitoring and supervision that will be provided to the Subgrantees by the school readiness liaisons, particularly in the spring of each year. These recommendations include:

1) The preschool program provides orientation to the kindergarten registration process and the kindergarten curriculum for parents of children entering kindergarten;
2) Preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers collaborate by participating in joint workshops and exchanging class visits, resources, and materials;
3) Preschool and kindergarten teachers collaborate to align the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten curriculum with the Early Learning and Development Standards and the Connecticut K-12 Core Standards;
4) Programs assist parents in registering their children by working with the public schools. The activities may include registration on site; organizing a parent trip to the kindergarten registration at the school; assisting parents with the paperwork; and providing special assistance for parents who speak languages other than English;
5) Activities are planned for children who will transition to kindergarten to give them experience and practice. These activities may include a school bus ride, social stories, and visiting a kindergarten class.
6) The preschool teacher, with a parent's permission shares the developmental profile for a child entering kindergarten with the kindergarten teacher. The profile is based on the outcomes and goals of the Early Learning and Development Standards; and

7) Preschool and kindergarten administrators provide opportunities for communication and exchange among preschool and kindergarten teachers for planning the transition process.

In addition, Connecticut has made considerable efforts to build upon the Pre-K-3rd Grade continuum. In 2010, a cross-stakeholder team was sent to Harvard to participate in the Pre-K-3rd Grade Institute led by Dr. Kristie Kauerz. In the years subsequent to the Harvard Institute, Connecticut convened two cohorts of a Connecticut 3-to-3 Institute with support from the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, Connecticut Association of Schools, EASTCONN (one of our regional educational service centers), Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents, and individual stakeholders from public schools and community-based programs. Eight communities (including two of the communities included in this grant) were required to gather cross-sector teams that included public school central office administration with the ability to commit resources as well as community-based early childhood leaders. Each cross-sector team developed an actionable plan based on the Kauerz/Coffman *Framework for Planning, Implementing and Evaluating Pre-K to 3rd Grade Approaches*. As a result of the Institute, several of the communities are now involved in a regional Prek-3rd Grade consortia and have engaged in additional work, specifically in the area of executive function through deep imaginative play. Several communities have focused on effective transition to kindergarten, making transition a thoughtful, intentional process instead of a disconnected or one-time activity. All communities have increased collaboration in their efforts to develop a coherent continuum of Pre-K to 3rd Grade services. The Office of Early Childhood is in the process of forming a statewide Pre-K to 3rd Grade Advisory body.

In June 2013, Connecticut was selected by the National Governors Association (NGA) as one of six states to participate in an 18-month Pre-K to Grade 3 Policy Academy focused on the crucial intersection of early care and education. This work has supported our efforts to develop a robust policy agenda beginning with a

Governor's Pre-K to Grade 3 Policy Symposium in 2014 aimed at building awareness and commitment across key stakeholders to support a continuum of high-quality early learning opportunities from birth through third grade. The symposium highlighted the role of community leaders, including elementary school principals. Specific tools and strategies were shared, including the Kauerz-Coffman *Framework for Planning, Implementing and Evaluating Pre-K-3rd Grade Approaches* (2013). As a result of the Policy Academy, the OEC partnered with the Connecticut State Department of Education's Talent Office to develop an *Evidence Guide for Pre-K through Grade 2 Teacher Evaluation*. This guide is based on the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching Rubric and was used by the Connecticut State Department of Education as a model for other evidence guides for other ages and content areas. Collaborative groups created this tool to aid in the teacher evaluation process from Pre-K through grade 2. The Evidence Guide for Pre-K through Grade 2 provides examples of what evaluators should see in classrooms based on the Connecticut Core of Teaching Rubric. Additionally, *A Principal's Guide to the New CT ELDS* was developed and disseminated through a partnership with the Connecticut Association of Schools.

Under a Memorandum of Agreement with the Office of Early Childhood, the University of Connecticut is designing a Pre-K to Grade 3 Leadership Program to increase the knowledge of pre-service and in-service leaders about the unique developmental period of early childhood Pre-K-to grade 3 (age 8). Improving knowledge by those leading programs for children Pre-K to grade 3 is a lever for improved outcomes for children. The program will be tailored to the needs of Connecticut elementary principals, assistant principals, PreK-3rd grade teacher leaders, early childhood directors (community and public school based), and school district central office administrators. The program is being designed to focus on curriculum and instruction, assessment practices for young children, evaluation of early childhood teachers and programs, and leading for equity, excellence and early success. When the University of Connecticut is ready to enroll its first cohort in this program in July 2015 we will ensure that any applicant working in one of the targeted high-need communities under this grant receives preference.

The University and the Office of Early Childhood have assembled an impressive advisory panel for this program:

Elizabeth Aschenbrenner, Director of Birth – Age 8 Initiatives, EASTCONN Regional Educational Service Center, Project Coordinator, Executive Function and Dual Language Learning

Craig Cooke, Ph.D., Superintendent of Windsor Public Schools, CT

Juanita Copley, Ph.D., Professor, Emerita Curriculum and Instruction Department College of Education: University of Houston

Kristie Kauerz, Ed.D, Research Assistant Professor of P-3 Policy and Leadership: University of Washington

Lois Lanning, Ph.D., International consultant for literacy and concept-based curriculum design, adjunct professor, and author

Chris Maxwell, Buffett Early Childhood Institute, University of Nebraska

Sharon Ritchie, Senior Scientist and Principal investigator First School initiative, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, UNC, Chapel Hill

Susan Rivers, Ph.D., Deputy Director and lead developer of RULER, Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, CT

Wendy Simmons, Ph.D., Assistant Director for Program Development and Common Core State Standards, Connecticut State Education Resource Center (SERC)

Steve Tozer, Director, Center for Urban Education Leadership, University of Illinois at Chicago College of Education

(ii) *Expanding access to Full-Day kindergarten*. **All of the high-need communities selected for this grant offer full-day kindergarten**. Statewide, 90 percent of Connecticut's kindergarteners are attending full-day programs (defined as 900 hours of actual schoolwork for a minimum of 180 days per year.) They are enrolled in 132 school districts that offer full-day kindergarten to all children. Twelve additional districts offer full-day kindergarten to some children, 14 offer only half-day kindergarten, and 8 districts offer half-day kindergarten to some children. In addition, 10 Charter Schools and 14 Magnet Schools offer full-day kindergarten.

One district that moved from half-day to full-day kindergarten in Fall 2013 has already been able to document a tremendous improvement in academic outcomes as indicated below:

Comparison of Student Outcomes at the end of Kindergarten

District Average*	Spring 2013 Half-Day K	Spring 2014 Full Day K	Increase
DRA 2 (Developmental Reading Assessment)	58%	76%	+18%
Word Recognition	84%	98%	+14%
Hearing/Recording Sounds	86%	94%	+8%
Number Identification	86%	94%	+8%
Quantity Discrimination	81%	92%	+11%

*Word Recognition and Hearing/ Recording Sounds are district-created assessments. Number Identification and Quantity Discrimination are subtests of the AIMSweb Test of Early Numeracy Skills. Data Source: Enfield Public Schools, September 2014

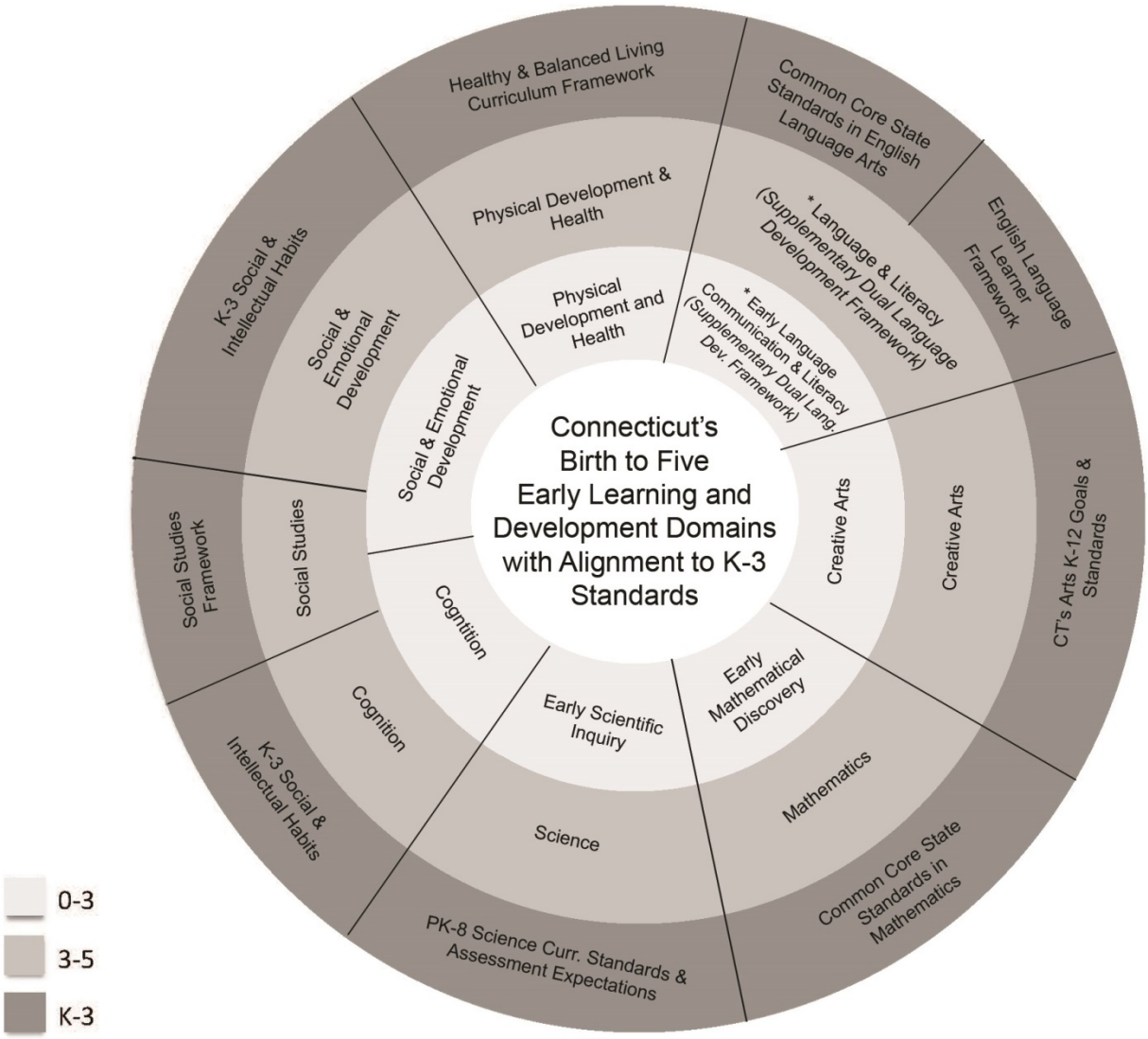
(iii) *Sustaining a high level of parent and family engagement as children move from High-Quality Preschool Programs into the early elementary school years*; Connecticut's Department of Education has been working diligently to increase parent and community engagement in all schools. All Title I districts (and all of our selected high-need communities receive Title I funding) are required to implement School-Parent Compacts under federal law. With the enhanced monitoring and supervision to be provided under this grant, we will ensure that each of our high-need communities implements these School-Parent Compacts, increasing parent and family engagement.

The State Department of Education began an initiative to improve school-parent compacts after a review found that most of the compacts described activities that did not directly affect learning. As a result, the State Department of Education issued a "School-Parent Compact Guide to Quality" to assist districts. The guide highlights quality indicators for the compacts including the school's role, the parent's role, the student's role, activities to develop partnerships, jointly developed activities, communicating about student progress, and the format and language used in those compacts. An article by several staff of the Connecticut Department of Education called "Making the Most of School-Family Compacts" was published in *Educational Leadership* in May 2011, detailing their initiative and what they saw as the keys to its success at all grade levels. These compacts will be the foundation for sustaining a high level of parent and family engagement in our 14 targeted communities..

(c) *Taking steps, or building upon the steps it has taken, to align, at a minimum—*

(i) *Child learning standards and expectations*. The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards were designed to align with Connecticut's K-3 standards from their inception. This alignment is best depicted by the chart below. The Office of Early Childhood and the State Department of Education staff have recently worked to develop K-3 Social and Intellectual Habits Standards that are aligned with the CT ELDS. Those K-3 standards were presented to a Connecticut

State Board of Education's academic subcommittee on September 24, 2014 and will be presented by the Connecticut State Department of Education to the Board for adoption sometime this calendar year. The chart below describes the alignment of Connecticut's ELDS from birth through third grade. See Appendix #2 – CT Early Learning and Development Standards.



*The supplemental Dual Language Development Framework applies to children learning multiple languages. Early learning environments must respect family language preference and honor children's development in their primary language and promote continued bilingual development.

(ii) *Teacher preparation, credentials, and workforce competencies*.

The Connecticut Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competency Framework (CKCs) for the role of the Teacher utilized multiple resources as a basis for its creation. An analysis of Connecticut competency documents associated with various credentials teacher certifications was conducted to identify the strengths and gaps in addressing a unified set of competencies that cut across each sector where an adult (the Teacher) has responsibility for one or more children. The State Department of Education's Common Core of Teaching provided some foundational ideas to the work by addressing NAEYC professional preparation standards.

Over the past three years, 13 higher education institutions at both the two-year and four-year level engaged in a review of their early childhood planned program of study as part of an application to be approved to offer a pathway leading to the OEC Early Childhood Teacher Credential (ECTC). The ECTC is based on the NAEYC professional preparation standards with additional elements such as assessment of oral competency, a 24-credit transfer agreement, and two possible endorsements; infant/toddler and/or preschool, each with practicum expectations. The development of the ECTC was a cross-agency and multi-stakeholder initiative with the intent to align higher education planned programs of study in the use of common standards and common articulation expectations. This work provided a fundamental source for the development and recent approval of the Teacher CKCs.

(iii) *Comprehensive Early Learning Assessment Systems.*

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood and the Connecticut State Department of Education are partnering with the University of Connecticut Department of Educational Psychology to develop a new Integrated Early Childhood Assessment System for use in our state. The new Integrated Early Childhood Assessment System will include two interrelated components which will replace the current

Kindergarten Entry Inventory and the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework: a Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (fully described in Section C) and a formative assessment tool, anticipated for use across the age span from birth to 72 months.

The Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) will provide information to stakeholders at the local, regional and state levels about how well-prepared children are for kindergarten.

- *Student Results*
  Families and teachers will learn about each student's skills, learning, and developmental needs, so that they can identify strengths and weaknesses of each student, resulting in individualized plans of instruction and any necessary interventions.
- *Group Results*
  School, local district, and state leaders will learn about students' levels of preparedness for kindergarten, which will facilitate programmatic decision-making at the school, district, and state levels.

The KEA will address the domains of Social Foundations, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Physical Well-Being and Motor Development through a set of selected response items, performance tasks, and observational rubrics for teachers. Census administration of the KEA will begin in September 2016.

The other critical component in development is a formative assessment tool, anticipated for use across the age span from birth to 72 months. While the KEA will help educators better understand children as they begin formal schooling, a formative process will be the foundation of the birth to age five portion of the assessment system in Connecticut. Formative assessment is a collaborative practice between the educator and child designed to further, rather than evaluate, the learning process.

Once this system is established, State Preschool Program providers will carefully review current assessment practices to determine any duplication, as the new system is likely to replace other locally used tools. It is anticipated that the new KEA and the assessment system will provide more useful information for teachers so that they can make informed decisions about how to support children in their classrooms and communities.

The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood and the Connecticut State Department of Education, with assistance from the University of Connecticut's Department of Educational Psychology, will design a system of observation and documentation based on the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards, the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Framework, the Kindergarten Entry Assessment and the formative assessment tool. The Connecticut Integrated Early Childhood Assessment System will reflect the depth and breadth of Connecticut's standards for learning and development from birth to age five which, as noted in section (i) above, are aligned with K-3 standards.

(iv) *Data systems*. The Office of Early Childhood, in conjunction with the Connecticut Department of Education (CSDE), has embarked on a multi-year, $6 million project to develop an Early Childhood Information System. The CSDE Information Technology Department is overseeing the project and is also redesigning its own public school information system and software for assigning unique identifiers to students as well as its K-12 Longitudinal Data System. We are fortunate that the same Information Technology Bureau in CSDE is in charge of both projects to ensure absolute alignment of the two systems.

By December 2014, we expect that all children in State Preschool Programs will be receiving unique identifiers that will follow them through their K-12 education, higher education, and into the workforce. Currently, only State Preschool Programs operated by public schools are able to easily assign these identifiers. This next phase will allow 450 community agencies and Head Start Programs to

also obtain these identifiers. The new Early Childhood Information System (ECIS) will, whenever possible, ensure that data fields use the Common Education Data Standards which will allow easier matching of data with the CSDE K-12 data system. One of our most important linkages will be piloted in the Fall 2015 when the new KEA data is field-tested in several districts. That will give us the opportunity to try out our ability to link early childhood data on children, settings, and workforce with KEA results. The first KEA census data collection will be completed in Fall 2016. The Office of Early Childhood's ECIS will become the "P for Preschool" in our state's P-20WIN project, managed by the Connecticut Board of Regents. That will eventually allow researchers to link early childhood, K-12, higher education, and Department of Labor data.

(v) *Family engagement strategies*. In 2013, the Family Engagement workgroup of the Early Childhood Cabinet issued a report entitled "Engage Parents as Partners and Leaders, a Guide for Early Childhood Providers." See Appendix #14 – Engaging Parents as Partners and Leaders. Those recommendations included adopting a common framework that defines parent engagement and leadership along a continuum and connects it back to child and family outcomes; ensures parent leadership is an essential part of the framework; provides training and support to parents and providers; and includes parent engagement as an essential piece to all programming and systems building initiatives. The report further offers specific recommendations for providers, for policy makers, for the community, and for parents. These recommendations are very much in alignment with what the Department of Education has found to be successful K-3 strategies.

The Early Childhood Cabinet's Family Engagement workgroup also contributed the latest thinking on family engagement which are well-aligned with work produced by the Department of Education:

- Families are the strongest influence on children's development and learning. Effective programs and providers must be knowledgeable of and responsive to the diverse needs and circumstances of all children and

families in a way that supports mutual, two-way respectful communication and support. Partnerships between families and providers are built strongest when the languages and communication styles of enrolled families enhance opportunities to work together equally in supporting individual children's development and learning.

- Early childhood programs and providers are a critical resource that can have a lasting and profound impact on early child development and school readiness. A family's early childhood program or provider is in contact with the family on a continual basis which provides opportunities to form relationships, share information, and link families to community resources. To do this effectively, programs or providers must be knowledgeable of and responsive to the needs and circumstances of all children and families, especially those of vulnerable children. Program and providers must form partnerships with community based programs and services that both meet the needs of children and families and build upon the parents' assets, knowledge, skills and networks.
- Family engagement in children's learning and development is increasingly viewed as an essential support to early childhood programs and providers. There are many different ways in which families can be involved in their children's early childhood setting and the more different opportunities are available, the more parents are likely to become involved. Programs and providers must structure a welcoming and inviting environment that is supported by policies and practices that support a culture of partnership. All parents have strengths, and when cultivated, parents take on leadership roles within the program and in the community and become effective advocates for policies that increase access to and quality of early childhood programs and services.

Ambitious and Achievable Plan: Section F

(does not include key activities from competitive priority #2)

Key Goal

To align high-quality preschool programs supported by this grant with programs and systems that serve children from birth through third grade to, among other things, improve transitions for children across this continuum.

Key Activities & Rationale

To achieve the key goal of the plan, the state is committed to the following key activities:

KEY ACTIVITY 1: Complete organizational assessment of the Office of Early Childhood to better align the structure of the department and its workforce to the work to be accomplished and aligned across the many early childhood programs transferred to the Office of Early Childhood from other agencies.

The rationale is that the existing structure of the agency was created by a planning team in 2012 based on moving entire programs from one agency to another. Since the point of bringing these programs under one agency was to align them, streamline processes for families and providers, and seek efficiencies where there is duplication of effort, a new structure is needed.

Timeline: October 2014 - June 2015

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood Strategic Planning Director (Mary Farnsworth) is the point person from the Office of Early Childhood and the Public Consulting Group is conducting the research and writing the report with recommendations. The Early Childhood Funders Collaborative is funding this project.

Supporting Evidence: Contract between the Public Consulting Group and the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative.

Performance Measures: Report with recommended changes completed. Reassignment (if needed) of Office of Early Childhood personnel, alignment of work, and decisions on the creation of new positions completed.

KEY ACTIVITY 2: Comprehensive reform and realignment of the Office of Early Childhood program infrastructure and financing to ensure access to high-quality programs for eligible children, birth through preschool.

The rationale is that various means of financing early childhood programs were formerly distributed across three agencies (Education, Social Services, and Developmental Services.) The eligibility for these programs and payment structures and reporting requirements are all different and all codified in statute or regulation. Transferring them to the Office of Early Childhood has not fundamentally changed anything about the way these programs relate to local providers or families. In order to fulfill the expectation that consolidating many programs into one state agency has created, changes to funding mechanisms, eligibility, and reporting requirements are necessary.

Timeline: January 1, 2015 - July 2016
Party or Parties responsible: Office of Early Childhood Strategic Planning Director (Mary Farnsworth) and selected contractor (to be finalized with a signed contract in late November, 2014.)
Performance Measures: Final report with recommended legislative or regulatory changes due by Fall 2015. Legislative and regulatory changes to be made 7/1/15 to 6/30/16. Full implementation of legislative changes by 7/1/15 and regulatory changes 7/1/16.

KEY ACTIVITY 3: Forge a seamless birth to eight continuum at the local level

Timeline: April 2015 – June 2019
Party or Parties: Office of Early Childhood staff hired as family engagement/community outreach coordinator, school readiness liaisons, Office of Early Childhood Family Support Division (Karen Foley-Schain Division Director.)
Supporting Evidence: Invitations from Help Me Grow program coordinators to all 14 selected communities to invite their participation in all networking meetings. Scheduling by the Office of Early Childhood staff member of quarterly meetings of all relevant community organizations in each of the 14 selected communities.

Performance Measures: Data on collaborations to be collected at each networking meeting and quarterly meeting to show improved collaboration. 85 percent of families surveyed report smooth transitions between various programs in each of the selected communities.

KEY ACTIVITY 4: Third-party evaluation of child outcomes. A contractor to conduct a third-party evaluation will be selected. The evaluation will include pre- and post- assessment of eligible children's development in the expansion and improved slots as well as pre- and post-assessment of children in existing, unimproved, State Preschool Slots.

Timeline: September 2015 – June 2019
Party or Parties: Office of Early Childhood staff member hired as grant accountability and reporting coordinator, Office of Early Childhood QRIS Manager, school readiness liaisons in the 14 selected communities.
Supporting Evidence: RFP issued, contractor selected, report submitted on results of pre- and post assessments and mid-year observation completed each year.
Performance Measures: Eligible children in high-quality State Preschool Programs funded under this grant make more developmental progress than their peers in state-funded State Preschool Programs.

Financial Resources

In-kind: state salaries and fringe of OEC staff assigned to key activities 1 through 4.

Additional state funding for third-party evaluation estimated at $3,084,009

Grant funding:

60 percent of salary of Office of Early Childhood staff member for family engagement/community outreach in years one and two of the grant: $101,751 (year one); $105,242/year (year two); ($108,739 (year 3); and $112,226 (year 4) for a total of $427,958.

20 percent of salary of Office of Early Childhood accountability and reporting coordinator for $33,917 (year 1); $35,081 (year 2); $36,246 (year 3); and $37,409 (year 4) for a total of $142,653

Third-party evaluation contractor: $328,076 (year 1); $178,251 (year 2); $189,444 (year 3); and $177,820 (year 4). Total is $873,591.

Needs of Eligible Children

High-Need Children: The Office of Early Childhood will address the needs of all eligible children under this grant in the following ways:

1. 10-hour days and year-round programming for over 60 percent of eligible children to meet families' needs and to offer a higher dosage of enrichment activities and prevent summer learning loss;
2. Transportation will be provided in those communities that indicated it was necessary to reach isolated families;
3. Comprehensive services for early identification of remediable health or development concerns; and
4. Availability of the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, a nationally-recognized statewide consultation model for early childhood mental health prevention and intervention.

Homeless children: The Early Childhood Cabinet will concentrate on homeless families with young children this coming year, attempting to focus the efforts of multiple agencies around this very vulnerable population. Particular focus will be on ensuring that these children have access to high-quality preschool. This area of concern was identified through discussions with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. To move this effort forward, the Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood has met with nonprofit housing organizations to discuss the specific needs of homeless families with young children. The Commissioner is also an Advisory Committee Member of Secure Jobs, a two-year demonstration pilot designed to increase the income of

families transitioning from homelessness to housing by connecting them to the education, training and supports, including early care and education, the need to secure and maintain stable, competitive employment.

In recent years, Connecticut's early childhood programs have made conscientious efforts in outreach to homeless families and families at-risk of homelessness. Collaborative work continues through communities, homeless shelters and transitional housing staff, the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), United Way of Connecticut, Care 4 Kids (Child Care Subsidy Program), Office of Early Childhood, Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the state Departments of Housing, Social Services, Office of Early Childhood, and Children and Families, to provide early care and education opportunities to homeless children, in ways to allow for consistent, safe and comprehensive care.

In Connecticut, during Fiscal Year 2013, the CCEH Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) had an unduplicated count of 1,113 children, ages birth to five years, served by Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing programs. Of the 14 Subgrantee communities represented in this grant proposal, five have shelters that served 21 percent of this population, as reported in HMIS. The five communities are Bridgeport, Killingly, Shelton, Torrington and Vernon. Please note that children in shelters represent only a percentage of homeless children in the state. Many homeless families double-up with friends and relatives, find other temporary shelter, or live on the streets.

The impact of homelessness on a child's success in school and in life may be devastating. By providing high-quality preschool education to children, we establish a consistent place to learn and thrive and help support the child and their family in preschool and through the transition to kindergarten through third grade.

Children in child welfare: The Office of Early Childhood will collaborate with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families to develop a plan to identify children in foster care who currently are not enrolled in high-quality preschool and make sure they are enrolled a high-quality State Preschool Program or Head Start program, pursuant to Special Act 14-22. Currently there is no mechanism in place to ensure that all foster children in Connecticut are enrolled in a high-quality preschool. This plan will create that mechanism.

Dual language learners: The Office of Early Childhood is working with the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Training and Research (UCEDD) to focus on the use of the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners. UCEDD will focus groups and a survey with home-based and center-based preschool programs to gain feedback about what would be most helpful to providers and parents to aid them in using the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners.

Children with disabilities and delays: Statutory and budgetary authority for part C and section 619 of part B of IDEA will move from the State Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services, respectively, to the Office of Early Childhood July 2015 to better align and coordinate policies, programs and services for children with disabilities and delays with all the policies, programs and services for young children in Connecticut managed by the Office of Early Childhood, including home visiting and State Preschool Programs.

G. **Budget and Sustainability (10 points)**

The extent to which the budget narrative and budget tables demonstrate that the State will -

(1) *Use the funds from this grant and any matching contributions to serve the number of children described in its ambitious and achievable plan for each year, including using the funds for the projected per child costs for new and improved State Preschool Program slots that are reasonable and sufficient and that the projected per child costs for new and improved State Preschool Program slots are reasonable and sufficient to ensure High-Quality Preschool Programs;*

Please see Budget and Budget Narrative and Competitive Priority 1

(2) *Coordinate the use of existing funds from Federal sources that support early learning and development, such as title I of the ESEA, Part C and Section 619 of IDEA, subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Act, the Head Start Act, and the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990, and State, private, local foundation, or other private funding sources for activities and services that help expand High-Quality Preschool Programs;*

The Office of Early Childhood, by July 2015, will be managing the Part C of IDEA and Section 619 of Part B of IDEA grant (other than funds passed through to the LEAs). These programs will transfer from the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services and the State Department of Education. The Office of Early Childhood currently manages the state-funded Nurturing Families Network home-visiting program as well as the Community-Based Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention grant (CBCAP) and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). Connecticut uses $9 million in Child Care and Development Block Grant funding for the State Preschool Program. However, since CCDBG requires that parents pay at least something for those preschool services. It will not be used for any child funded under this grant. For family fees, Connecticut uses a sliding fee scale from 0 percent to 10 percent of a family's income, based of the State Median Income level. A significant percentage of the Child Care and Development Fund in Connecticut is used to subsidize child care.

The state works with other organizations such as the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative that is funding the organizational assessment of the Office of Early Childhood, to align the OEC structure and workforce across all of the programs we now manage. In addition, the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund, a private philanthropic organization, provides funding to 53 communities in the state to enhance the early childhood planning efforts. The Office of Early Childhood provides state funding to supplement Head Start programs in the state. The State Head Start Collaboration Office is in the Office of Early Childhood and works directly with the other divisions in the office linking Head Start programs to services in the state. Many Head Start programs also receive State Preschool Program funding for additional slots and additional hours to provide continued early learning opportunities for children.

In recent years Connecticut's early childhood programs have made conscientious efforts in outreach to homeless families and families at-risk of homelessness. Collaborative work continues through communities, homeless shelters and transitional housing staff, the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), United Way of Connecticut, Care 4 Kids (Child Care Subsidy Program), Office of Early Childhood, Head Start State Collaboration Offices, Connecticut State Department of Education, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance resources, and the state Departments of Housing, Social Services, and Children and Families, to provide access and opportunities for early care and education to homeless children, in ways to allow for consistent, safe and comprehensive care.

In Connecticut, during FFY 2013, the CCEH Homeless Management Information System had an unduplicated count of over 1,000 (1,113) children, ages birth to five years, served by Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing programs. Of the 14 towns represented in this grant proposal, five have shelters that served 21 percent (235 children birth to age five) of this population, as reported in HMIS.

Connecticut, through the Office of Early Childhood and its partner organizations, is working to coordinate funding and resources to bridging gaps for families at risk and

experiencing homelessness, into high-quality services, early care and education, and comprehensive child and family supports.

(3) Sustain the High-Quality Preschool Programs supported by this grant after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Eligible Children with access to High-Quality Preschool Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded, including to additional High-Need Communities

Connecticut is firmly committed to sustaining the High-Quality State Preschool Programs after the grant period ends in December 2019. **The Office of Early Childhood will reallocate available state funding for State Preschool Programs to ensure that the 428 expansion and 284 improved spaces in these 14 communities continue.** In the meantime, Connecticut will find ways to further improve our existing 13,935 State Preschool spaces as we also seek to expand by another 3,000 spaces over the next three years plus implement a Connecticut Smart Start program of funding for local school districts to serve three- and four-year-olds with certified teachers in programs operated by the local Boards of Education. The $205 million Smart Start initiative funded over a 10-year period has the potential to expand the State Preschool Program by another 2,000 slots. Bond funding for capital improvements ($15 million this year) begins in Fiscal Year 2015 and operating funding begins as early as July, 2015 for Fiscal Year 2016. A Request for Proposals is under development and will be issued by the Office of Early Childhood in November, 2014.

Our plan is that through the state's expansion funding in the next four years, and with the expertise of a consultant group that will be contracted this fiscal year to complete an 12-month study of how best to blend and streamline the many different state and federal preschool funding streams to maximize funding we are currently managing, we will be able to sustain and expand high-quality preschool programs as defined by this grant for high-need three- and four-year-olds in Connecticut. We realize that the current annual rates of $6,000 per child for a school-day/school year and $8,670 per child for a 10-hour day/year-round are inadequate to achieve the level of quality we want for our children.

We propose rates in this grant of $12,800 for school day and $18,200 for full-day, full-year and will monitor costs and expenditures by our Subgrantees to determine whether those are appropriate rates for purposes of planning universal access for all high-need three- and four-year- olds. See Appendix #16 – RFP Overview Creating a Better System of Early Care and Education for Connecticut. See Section F High Quality Plan for additional detail.

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Contributing Matching Funds (up to 10 points).

Over the four years of the grant, the budget and plan demonstrate a **65 percent** state match of state funds to federal funds, equal to **$30,917,955**. The match is directed toward high-quality preschool improved spaces for eligible children and for state infrastructure, including the state's investment in funding for State Fiscal Year 2015 over the expenditures in State Fiscal Year 2014 for the State's Preschool Program. This match reaches the highest level of the competitive preference of 50 percent or more in Competitive Preference Priority 1 for "Contributing Matching Funds."

Connecticut is committed to improving to quality and comprehensive services in the State Preschool Program through this grant and to sustaining these efforts after the grant is completed. A state funding match will support the work of this grant and the state level infrastructure will also sustain the work and align with the structure and intent of the grant.

Competitive Priority 1 Table						
Types of Match	*Increased* State Funding in Fiscal Year 2014 (SFY15)	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	**TOTAL**
State	14,450,697	3,584,573	4,710,895	4,710,895	3,460,895	30,917,955
Local						0
Philanthropic						0
Other						0
Overall Match	14,450,697	3,584,573	4,710,895	4,710,895	3,460,895	30,917,955

This state match includes the increase from State Fiscal Year 2014 to State Fiscal Year 2015 for the State Preschool Program slots and quality enhancements of $14,450,697. the State Preschool Program of $14,450,697, and includes the state funding for 16 new Child Care Licensing staff with mid-range salary of $69,628 + $55,702 (80 percent) in benefits, and one new Child Care Licensing Supervisor positions with mid-range salary of $79,872 + $63,898 (80 percent) in benefits are included in the match. Twelve of the sixteen are included in the Year 1 match, to allow for any potential delays in hiring. The state match includes $1,311,839 in state funds each year for the current State Preschool Program spaces being improved in the 13 Competitive districts. Also included in the state match for infrastructure is $3,125,000 from the $6 million in state bond funds for the integrated Early Childhood Information System (ECIS). This system

will provide a mechanism for streamlined reporting and data analysis and help support a coordinated system of early care and education in Connecticut. This demonstrates Connecticut's intent and work for sustainable infrastructure and the opportunity for continued program evaluation and review of the success of children from birth through Grade 12. The ECIS will be built to link to the State Longitudinal Data System for Pre-K through Grade 12 and the P-20WIN system that includes Higher Education and Workforce data. This commitment to quality and safety is shown in the state level infrastructure line in Table A. Part II, 2A. This commitment to quality and safety is shown in the state level infrastructure line in Table A. Part II, 2A.

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting a Continuum of Early Learning and Development (up to 10 points)

Key Goal

To create a more seamless progression of supports and interventions from birth through third grade for a defined cohort of eligible children and their families within each high-need community served by each Subgrantee.

Key Activities & Rationale

To achieve the key goal of the plan, the state is committed to the following key activities:

KEY ACTIVITY 1: Track data on children residing in the 14 selected communities who are enrolled in MIECHV or state-funded home-visiting programs. (Each of the selected communities has at least one home-visiting program that serves their town.) Starting with the cohort of children born in 2015 (and each birth cohort thereafter) who will be enrolled in home-visiting programs prenatally or within 30 days of their birth, we will assign unique identifiers and begin the process of collecting longitudinal data to track their progress during home visiting enrollment (and/or IDEA Part C enrollment), as they enter into State Preschool Programs or Head Start and/or IDEA Part B Section 619 (information on type and dosage of program and types of services provided), as they enter kindergarten (KEA data), and eventually, into third grade (test scores).

The rationale for monitoring the transition of age cohorts of children through an array of early childhood programs in these 14 selected communities would be to pilot a method of ensuring that children are transitioned successfully and are not lost to the system. This type of longitudinal tracking will be expanded statewide when the Early Childhood Information System is fully developed and implemented.

Timeline: January 1, 2015 - June 30, 2019

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood MIECHV staff (Karen Foley-Schain Division Director) and contractors will begin data collection and will maintain the child's record while enrolled.

The Office of Early Childhood staff member hired for monitoring, supervision, and reporting will track and collect data maintained by the Subgrantees during the children's enrollment in State Preschool Programs. The Office of Early Childhood data and accountability coordinator, an existing state-funded position, will report aggregate kindergarten entry assessment data on each birth cohort as they enter kindergarten and will coordinate with the Connecticut Department of Education Bureau of Research and Evaluation on reporting of aggregate third grade mastery testing results for each birth cohort.

Performance Measures: Annual data report on children residing in the 14 selected communities as they progress through the continuum of services for children from birth through third grade.

KEY ACTIVITY 2: The Office of Early Childhood, Family Support Division, will require MIECHV-funded and state-funded home-visiting contractors using the Parents as Teachers, Nurse-Family Partnership, and Early Head Start models to retain children until preschool age (if at all possible) in order to better inform these hard-to-reach or isolated parents (including parents who speak languages other than English) in the 14 selected communities about high-quality preschool options available through the State Preschool Program or Head Start for children turning three.

The rationale is that home visitors establish long-term relationships with these families in the three years preceding preschool enrollment and would be in a good position to inform the families on their caseloads about the value of high-quality preschool experiences and to choose high-quality preschool when their children reach preschool age. Since these families are not typically well-connected to the early childhood system in their communities or with the local public schools, they tend to choose early care and education from informal care networks rather than seeking higher quality.

Timeline: January 1, 2015 - June 30, 2019

Party or Parties responsible: Office of Early Childhood MIECHV staff (Karen Foley-Schain Division Director) and home-visiting contractors.

Performance Measures: The percentage of children remaining in MIECHV-funded or state-funded home visiting programs until the age of three will increase over the four years of the grant.

KEY ACTIVITY 3: The Office of Early Childhood will enter into an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with all Early Head Start programs serving the 14 selected communities to ensure that parents of enrolled children are well informed about high-quality preschool options available through the State Preschool Program or Head Start for children turning three and that the parents are assisted to visit Head Start Programs and State Preschool Programs to meet the staff and other parents.

Timeline: MOU in place no later than July 1, 2015

Party or Parties: Head Start Collaboration Office (Grace Whitney) and all Early Head Start programs serving children in the 14 selected communities.

Supporting Evidence: A signed Memorandum of Understanding

Performance Measures: The percentage of children in the 14 selected communities who exit Early Head Start at age three and enter a high-quality preschool program will increase over the four years of the grant.

KEY ACTIVITY 4: The Office of Early Childhood, Division of Family Support will ensure that home-visiting program contractors assist parents of children in these 14 selected communities to visit State Preschool Programs or Head Start Programs and meet the staff and other parents as their children approach age three.

Timeline: July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2019

Party or Parties: OEC Division of Family Support staff (Karen Foley-Schain, Division Director) and home-visiting contractors.

Supporting Evidence: Activity reports submitted by contractors

Performance Measures: The percentage of children exiting from home visiting programs at age three and enrolling in high-quality State Preschool Programs will increase over the four years of the grant.

KEY ACTIVITY 5: The Office of Early Childhood, Division of Early Intervention, will require IDEA Part C providers to include local State Preschool Program information on the transition plan for all children living in the 14 selected communities, to actively work to enroll children not eligible for early childhood special education and related services in State Preschool Programs at age three, and to invite (with parent consent) a local State Preschool Program representative to each transition conference for children not seeking to enroll in early childhood special education programs.

Timeline: Beginning July 1, 2015

Party or Parties Responsible: Early Intervention Division Director and IDEA Part C Coordinator Lynn Johnson and Birth to Three System staff and contractors.

Supporting Evidence: Policy directive to Birth to Three System local programs serving any of the 14 selected communities.

Performance Measures: The percentage of children exiting from Birth to Three programs at age three in the 14 selected communities and enrolling in high-quality State Preschool Programs will increase over the four years of the grant.

KEY ACTIVITY 6: The Office of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Education, will require State Preschool Program Subgrantees funded under this grant to negotiate formal inter- or intra-agency agreements with their local school district's early childhood special education coordinator to formalize the process of referral and transition for any enrolled child, including the involvement of the child's teacher in the IEP meeting (at the request of the parent). Conduct an annual survey and request aggregate special education data from the Connecticut Department of Education to determine the effectiveness of the agreements. The rationale is that written agreements between the local State Preschool Programs and the local school district with which all personnel are familiar will contribute to a smoother process for families of children who require special education and related services.

Timeline: July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2017

Party or Parties: OEC Early Care and Education Division staff (Division Director Harriet Feldlaufer), school readiness liaisons in the selected communities, Directors of Special Education and early childhood special education coordinators in the selected communities, state IDEA Part B Section 619 coordinator.

Supporting Evidence: Completed agreements

Performance Measures: Annual parent, provider, school district surveys, and special education data will indicate that the process of identification and referral for children potentially eligible for special education and related services was handled efficiently and in compliance with the requirements of IDEA Part B regulations.

KEY ACTIVITY 7: The Office of Early Childhood in collaboration with will the State Department of Education Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services & Adult Education will develop an on-line toolkit on transition to kindergarten. Work with stakeholders on this toolkit will include the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) team under this grant that includes the 14 school readiness liaisons and the Office of Early Childhood, the family engagement/community outreach staff member, and some selected districts that have already implemented successful pre-K to kindergarten transition programs. The toolkit will be piloted in the 14 targeted communities under this grant before introducing it statewide to all State Preschool Programs.

Timeline: July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2017

Party or Parties: Office of Early Childhood family engagement/community outreach staff member, Division Early Care and Education staff (Harriet Feldlaufer, Division Director) CSDE Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education (John Frassinelli, Bureau Chief). The toolkit will be developed by staff from both agencies and posted on the websites of both agencies.

Supporting Evidence: Completed toolkit posted on Office of Early Childhood and State Department of Education websites.

Performance Measures: 85 percent of families surveyed will report a smooth transition from preschool to kindergarten.

KEY ACTIVITY 8: The University of Connecticut Pre-K to Grade 3 Leadership Program will enroll its first cohort of educators and child care administrators that will include participants from the selected communities.

Timeline: July, 2015

Party or Parties Responsible: Office of Early Childhood Early Care and Education Division (Harriet Feldlaufer, Division Director) and University of Connecticut Leadership Program, Karen List, Ph.D. program director.

Supporting Evidence: List of enrollees in Pre-K to Grade 3 Leadership Program by community

Performance Measures: As a result of completion of this program, participants will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the special considerations for curriculum, instruction and assessment for children pre-K to Grade 3 as measured by pre- and post-assessments of participants.

Financial Resources

In-kind: state salaries and fringe of Office of Early Childhood and State Department of Education staff assigned to key activities 1 through 8.

Grant funding: 20 percent of salary of grant-funded Office of Early Childhood Accountability and Reporting Coordinator: $33,917 (year one); $35,081 (year two); $36,246 (year 3); and $37,409 (year 4) for a total of $142,653.

Needs of Eligible Children

High-Need Children: The Office of Early Childhood will address the needs of all eligible children under this grant in the following ways:

1. 10-hour days and year-round programming for over 60 percent of eligible children to meet families' needs and to offer a higher dosage of enrichment activities and prevent summer learning loss;

2. Transportation will be provided in those communities that indicated it was necessary to reach isolated families;
3. Comprehensive services for early identification of remediable health or development concerns; and
4. Availability of the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership, a nationally-recognized statewide consultation model for early childhood mental health prevention and intervention.

Homeless children: The Early Childhood Cabinet will concentrate on homeless families with young children this coming year, attempting to focus the efforts of multiple agencies around this very vulnerable population. Particular focus will be on ensuring that these children have access to high-quality preschool. This area of concern was identified through discussions with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. To move this effort forward, the Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood has met with nonprofit housing organizations to discuss the specific needs of homeless families with young children. The Commissioner is also an Advisory Committee Member of Secure Jobs, a two-year demonstration pilot designed to increase the income of families transitioning from homelessness to housing by connecting them to the education, training and supports, including early care and education, the need to secure and maintain stable, competitive employment.

In recent years, Connecticut's early childhood programs have made conscientious efforts in outreach to homeless families and families at-risk of homelessness. Collaborative work continues through communities, homeless shelters and transitional housing staff, the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness (CCEH), United Way of Connecticut, Care 4 Kids (Child Care Subsidy Program), Office of Early Childhood, Head Start State Collaboration Office, and the state Departments of Housing, Social Services, Office of Early Childhood, and Children and Families, to provide early care and education opportunities to homeless children, in ways to allow for consistent, safe and comprehensive care.

In Connecticut, during Fiscal Year 2013, the CCEH Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) had an unduplicated count of 1,113 children, ages birth to five years, served by Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing programs. Of the 14 Subgrantee communities

represented in this grant proposal, five have shelters that served 21 percent of this population, as reported in HMIS. The five communities are Bridgeport, Killingly, Shelton, Torrington and Vernon. Please note that children in shelters represent only a percentage of homeless children in the state. Many homeless families double-up with friends and relatives, find other temporary shelter, or live on the streets.

The impact of homelessness on a child's success in school and in life may be devastating. By providing high-quality preschool education to children, we establish a consistent place to learn and thrive and help support the child and their family in preschool and through the transition to kindergarten through third grade.

Children in child welfare: The Office of Early Childhood will collaborate with the Connecticut Department of Children and Families to develop a plan to identify children in foster care who currently are not enrolled in high-quality preschool and make sure they are enrolled a high-quality State Preschool Program or Head Start program, pursuant to Special Act 14-22. Currently there is no mechanism in place to ensure that all foster children in Connecticut are enrolled in a high-quality preschool. This plan will create that mechanism.

Dual language learners: The Office of Early Childhood is working with the University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities, Education, Training and Research (UCEDD) to focus on the use of the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners. UCEDD will focus groups and a survey with home-based and center-based preschool programs to gain feedback about what would be most helpful to providers and parents to aid them in using the CT ELDS with children with disabilities and children who are dual language learners.

Children with disabilities and delays: Statutory and budgetary authority for Part C and section 619 of Part B of IDEA will move from the State Department of Education and the Department of Developmental Services, respectively, to the Office of Early Childhood July 2015 to better align and coordinate policies, programs and services for children with disabilities and delays with all the policies, programs and services for young children in Connecticut managed by the Office of Early Childhood, including home visiting and State Preschool Programs.

Competitive Preference Priority 3: Creating New High-Quality State Preschool Program Slots (0 or 10 points)

To receive a competitive preference under this priority, the State must demonstrate how it will use at least 50 percent of its Federal grant award to create new State Preschool Program slots that will increase the overall number of new slots in State Preschool Programs that meet the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs.

Connecticut is spending more than 50 percent of its Federal grant award to create new State Preschool Program slots that meet the definition of High-Quality Preschool Programs as defined in this grant. Over the four-year grant, Connecticut proposes to spend $47,566,327, of which $31,860,252 is for *new* State Preschool Program spaces, or 67 percent. The expansion funding includes per child cost, start-up costs, transportation, coordination and monitoring, and high-quality professional development. Over the four-year period, we propose to spend $13,327,760 for *improved spaces*, or 28 percent of the total grant.

In Year 1, Connecticut proposes to spend $8,471,313 for *new* State Preschool Program spaces, or 68 percent, and $3,331,940 for *improved spaces*, or 27 percent of the total Year 1 grant budget. In Years 2, 3, and 4, Connecticut proposes to spend $7,796,313 for *new* State Preschool Program spaces, or 67 percent, and $3,313,940 for *improved spaces*, or 29 percent of the Year 2, 3 and 4 grant budget.

	New Spaces	%	**Improved Spaces**	%	**Total for Spaces**	**%**	**Infrastructure**	**%**
Year 1	$8,471,313	68%	$3,331,940	27%	$11,803,253	94.4%	$695,747	5.6%
Year 2	$7,796,313	67%	$3,331,940	29%	$11,128,253	95.2%	$560,856	4.8%
Year 3	$7,796,313	67%	$3,331,940	29%	$11,128,253	95.2%	$560,856	4.8%
Year 4	$7,796,313	67%	$3,331,940	29%	$11,128,253	95.2%	$560,856	4.8%
Program	**$31,860,252**	**67%**	**$13,327,760**	**28%**	**$45,188,012**	**95.0%**	**$2,378,315**	**5.0%**

TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDS: $47,566,327 ($45,188,012 + $2,378,315)

Budget and Sustainability – Budget Summary and Budget Narrative

OVERALL STATEWIDE BUDGET					
Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category (Evidence for selection criterion (G))					
Budget Categories	**Grant Year 1 (a)**	**Grant Year 2 (b)**	**Grant Year 3 (c)**	**Grant Year 4 (d)**	**Total (e)**
1. Personnel	$ 188,428	$ 194,892	$ 201,368	$ 207,826	**$ 792,514**
2. Fringe Benefits	$ 150,742	$ 155,914	$ 161,094	$ 166,260	**$ 634,010**
3. Travel	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	**$ 6,000**
4. Equipment					**$ -**
5. Supplies	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	**$ 4,800**
6. Contractual	$ 347,627	$ 201,100	$ 189,444	$ 177,820	**$ 915,991**
7. Training Stipends	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**
8. Other	6250	6250	6250	6250	**$ 25,000**
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	**$ 695,747**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 2,378,315**
10. Indirect Costs*					**$ -**
11. Funds to be distributed to Subgrantees	$ 11,803,253	$ 11,128,253	$ 11,128,253	$ 11,128,253	**$ 45,188,012**
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance					$ -
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	**$ 12,499,000**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 47,566,327**
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State's plan	$ 3,584,573	$ 4,710,895	$ 4,710,895	$ 3,460,895	**$ 16,467,258**
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	**$ 16,083,573**	**$ 16,400,004**	**$ 16,400,004**	**$ 15,150,004**	**$ 64,033,585**

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first $25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to Subgrantees. At the time of application, States are not required to provide budgets for how the Subgrantees will use these funds. However, as stated in Program Requirement (o), grantees must submit scopes of work for the State and for each Subgrantee within 90 days of receipt of an award, and these scopes of work must contain, among other items, detailed budgets. Additionally, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that Subgrantees spend these funds in accordance with the State plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside $25,000 annually from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in Preschool Development Grant technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Subgrantees evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

Budget Summary

The budget outlines proposed funding and costs associated with the implementation of the state's plan. It includes Subgrantee preschool program costs for expansion of new spaces and improvement to existing spaces to serve eligible four-year olds, as well as funding and costs associated with the state's preschool and early care and education infrastructure, quality improvement initiatives, early childhood reporting, monitoring, and evaluation.

The Subgrantees for this initiative are the 14 school readiness councils in the following communities: Bridgeport, Derby, East Haven, Griswold, Groton, Hamden, Hebron, Killingly, Manchester, Naugatuck, Seymour, Torrington, Vernon, and Wolcott. The school readiness councils for each community are represented by the Mayor or First Selectman of the local municipality, the Superintendent of Schools, and a fiduciary. The preschool expansion and improved spaces for eligible children are expected to be located at forty different early learning provider sites in the 14 communities. The inclusion of a larger number of communities and program locations, allows the state's plan for high-quality State Preschool Programs to have greater impact and sustainability at the local and state levels. This budget makes the first strides in increased compensation for preschool education teaching staff and builds greater capacity throughout the state for comprehensive services, coaching, professional development and family engagement.

Statewide Budget

OVERALL STATEWIDE BUDGET					
Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category (Evidence for selection criterion (G))					
Budget Categories	**Grant Year 1 (a)**	**Grant Year 2 (b)**	**Grant Year 3 (c)**	**Grant Year 4 (d)**	**Total (e)**
1. Personnel	$ 188,428	$ 194,892	$ 201,368	$ 207,826	**$ 792,514**
2. Fringe Benefits	$ 150,742	$ 155,914	$ 161,094	$ 166,260	**$ 634,010**
3. Travel	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	**$ 6,000**
4. Equipment					**$ -**
5. Supplies	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	**$ 4,800**
6. Contractual	$ 347,627	$ 201,100	$ 189,444	$ 177,820	**$ 915,991**
7. Training Stipends	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**
8. Other	6250	6250	6250	6250	**$ 25,000**
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	**$ 695,747**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 2,378,315**
10. Indirect Costs*					**$ -**
11. Funds to be distributed to Subgrantees	$ 11,803,253	$ 11,128,253	$ 11,128,253	$ 11,128,253	**$ 45,188,012**
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance					$ -
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	**$ 12,499,000**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 47,566,327**
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State's plan	$ 3,584,573	$ 4,710,895	$ 4,710,895	$ 3,460,895	**$ 16,467,258**
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	**$ 16,083,573**	**$ 16,400,004**	**$ 16,400,004**	**$ 15,150,004**	**$ 64,033,585**

Budget Narrative

The budget is structured to support the state's ambitious and achievable plan for the four years of the grant and to sustain these efforts. The budget allocates 95% of the federal funding to the Subgrantees for 428 new expansion spaces and 284 improved spaces, at high levels of quality as defined in this grant. For the state level infrastructure, 5% of the federal funds will support the work of two state employees, professional development, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of the state's ambitious plan for our most at-risk four-year olds living in the selected communities.

Competitive Priority 1

Over the four years of the grant, the budget and plan demonstrate a **65%** state match of state funds to federal funds, equal to **$30,917,955,** directed toward improved spaces and state infrastructure, including the state's investment in funding for State Fiscal Year 2015 over the expenditures in SFY 2014 for the State's Preschool Program. This match reaches the highest level of the competitive preference of **50% or more** in **Competitive Preference Priority 1** for **"Contributing Matching Funds."**

Competitive Priority 2

The budget and plan also demonstrate that funding is appropriate to ensure the state's success in meeting the requirements of **Competitive Preference Priority 2** in **"Supporting a Continuum of Early Learning and Development."** Additional details and evidence of the activities relating to offering a broader continuum of comprehensive high-quality supports and services, transitions for children and families, and ensuring consistent high-quality early learning opportunities are documented in sections C, E, and F of this application. Other services and collaboration efforts to help strengthen and stabilize families will build upon the communities' connection to Head Start and Early Head Start, home visiting, adult education, Family Resource Centers, housing, child welfare, food security, health and mental health services. This priority for supporting the continuum of care will be evident in the MOU program requirements with the Subgrantees and in contracts or MOUs between the Subgrantees and the early learning providers.

Competitive Priority 3

The budget and plan also demonstrate that **$31,860,252 (67%)** of the federal funds will be directed toward **expansion spaces**, which is well above the 50% required to meet the **Competitive Preference Priority 3** for **"Creating New High-Quality State Preschool Program Slots."** The evidence and details regarding the Expansion and Improved spaces is shown in this budget section and further expanded on throughout the application.

Selection Criteria

The budget supports the state's ambitious and achievable plan described in sections A through F. and provides reasonable and sufficient funding to ensure High-Quality Preschool Programs by creating new and improving existing State Preschool Program spaces for eligible four-year old children. The evidence of budget amounts and categories is shown on the budget and budget narrative pages. Below is a summary of the Selection Criteria for the grant.

A. Executive Summary

Connecticut will use the Preschool Development Grant – Expansion Grant to build on the strong infrastructure of our existing State Preschool Program. This strong foundation has translated into high national rankings for Connecticut.

***We see this grant as an unparalleled opportunity to invest in areas that will greatly enhance the quality of our existing State Preschool Programs*.** Connecticut's ambitious and achievable plan will build off our existing strong state preschool infrastructure to expand access to high-quality State Preschool Programs for 428 children and to improve the quality of State Preschool Programs for another 284 children, for a total of 712 four-year-olds who are at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line in 14 high-need communities.

B. Commitment to State Preschool Programs

Connecticut's legacy of providing center-based child care services dates back to the late 1960s with the establishment of our Child Day Care Centers, which are supported with state funds and federal funds. In 1997, landmark legislation established the state-funded School Readiness preschool program. School Readiness and Child Day Care Centers are Connecticut's two major State Preschool Programs. Currently, they are two separate funding

streams. Work is underway to align policies, implementation, and quality, with the plan to integrate them into a single program. The Office of Early Childhood will soon contract with a consultant to undergo a 12-month process to integrate our early care and education programs.

C. Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs

Connecticut currently has a robust early childhood infrastructure with a recently established Office of Early Childhood that has already produced many of the examples listed in Section C including: the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards, program standards, upgrading workforce requirements, ongoing work toward a statewide longitudinal data system, a statewide quality improvement system, a comprehensive early learning assessment system and a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (described great detail in (3) below). The state will continue to enhance this infrastructure using existing state funds.

Currently, all school readiness programs must complete a "Connecticut School Readiness Preschool Program Evaluation System" which, in addition to collecting demographic information, measures compliance with quality indicators for programs that are not yet NAEYC accredited or Head Start approved and measures parent satisfaction with the program. The evaluation also measures parent satisfaction as well as quality components including: Collaboration, Parent involvement, Education and outreach, Referrals for Health Services, and Nutrition Services.

Financial Resources in Section C:

In-kind: State salaries and fringe of OEC staff assigned to key activities

State bond funds for Early Childhood Information System

State funds for University of Connecticut work on KEA

Grant funding:

20 percent of salary and fringe of OEC accountability and reporting coordinator: $33,917 (year one) and $35,085 (year 2); $36,246 (year 3); and $37,408 (year 4). Total $142,656

CLASS Training $42,400

Third-party evaluation contractor: $328,076 (year 1); $178,251 (year 2); $189,444 (year 3); and $177,820 (year 4). Total is $873,591.

D. **Expanding High-Quality Preschool Programs in Each High-Need Community**

Connecticut has selected 14 High-Need Communities for this grant. In Connecticut we define High-Need Communities as those communities with

(i) the highest rates of students receiving Free or Reduced School Meals, lowest rates of maternal education, and lowest student state mastery test scores. The school readiness councils in these 19 Priority Communities now receive 86 percent of the funding that supports 13,935 three- and four-year-olds.

(ii) or are either among the 50 poorest towns in the state and or who operate one or more schools in which at least 40 percent of the students are eligible for Free and Reduced School Meals and are labeled "competitive" communities.

Financial Resources for Section D

In-kind: state salaries and fringe of OEC staff assigned to key activities

E. **Collaborating with Each Subgrantee and Ensuring Strong Partnerships**

The role of the State and the Subgrantee will be based on the existing school readiness council infrastructure put forth by the State both in statute and in written internal policies and guidance. The Office of Early Childhood will oversee the Preschool Development Expansion program, having ultimate authority regarding finances, program quality, standards implementation, and compliance with all grant requirements.

The Office of Early Childhood will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the school readiness council in each community, which will serve as the Subgrantee. The fiduciary for the school readiness council is either the municipality, the local board of education or a Regional Educational Service Center (RESC). The school readiness council will subcontract with the early learning provider that will provide direct preschool service to eligible four-year-old children under this grant. The school readiness liaison serves as the

central point of contact between the early learning provider and the Office of Early Childhood regarding program quality and accountability, monitoring and support, standards implementation, program evaluation, and finance.

Financial Resources for Section E:

In-kind: state salaries and fringe of Office of Early Childhood and State Department of Education staff assigned to key activities 1 through 7.

Grant funding:

School readiness liaison salaries and benefits for each year $533,550 for a total of $2,134,200. CLASS training $42,400.

40 percent of salary and fringe for Office of Early Childhood grant accountability and reporting coordinator: $67,834 (year 1); $70,169 (year 2); $72,492 (year 3); $74,817 (year 4) for a total of $285,312

40 percent of salary and fringe for Office of Early Childhood family engagement/community outreach specialist: $67,834 (year 1); $70,169 (year 2); $72,492 (year 3); $74,817 (year 4) for a total of $285,312

F. **Alignment within a Birth through Third Grade Continuum (20 points)**

Connecticut has made significant strides toward aligning its systems and programs that serve children from birth through grade three. This progress is helping children and their families transition across the developmental continuum and ensure that programs and systems are aligned to promote positive growth and development among young children. A major contribution to this work included aligning early childhood governance within the Office of Early Childhood, a new cabinet-level agency responsible for the administration, coordination, and improvement of early childhood services in the state.

Financial Resources for Section F:

In-kind: state salaries and fringe of OEC staff assigned to key activities 1 through 4.

Additional state funding for third-party evaluation estimated at $3,084,009

Grant funding:

60 percent of salary of Office of Early Childhood staff member for family engagement/community outreach in years one and two of the grant: $101,751 (year one); $105,254/year (year two); ($108,738 (year 3); and $112,225 (year 4) for a total of $427,968.

20 percent of salary of Office of Early Childhood accountability and reporting coordinator for $33,917 (year 1); $35,085 (year 2); $36,246 (year 3); and $37,408 (year 4) for a total of $142,656

Third-party evaluation contractor: $328,076 (year 1); $178,251 (year 2); $189,444 (year 3); and $177,820 (year 4). Total is $873,591.

G. **Budget and Sustainability**

Connecticut will use the funds from this grant and any matching contributions to serve the number of children described in its ambitious and achievable plan for each year, including using the funds for the projected per child costs for new and improved State Preschool Program. The budget includes costs associated with state level infrastructure and quality improvement initiatives, as well as the local preschool program costs for expansion of 428 new spaces and improvement to 284 existing spaces, to serve eligible four-year olds. The State Preschool Program slot costs are reasonable and sufficient to ensure High-Quality Preschool Programs.

Budget Plan and Evidence

The following outlines the budget plan and evidence on how the funding for and implementation of Connecticut's ambitious plan for early care and education will be achieved by state and Subgrantee efforts. The State of Connecticut budget for the Preschool Development Grant – Expansion Grant includes a budget that is consistent with the requirements of the grant and reasonable for successful implementation of the state's plan for high-quality preschool opportunities and improvement of infrastructure supporting the needs of young children and their families. The $47,566,327 budget is shown over a four year period starting in 2015. A 65% state match will provide support and continued sustainability of quality initiatives and services.

The budget includes costs associated with state level infrastructure and quality improvement initiatives, as well as the local preschool program costs for expansion of new spaces and improvement to existing spaces, to serve eligible four-year olds.

The selection criteria and rationale for the choice of Subgrantees, high-need communities, and project proposals for implementing Connecticut's Preschool Program Plan with 14 communities, is documented in the budget and budget narrative and Section D of the application.

Budget Structure

The structure for the implementation of the plan and the budget for use of the federal Preschool Development Grant funding is organized at two levels, state and local. The overall quality improvement infrastructure for preschool programs will be provided at the state level. The monitoring, data collection, evaluation, reporting and supports for quality improvement, coordination of family engagement and outreach to hard-to-reach families, dual-language learners and children with disabilities and delays, will be provided at both the state and local levels.

The state will hire two (2) staff positions, a Family Engagement/Community Outreach Specialist and a Preschool Development Grant Accountability and Reporting Coordinator, in the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) (See Appendices #9 and #10 for Job Descriptions). These two positions will have the support of the multiple program divisions and initiatives in the OEC and its partner agencies and organizations. The Family Engagement/Community Outreach Specialist and Preschool Development Grant Accountability and Reporting Coordinator will work with the Subgrantee school readiness liaisons to implement the plan at the local level.

Improvements to programs will ensure that children are receiving the highest quality early care and education experience to succeed in school and life. The state staff and the school readiness liaisons will be responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the Subgrantees' abilities to provide and maintain consistent and reliable preschool education and services for children and families. The state and Subgrantees will demonstrate success in meeting the intended outcomes of this grant: to maintain fiscal accuracy and accountability; to provide effective and efficient

program management; and to accurately report child and program level data. The local and state level projects, implemented over the four years, will be monitored with plans for continuous improvement, to ensure compliance with the state's plan and the requirements of the federal grant.

The Subgrantees included in this grant were chosen because they have a need for expansion and improvement in preschool settings for eligible four-year olds and the demonstrated ability to reach intended positive outcomes for children and families, maintain accountability, and participate in continuous improvement and evaluation activities. The local school readiness infrastructure, collaboration, and ability to promote, support, and sustain high-quality programs will provide our State Preschool Program the necessary structure for improving the quality of care, education, health, and safety for all children. As part of this grant, funding for additional Full Time Equivalents of school readiness liaisons will be added to the existing Subgrantee budgets, according to the number of classrooms and eligible children supported by this grant.

Overall Budget Categories:

1. **Personnel:** $188,428 for two positions with annual salaries of $94,214 each and anticipated increases of approximately 3% per year to $ 97,446, $100,684, and $103,913 over the four years. The state will hire two (2) staff positions, a Family Engagement/Community Outreach Specialist and a Preschool Development Grant Accountability and Reporting Coordinator, in the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) (See Appendices #9 and #10 for Job Descriptions). Staff will provide support in community outreach, family engagement, monitoring, data collection, accountability and evaluation.
2. **Fringe Benefits:** 80% of salary is the fringe benefit rate per memo from the State Comptroller, with the actual amount and percentage dependent on the health care plan chosen by the employees. (See Appendix #17, Budget Documentation, Memorandum No. 2014-12). Fringe benefits for the two positions equal $150,742, $155, 914, $161,094 and $166,260 for years 1 through 4 respectively.
3. **Travel:** is calculated at $0.55 per mile x 14 sites x 2 site visits x 80 miles, plus $0.55 per mile x 12 meetings with liaisons x 40 miles, plus $4 to round to $1,500.

4. **Equipment:** Not budgeted
5. **Supplies:** are calculated at $1,200 and average $600 each for the Family Engagement/Community Outreach Specialist and the Preschool Development Grant Accountability and Reporting Coordinator.
6. **Contractual:** Includes training equal to $19,550 for Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) training in year one for Subgrantee liaisons, and $22,850 in year two for CLASS training for Train-the Trainer to ensure sustainability. Third-Party evaluation is budgeted from federal funds at $328,076 in Year 1, $178,251 in Year 2, $189,444 in Year 3 and $177,820 in Year 4, total equal to $873,591. Any additional funding required for this outside evaluation contract will be the responsibility of the state.
7. **Training Stipends:** Training costs shown in Contractual
8. **Other:** $25,000 calculated for the federal evaluation, monitoring and technical assistance at$6,250 each year and is set-aside for work by the state staff to coordination and communicate with Subgrantees.
9. **Total Direct Costs: $2,378,315**
10. **Indirect Costs:** The Office of Early Childhood has no indirect rate and would not be able to establish one within the three months of the grant award.
11. **Funds to be Distributed to Subgrantees:** Over the four years of the grant, a total of $45,188,012 for High-Quality Expansion ($31,860,252) and Improved ($13,327,760) Preschool Spaces with Comprehensive Services, Professional Development and Teacher compensation comparable to public school teachers. This includes Start-up Costs in Year 1, for New Classrooms at $25,000 per classroom, total equal to $675,000. The additional support for Professional Development (Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS), Leadership Development Institute (LDI), Coaching) at $5,000 per classroom, per year for 2 or more staff per classroom. Total equal to $255,000 per year. Transportation equal to $650,943 for 6 communities to transport 473 children. Subgrantee school readiness liaison costs totaling $533,550 for salaries and benefits for the 14 communities. Liaison costs at an average salary rate of $65,000 are included up to a full-time position if at least two classrooms, minus what is already funded from the state.

12. **Funds for Grantee Technical Assistance:** Coordination of work with state staff. Expenditures shown in Item #8. Other.
13. **Total Grant Funds Requested: $47,566,327**

Cost Allocation for Expansion and Improved Spaces

Connecticut has designed the plan to allow for multiple levels of improvement. Because programs are at varying levels of quality and have varying degrees of comprehensive services, professional development support and teacher compensation, this will allow programs to build upon and align existing resources, services and capacity with the high-quality State Preschool Program described in this application. Funding is determined at a per slot rate as shown further below. Funding levels were determined for slots at six hour per day for school-day, school-year and ten hours per day, year-round. Both were calculated as a percentage increase to the existing State Preschool Program rates. The per slot rates for the expansion and improved spaces is approximately 2.1 times the State Preschool Program rates to support the requirements for high-quality. The largest percent of spaces funded in the State Preschool Program and chosen by families are year-round. The school year rate was determined as a of the year-round classroom. The rate for school-year slots also factored in an amount expected as potential in-kind resources and related directly to the costs associated with rent for classroom and playground space, utilities and custodial work. school-year (6 hours/day, 10 months) and year-round (10 hours/day, 12 months). Rates for Improved spaces, with increase in hours from and existing State Preschool Space, such as Part-Day to School-Day, are equal to the rates in this plan minus the rate already paid through the State Preschool Program.

Classroom Costs including Comprehensive Services

Comprehensive services include additional staff or consultants at percentages from 5% to 20% of FTE for classrooms, including the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP), education consultants, mental health & health consultants, social workers, family outreach workers, coordinator/assessment staff, and nutritionist are included in the classroom costs including the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership. The Head Teacher will hold a Bachelor's Degree and credentials in early childhood and be paid at a salary comparable to the public school K-12 Teacher. Other teaching and classroom staff as well as administrative staff are included in the

costs, as shown below. Salary calculations were determined from average salaries documented and reported through the Connecticut Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood, Department of Labor, Office of Research, and the Subgrantees, for public school and preschool program salary and benefit rates. (See Appendix #17, Budget Documentation). Benefits are calculated at 28% which is typical of communities in this grant. The program administration costs are budgeted to be low. Please see detailed costs by position or activity in the chart shown further below. In addition,

The following costs were determined as described.

- The federal Child and Adult Care Food Program rates are used for meals and equal $0.82 for Snacks x 2 + $1.62 for Breakfast + $2.98 for Lunch.
- Professional Development is calculated at $3,750 per classroom.
- Substitutes @ $75/day for 10 days for 2 teaching staff, per year plus 4 Professional Development days per year.
- Rent is calculated at rent at 35 sq. ft. per child x 18 children x $3 per month x 12 months + 20% of that rate for playground space.
- Travel is calculated at $660 per year.
- Transportation is calculated at $1,350 per year for each classroom to include field-trips and other basic transportation needs of the program.
- Transportation of children to and from the early childhood program for 6 of the communities equals $650,943, serving 473 of the eligible children.

Comprehensive Services will be provided by all Subgrantees. Additional funding will be needed at varying degrees according to what is already provided and what improvements will be added to existing spaces and services needed for the expansion spaces. Costs for comprehensive services are included within the rate per slot. Personnel costs are calculated as a percent of the salary rates documented by the school readiness programs or as identified by the Connecticut Department of Labor, Office of Research, “Connecticut Occupational Employment & Wages, Statewide 2009.” The fringe benefit rate used in these calculations is 28%, which is typical of many of the Subgrantee community’s preschool programs.

In addition to the per slot rate, Connecticut proposes to significantly increase the opportunity to improve the outcomes for children by providing training, professional development, coaching and other supports to the staff in these classrooms as described above.

The teacher salary for these programs will be comparable to the salary for the local public school K-12 Teacher. The average salary included for public school teachers equals $52,419, per salary ranges reported by the Subgrantees in their school districts. The 2012-13 Average Teacher Salary for New Teachers Working Full-time, by Degree Level - Bachelor's (State Department of Education) starting salary ranges for new teachers from $40,883 to 46,483 with a statewide average $44,743.

Below please see a detailed list of staff, line items and the percent of a Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) or unit of cost per classroom. A classroom in Connecticut's State Preschool Program is recommended to have a total of 18 children with a staff to child ratio of 1:9.

Budget for Cost Per Classroom and Per Child Costs to determine per Child Rate

Line Item	Cost / Salary	Cost/Salary w/Benefits (28%)	% FTE / Cost, Year-Round	Year-Round Cost	School Year Cost
Teacher	$ 52,419	$ 67,096	100%	**$ 67,096**	**$ 67,096**
Assistant Teacher	$ 28,750	$ 36,800	138%	**$ 50,600**	**$ 36,800**
Floater	$ 20,750	$ 26,560	138%	**$ 36,520**	**$ 18,592**
Administration & Fiscal & Audit	$ 93,695	$ 119,930	8%	**$ 8,995**	**$ 5,996**
Clerical & Data Collection	$ 50,045	$ 64,057	20%	**$ 12,811**	**$ 9,609**
Coordinator + Evaluate, Monitor, Report	$ 65,000	$ 83,200	20%	**$ 16,640**	**$ 12,480**
Education Specialist	$ 85,000	$ 108,800	15%	**$ 16,320**	**$ 8,704**
Health & Mental Health Specialist (& ECCP)	$ 65,000	$ 83,200	5% + 18%	**$ 19,136**	**$ 19,136**
Social Services / Family Coordinator	$ 40,240	$ 51,507	20%	**$ 10,301**	**$ 10,301**
Outreach Worker & Parent Activities	$ 28,000	$ 35,840	20%	**$ 7,168**	**$ 7,168**
Nutritionist	$ 78,000	$ 99,840	8%	**$ 7,488**	**$ 4,992**
Meals & Snacks	$ 27,855	$ 27,855	100%	**$ 27,855**	**$ 17,552**
Classroom, Instructruction, & Assessment Materials	$ 6,750	$ 6,750	100%	**$ 6,750**	**$ 6,750**
Professional Development	$ 3,750	$ 3,750	100%	**$ 3,750**	**$ 3,000**
Substitutes	$ 2,625	$ 2,625	100%	**$ 2,625**	**$ 2,100**
Transportation	$ 1,350	$ 1,350	100%	**$ 1,350**	**$ 1,350**
Travel	$ 660	$ 660	100%	**$ 660**	**$ 660**
Rent	$ 22,680	$ 22,680	100%	**$ 22,680**	**$ 18,900**
Utilities	$ 2,400	$ 2,400	100%	**$ 2,400**	**$ 2,000**
Custodian & Security	$ 28,000	$ 35,840	8%	**$ 2,688**	**$ 4,480**
Playground Space	$ 4,536	$ 4,536	100%	**$ 4,536**	**$ 3,780**
Cost Per Classroom				**$ 328,370**	**$ 261,446**
Cost Per Child				$ 18,243	$ 14,525*
Rate Per Child (18)				**$ 18,200**	**$ 12,800**

* The School-Year Rates are reduced by the anticipated In-Kind Contribution in School District locations of $1,725 per space supporting line items such as Rent, Utilities, Playground Space, and Custodial & Security.

Expanded and Improved Slot Rates (to be paid per eligible child in this grant program).
See Section D, Table "Targets for each year of the Preschool Development Grant" for number of spaces to be funded as expansion and improved **.**

$12,800 EXPANSION, 6 Hour-Day, School-Year

$18,200 EXPANSION, 10 Hour-Day, Year-Round

$ 8,300 IMPROVED, 2.5 Hour-Day to 6 Hour-Day, School-Year

$ 6,800 IMPROVED, add to existing 6 Hour-Day, School-Year

$ 9,530 IMPROVED, add to existing 10 Hour-Day, Year-Round

The Budget Calculation Averages:

Expansion: $16,194 Average for Rates per Slot.

Average with Prof. Dev., Transportation, Subgrantee Liaison & Start-up Cost = $18,610

Improved: $ 9,710 Average for Rates per Slot.

Average with Prof. Dev., Transportation, & Subgrantee Liaison = $11,732

State Match for Implementation

Connecticut is committed to improving quality in the State Preschool Program through this grant and to sustaining these efforts after the grant is completed. A state funding match of **$30,917,955 (65%)** will support the work of this grant and the state level infrastructure will also sustain the work and align with the structure and intent of the grant. This match includes the increase from SFY 2014 to SFY 2015 for the State Preschool Program of $14,450,697, and includes the state funding for 16 new Child Care Licensing staff with mid-range salary of $69,628 + $55,702 (80%) in benefits, and one new Child Care Licensing Supervisor positions with mid-range salary of $79,872 + $63,898 (80%) in benefits are included in the match. The 80% rate for benefits is per the State Comptroller tax and withholding rates and average for health care insurance, per year. (See Appendix #17, Budget Documentation for Memorandum No. 2014-12). Actual health care costs are dependent on the health care plan chosen by the employee. Each position is calculated to receive an increase in salary of approximately 3% for each year following. Twelve of the sixteen are included in the Year 1 match, to allow for any potential delays in hiring. This commitment to quality and safety is shown in the state level infrastructure line in Table A. Part II, 2A. Also included in the state match for infrastructure is

$3,125,000 from the $6 million in state bond funds for the integrated Early Childhood Information System (ECIS). This system will provide a mechanism for streamlined reporting and data analysis and help support a coordinated system of early care and education in Connecticut. This demonstrates Connecticut's intent and work for sustainable infrastructure and the opportunity for continued program evaluation and review of the success of children from birth through Grade 12. The ECIS will be built to link to the State Longitudinal Data System for Pre-K through Grade 12 and the P-20WIN system that includes Higher Education and Workforce data.

Sustainability

The commitment to the success in program implementation and appropriate use of funds to further the goals of the state's ambitious and achievable plan during the four years of this grant and to sustain the work and support the systems and high-quality programs in the years after the grant has ended is evident in the budget, the plan, and application narrative. Connecticut's investment in early childhood has never been stronger. The Governor, the state Legislature, advocates, and state, community, and philanthropic organizations have created the Office of Early Childhood. It is the work of this growing agency to coordinate the infrastructure and programs and services for young children and their families. From State Fiscal Year 2014 to 2015 we have seen a significant investment in new funding, over $17 million, in quality, health and safety, comprehensive services and additional State Preschool Spaces. This includes the Governor's FY15 allocation of an additional 1,020 State Preschool spaces in Connecticut's highest-need communities. This new state funding will also and support professional development, child care licensing staff, criminal background checks, and other statewide infrastructure.

Connecticut is implementing the Smart Start program, funding local school districts to serve three- and four-year-olds with certified teachers in programs operated by the local Boards of Education. The $205 million Smart Start initiative funded over a 10-year period has the potential to expand the State Preschool Program by another 2,000 slots. Bond funding for capital improvements ($15 million this year) begins in Fiscal Year 2015 and operating funding begins as

early as July, 2015 for Fiscal Year 2016. A Request for Proposals is under development and will be issued by the Office of Early Childhood in November, 2014.

The State is going to provide additional financial support, in addition to the state match outlined above, for comprehensive services and teacher salary differential for the prorated share of costs for 176 non-eligible children in the improved classrooms, if there are at least 9 eligible children in that classroom. This will allow programs to maintain the socio-economic and age mix of three- and four-year olds determined preferable for children in these programs.

The early learning providers in the 14 Subgrantee communities have good access to other community and state resources, which provides for continued support of the early learning programs. Of the Subgrantee communities, seven have direct access to Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) services and the other 7 have state funded home visiting services, nine have Family Resource Centers providing community to school connections and services, eight have Head Start programs, two have Early Head Start Programs, four have state funded infant and toddler child care spaces, and four have state funded school age afterschool care spaces. All have access to the following Office of Early Childhood programs: Care 4 Kids child care subsidy program funded through the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF); the State's Child Care Infoline; Nurturing Families Network with the Ages to Stages Questionnaire; United Way of Connecticut 2-1-1 InfoLine and Resource and Referral system.

Extended Fiscal Year

Connecticut requests consideration for the option to budget on the State Fiscal Year, July 1 to June 30, instead of by calendar year. This was stated as a potential option on the webinar on October 3, 2014. Budgeting for the State Fiscal Year will allow us to maintain consistency with budgeting practices by the state and the local preschool programs. If permitted, the funds for 2018 would be obligated by December of 2018 and the balance liquidated by June 30, 2019.

Number of Expansion and Improved Preschool Spaces and Locations

428 New Expansion Spaces in 14 High-Need Communities

284 Improved Spaces in 14 High-Need Communities

Bridgeport

180 New Expansion Spaces

Wilbur Cross School, Bridgeport

Black Rock School, Bridgeport

PL Dunbar School, Bridgeport

Precious Memories, Bridgeport

Lovable Angels, Bridgeport

Affordable and Loving Angels, Bridgeport

90 Improved Spaces

Beardsley School, 500 Huntington Road, Bridgeport

Cesar A. Batalla School, 606 Howard Ave., Bridgeport

YMCA Kolbe Early Care and Learning Center, 401 Kossuth Street, Bridgeport

St. Mark's Day Care, 368-70 Newfield Avenue, Bridgeport

ABCD/Jamie A. Hulley Child Care Center, 460 Lafayette Street, Bridgeport

Derby

17 New Expansion Spaces

Potential facilities in Ansonia, Beacon Falls, Derby, Seymour, & Shelton

18 Improved Spaces

Lower Naugatuck Valley School Early Ch Ed Program, 80 Howard Avenue, Ansonia

East Haven

18 New Expansion Spaces

180 Prospect Road, East Haven or

290 Dodge Avenue, East Haven

18 Improved Spaces

East Haven School Readiness, East Haven

Griswold

12 **New Expansion Spaces**

Griswold High School, 267 Slater Avenue, Griswold

21 **Improved Spaces**

TVCCA-Little Learners-Griswold High School, 267 Slater Avenue, Griswold

Groton

15 **Improved Spaces**

ECDC, 591 Poquonnock Road, Groton

Hamden

18 **New Expansion Spaces**

Dunbar Hill, public school building, Hamden

Church Street, public school building, Hamden

Helen Street, public school building, Hamden

Alice Peck, public school building, Hamden

Keefe Community Center Preschool, Hamden

Private Provider location to be determined

Hebron

9 **New Expansion Spaces**

Gilead Hill School, 580 Gilead Street, Hebron

9 **Improved Spaces**

Gilead Hill School, 580 Gilead Street, Hebron

Killingly

18 **New Expansion Spaces**

Goodyear Early Childhood Center, Killingly

18 **Improved Spaces**

Goodyear Early Childhood Center, Killingly

Manchester

36 **New Expansion Spaces**

Nike Tykes Preschool Center, 255 Garden Grove Road, Manchester or

Manchester Preschool Center, 60 Washington Street, Manchester

20 **Improved Spaces**

Nike Tykes Preschool Center, 255 Garden Grove Road, Manchester or

Manchester Preschool Center, 60 Washington Street, Manchester

Naugatuck

43 **New Expansion Spaces**

Naugatuck YMCA, Naugatuck and/or

Naugatuck Daycare, Inc., Naugatuck

Seymour

5 **New Expansion Spaces**

TEAM or Seymour Public Schools Pre-School, 51 Skokorat Street, Seymour

13 **Improved Spaces**

TEAM or Seymour Public Schools Pre-School, 51 Skokorat Street, Seymour

Torrington

42 **New Expansion Spaces**

Southeast Elementary School, 184 Oak Avenue, Torrington

38 **Improved Spaces**

Litchfield County Head Start, 57 Forest Court, Torrington

Torrington Child Care Center, 338 Kennedy Drive, Torrington

Southeast Elementary School, 184 Oak Avenue, Torrington

Hilltop Christian Nursery School, 837 Charles Street, Torrington

Vernon

21 **New Expansion Spaces**

Center Road School, 20 Center Road, Vernon

15 **Improved Spaces**

Center Road School, 20 Center Road, Vernon

Wolcott

9 **New Expansion Spaces**

Children's Village, Inc., 545 Boundline Rd., Wolcott

9 **Improved Spaces**

Children's Village, Inc., 545 Boundline Rd., Wolcott

Table A

Expansion Grants

PART I. Absolute Priority 1

Instructions: For each year, please fill out the expected Federal Preschool Development Grant Funds for 1A,1C, and 1D. Nothing else should be filled out in this section. The other cells will self-populate with information; those should not be modified.

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Cumulative $	%
Allocation of Federal Preschool Development Grant Funds	$	% Funds	$	% Funds	$	% Funds	$	% Funds		
1A: State-Level Infrastructure	$695,747	5.6%	$560,856	4.8%	$560,856	4.8%	$560,856	4.8%	$2,378,315	5.0%
1B: High-Quality Preschool Programs	$11,803,253	94%	$11,128,253	95%	$11,128,253	95%	$11,128,253	95%	$45,188,012	95%
1C: New Preschool Slots	$8,471,313	68%	$7,796,313	67%	$7,796,313	67%	$7,796,313	67%	$31,860,252	67%
1D: Improved Preschool Slots	$3,331,940	27%	$3,331,940	29%	$3,331,940	29%	$3,331,940	29%	$13,327,760	28%
Total Federal Funds	$12,499,000	100%	$11,689,109	100%	$11,689,109	100%	$11,689,109	100%	$47,566,327	100%

PART II. Competitive Priority 1

Instructions: For each year, fill out the expected Matching Funds for 2A, 2C, 2D. Also, provide the increased State funding in Fiscal Year 2014 at the bottom of this section. The other cells will self-populate with information; those should not be modified.

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Cumulative $	%
Allocation of Matching Funds	$	% Funds	$	% Funds	$	% Funds	$	% Funds		
2A: State-Level Infrastructure	$2,272,734	63%	$3,399,056	72%	$3,399,056	72%	$2,149,056	62%	$11,219,902	68%
2B: High-Quality Preschool Programs	$1,311,839	37%	$1,311,839	28%	$1,311,839	28%	$1,311,839	38%	$5,247,356	32%
2C: New Preschool Slots	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%	$0	0%
2D: Improved Preschool Slots	$1,311,839	37%	$1,311,839	28%	$1,311,839	28%	$1,311,839	38%	$5,247,356	32%
Total Year 1-4 Matching Funds	$3,584,573	100%	$4,710,895	100%	$4,710,895	100%	$3,460,895	100%	$16,467,258	100%

Type of State Match	*Increased* State Funding in Fiscal Year 2014	$ from Year 1	$ from Year 2	$ from Year 3	$ from Year 4	Overall Matching Funds	Match %
2E: State Matching Funds (if applicable)	$14,450,697	$3,584,573	$4,710,895	$4,710,895	$3,460,895	**$30,917,955**	**65%**

2F: Total Funds for State-Level Infrastructure	$2,968,481	$3,959,912	$3,959,912	$2,709,912	$13,598,217	21%
2G: Total Funds for High-Quality Preschool Programs	$13,115,092	$12,440,092	$12,440,092	$12,440,092	$50,435,368	79%
2H: Total Funds for New Preschool Slots	$8,471,313	$7,796,313	$7,796,313	$7,796,313	$31,860,252	50%
2I: Total Funds for Improved Preschool Slots	$4,643,779	$4,643,779	$4,643,779	$4,643,779	$18,575,116	29%
2J: Total Program Resources	$16,083,573.40	$16,400,004.00	$16,400,004.00	$15,150,004.00	$64,033,585	100%

PART III. Selection Criterion (D)(4)

Instructions: For each year, please fill out 3A,3B,3C and 3F,3G. The other cells will self-populate with information; those should not be modified.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Cumulative
3A: Total Eligible Children	4,457	4,457	4,457	4,457	
3B: Eligible Children Served in New Preschool Slots	428	428	428	428	
3C: PPE/Slot	16,194	16,194	16,194	16,194	
3D: Estimated Cost (Rounded)	$6,931,002	$6,931,002	$6,931,002	$6,931,002	$27,724,008
3E: % Eligible Children Served in New Preschool Slots	10%	10%	10%	10%	
3F: Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots	284	284	284	284	
3G: PPE/Slot	9,710	9,710	9,710	9,710	
3H: Estimated Cost (Rounded)	$2,757,759	$2,757,759	$2,757,759	$2,757,759	$11,031,037
3I: % Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots	6%	6%	6%	6%	
3J: Total % Eligible Children Served With New and Improved Slots	15.97%	15.97%	15.97%	15.97%	
3K: Total Children Served	712	712	712	712	

Table B									
State Fiscal Year	1:State Funding	2: Local Funding	3: Philanthropic /Private Funding (if applicable)	4: Number of Four-Year Old Children	5: Number of Four-Year Olds at or below 200% FPL	6: Four-Year Olds Served in the State Preschool Program		7: Four-Year Olds at or below 200% FPL Served in the State Preschool Program	
						#	%	#	%
2014	$91,645,007	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	37,711	10,446	7900	21%	5989	57%
2013	$91,639,609	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	38,874	10,768	7850	20%	5858	54%
2012	$91,948,382	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	40,387	11,187	7326	18%	5416	48%
2011	$82,328,783	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	41,596	11,522	7304	18%	5233	45%

Competitive Priority 1 Table						
Types of Match	*Increased* State Funding in Fiscal Year 2014	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	**TOTAL**
State	14,450,697	3,584,573	4,710,895	4,710,895	3,460,895	30,917,955
Local						0
Philanthropic						0
Other						0
Overall Match	14,450,697	3,584,573	4,710,895	4,710,895	3,460,895	30,917,955
Matches Amount from Table A	Correct	Correct	Correct	Correct	Correct	Correct

Table (D)(4)

Subgrantee 1	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Bridgeport School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	90	90	90	90
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 1,061,082.67	$ 1,061,082.67	$ 1,061,082.67	$ 1,061,082.67

Subgrantee 2	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Derby School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	18	18	18	18
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 219,471.43	$ 219,471.43	$ 219,471.43	$ 219,471.43

Subgrantee 3	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
East Haven School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	18	18	18	18
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 199,840.00	$ 199,840.00	$ 199,840.00	$ 199,840.00

Subgrantee 4	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Griswold School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	21	21	21	21
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 316,100.09	$ 316,100.09	$ 316,100.09	$ 316,100.09

Subgrantee 5	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Groton School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	15	15	15	15
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 172,950.00	$ 172,950.00	$ 172,950.00	$ 172,950.00

Subgrantee 6	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Hamden School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☐ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☐ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☐ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☐ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☐ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☐ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☐ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☐ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	0	0	0	0
	Total Estimated Cost	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Subgrantee 7	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Hebron School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	9	9	9	9
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 79,950.00	$ 79,950.00	$ 79,950.00	$ 79,950.00

Subgrantee 8	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Killingly School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	18	18	18	18
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 189,400.00	$ 189,400.00	$ 189,400.00	$ 189,400.00

Subgrantee 9	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Manchester School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	20	20	20	20
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 210,242.86	$ 210,242.86	$ 210,242.86	$ 210,242.86

Subgrantee 10	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Naugatuck School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☐ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☐ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☐ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☐ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☐ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☐ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☐ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☐ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	0	0	0	0
	Total Estimated Cost	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Subgrantee 11	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Seymour School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☐ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	13	13	13	13
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 161,156.67	$ 161,156.67	$ 161,156.67	$ 161,156.67

Subgrantee 12	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Torrington School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	38	38	38	38
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 439,551.00	$ 439,551.00	$ 439,551.00	$ 439,551.00

Subgrantee 13	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Vernon School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☑ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	15	15	15	15
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 170,625.00	$ 170,625.00	$ 170,625.00	$ 170,625.00

Subgrantee 14	Breakdown	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Wolcott School Readiness Council	Methods for Improving Slots (Select as many as apply)	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services	☑ Teacher Qualifications/ Compensation ☐ Full Day ☐ Class Size/Ratio ☑ Evidence-Based Professional Development ☑ Comprehensive Services
	Total Eligible Children Served in Improved Preschool Slots (if applicable)	9	9	9	9
	Total Estimated Cost	$ 111,570.00	$ 111,570.00	$ 111,570.00	$ 111,570.00

OVERALL STATEWIDE BUDGET					
Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category (Evidence for selection criterion (G))					
Budget Categories	**Grant Year 1 (a)**	**Grant Year 2 (b)**	**Grant Year 3 (c)**	**Grant Year 4 (d)**	**Total (e)**
1. Personnel	$ 188,428	$ 194,892	$ 201,368	$ 207,826	**$ 792,514**
2. Fringe Benefits	$ 150,742	$ 155,914	$ 161,094	$ 166,260	**$ 634,010**
3. Travel	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	$ 1,500	**$ 6,000**
4. Equipment					**$ -**
5. Supplies	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	$ 1,200	**$ 4,800**
6. Contractual	$ 347,627	$ 201,100	$ 189,444	$ 177,820	**$ 915,991**
7. Training Stipends	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	**$ -**
8. Other	6250	6250	6250	6250	**$ 25,000**
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	**$ 695,747**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 560,856**	**$ 2,378,315**
10. Indirect Costs*					**$ -**
11. Funds to be distributed to Subgrantees	$ 11,803,253	$ 11,128,253	$ 11,128,253	$ 11,128,253	**$ 45,188,012**
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance					$ -
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	**$ 12,499,000**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 11,689,109**	**$ 47,566,327**
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State's plan	$ 3,584,573	$ 4,710,895	$ 4,710,895	$ 3,460,895	**$ 16,467,258**
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	**$ 16,083,573**	**$ 16,400,004**	**$ 16,400,004**	**$ 15,150,004**	**$ 64,033,585**

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Column (e): Show the total amount requested for all grant years.

Line 6: Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first $25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to Subgrantees. At the time of application, States are not required to provide budgets for how the Subgrantees will use these funds. However, as stated in Program Requirement (o), grantees must submit scopes of work for the State and for each Subgrantee within 90 days of receipt of an award, and these scopes of work must contain, among other items, detailed budgets. Additionally, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that Subgrantees spend these funds in accordance with the State plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside $25,000 annually from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in Preschool Development Grant technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Subgrantees evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Government Agency/Organization
Governor's Office
General Assembly
▪ Joint Committee on Appropriations
▪ Education Committee
▪ Human Services Committee
▪ Committee on Children
▪ Commission on Children
Government Agencies, Quasi-State Agencies and Advisory Councils
▪ Office of Early Childhood
▪ State Department of Education
▪ Office of Policy and Management
▪ Head Start Collaboration Office
▪ Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority
▪ State Education Resource Center
▪ Child Poverty and Prevention Council
▪ Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet/State Advisory Council
Philanthropy
▪ Graustein Foundation
▪ United Way of Connecticut
Business
▪ Connecticut Business and Industry Association
Advocacy Organizations
▪ Connecticut Voices for Children
▪ Connecticut Parent Advocacy
▪ Connecticut Parent Power
▪ Connecticut Association for Human Services
▪ Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance
▪ Connecticut Family Resource Center Alliance
Other Organizations and Associations
▪ Connecticut Association for Education of Young Children
▪ Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents
▪ Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education
▪ Connecticut Head Start Association
▪ Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc.
▪ Teach For America Connecticut
▪ Connecticut Children's Investment Partnership
▪ Training, Education and Manpower, Inc.

Dannel P. Malloy
GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Burwell:

I commend to you Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application that aligns with my agenda to improve the education, development, and health outcomes of young children, reduce the state's achievement gap, and prepare our children for lifelong success and learning.

As you well know, high quality early childhood education sets a foundation for our young people that they will build upon their entire lives. Since I became Governor, we are transforming how we address early childhood care and development with a comprehensive approach to delivering services to children and their parents. We created in law the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to administer a coordinated system of early childhood services and supports for children from birth to age five. We have expanded our state-funded School Readiness preschool program to serve 2,020 additional low-income three- and four-year-olds. And we created Smart Start, an opportunity for municipalities to expand high-quality early education in public school settings. We are making progress; we have created excellent early education programs that reach over 15,000 children and continue to work toward universal access to high-quality state preschool opportunities for all children in need, to raise the state's early childhood workforce standards and compensation levels, and to provide comprehensive services beyond early education.

However, there remains much work to do to provide a high quality preschool opportunity to every Connecticut child in need. The reality remains that one Connecticut child in every four enters kindergarten without the skills, knowledge, and behavioral skills needed to succeed. This constitutes one of the worst achievement gaps of any state in the country.

210 CAPITOL AVENUE, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106
TEL (860)566-4840 • FAX (860)524-7396 • www.governor.ct.gov
governor.malloy@ct.gov

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application proposes to expand our existing high-quality preschool system that currently provides early education to low-income families in our poorest communities so that we may serve an additional 428 four-year-olds in a high quality early education setting and improve quality for another 284 preschoolers. In addition we will focus on improving access to and integration of comprehensive services into our high-quality preschool classrooms while raising early education teacher compensation and significantly enhancing family engagement,

Our proposal will provide the resources necessary to support 14 communities, including Bridgeport our largest community with the greatest unmet need, to reach more youngsters in need of a high quality early learning experience. However, poverty doesn't just exist in our major cities but in pockets throughout our state. This proposal would enable Connecticut to accelerate ongoing efforts to increase access to high-quality early education in some of our most vulnerable towns.

Due to my Administration's ongoing expansion efforts, Connecticut has developed the necessary infrastructure and workforce to provide high quality opportunities. By using the existing structure of our state preschool program, Connecticut has the advantage of being able to quickly and efficiently put our most vulnerable four-year-old children from our partner communities on a path to healthy learning and growing in a high-quality early education setting with the ultimate goal of closing our achievement gap with the help of this grant.

Connecticut's application again reaffirms our historic commitment to provide high-quality early education to our state's most vulnerable preschool-age children. At its core, our Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal reflects Connecticut's belief in our fundamental responsibility to provide an opportunity for all children to succeed. It is a responsibility we fully embrace. I am proud to present to you Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application which aligns with my agenda to improve health, development and educational outcomes for young children, reduce the achievement gap and prepare our children for lifelong success and learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to apply and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor

The Connecticut General Assembly

Joint Committee on Appropriations

October 11, 2014

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Burwell,

We write to express the strong, bipartisan support of the Connecticut General Assembly's Appropriations Committee for our state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's robust Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

Despite current efforts, approximately one out of four children in our state enters Kindergarten with skills, knowledge, and behavior that are below expectations – putting them at an immediate disadvantage in reaching their educational and lifelong potential. The Appropriations Committee is committed to improving early childhood outcomes in Connecticut through participation in Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant initiative**.**

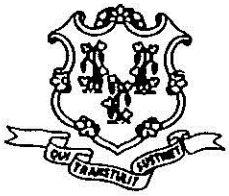
In a bipartisan effort, the Appropriations Committee has supported building on our early care and education system, most recently, formally establishing Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood in statute, expanding high-quality early education to an additional1, 020 low-income children through our School Readiness program, and creating Smart Start, an opportunity for municipalities to expand high-quality early education in public school settings.

The Office of Early Childhood was established with the vision of creating a system to consolidate existing, disparate early childhood programs and services for children from birth to age five - establishing a coordinated system that strives to:

- Reduce the academic achievement gap,
- Increase participation in early childhood education programs,
- Increase parental engagement, family literacy, and parenting skills ,
- Increase oral language development and social competence; and,
- Decrease special education placements.

The Appropriations Committee is pleased that Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, provides high-quality comprehensive services, augments professional development opportunities, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



EDUCATION COMMITTEE
ROOM 3100
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591
(860) 240-0420

October 11, 2014

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

The Honorable Silvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Burwell,

We write to express the strong, bipartisan support of the Connecticut General Assembly's Education Committee for our state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's robust Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

Despite current efforts, approximately one out of four children in our state enters Kindergarten with skills, knowledge, and behavior that are below expectations – putting them at an immediate disadvantage in reaching their educational and lifelong potential. The Education Committee is committed to improving early childhood outcomes in Connecticut through participation in Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant initiative.

Through our bipartisan work on the Education Committee, we have helped build the foundation for early learning and development that the Preschool Development Expansion Grant will build upon including, most recently, formally establishing Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood in statute, expanding high-quality early education to an additional 1,020 low-income children through our School Readiness program and creating Smart Start, an opportunity for municipalities to expand high-quality early education in public school settings.

Printed on recycled paper

The Office of Early Childhood was established with the vision of creating a system to consolidate existing, disparate early childhood programs and services for children from birth to age five. By establishing a coordinated system, our state is better positioned to achieve these critical goals:

- Reduce the academic achievement gap;
- Increase participation in early childhood education programs;
- Increase parental engagement, family literacy, and parenting skills;
- Increase oral language development and social competence; and
- Decrease special education placements.

We are pleased that Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, provides high-quality comprehensive services, augments professional development opportunities, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in these struggling communities and giving these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As leaders of the Education Committee, we fully endorse Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application and look forward to supporting its successful implementation.

Thank you for your consideration of this initiative that is so critical to the future success of the children in our state.

Sincerely,

Andrea Stillman
State Senator, 20th District
Co-Chair, Education Committee

Andrew Fleischmann
State Representative, 18th District
Co-Chair, Education Committee

Toni Boucher
State Senator, 26th District
Ranking Member, Education Committee

Tim Ackert
State Representative, 8th District
Ranking Member, Education Committee

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Senator Gayle Slossberg
CO-CHAIR

Senator Eric D. Coleman, *Vice-Chair*
Senator Joe Markley, *Ranking Member*

HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Representative Catherine Abercrombie
CO-CHAIR

Representative Charles Stallworth, *Vice-Chair*
Representative Terrie Wood, *Ranking Member*

October 11, 2014

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

As co-chairs of the Connecticut General Assembly's Human Services Committee, we write to express our strong support for our state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's robust Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

Despite current efforts, approximately one out of four children in our state enters Kindergarten with skills, knowledge, and behavior that are below expectations – putting them at an immediate disadvantage in reaching their educational and lifelong potential. The Human Services Committee is committed to improving early childhood outcomes in Connecticut through participation in Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant initiative.

The Human Services Committee focuses much of its policy work on our children and families who need a wide variety of supports to ensure they are stable, healthy and leading productive lives. Our Committee supported formally establishing Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood in statute, expanding high-quality early education to an additional1,020 low-income children through our School Readiness program, and creating Smart Start, an opportunity for municipalities to expand high-quality early education in public school settings.

The Office of Early Childhood was established with the vision of creating a system to consolidate existing, disparate early childhood programs and services for children from birth to age five - establishing a coordinated system that strives to:

- Reduce the academic achievement gap,
- Increase participation in early childhood education programs,
- Increase parental engagement, family literacy, and parenting skills ,
- Increase oral language development and social competence; and,
- Decrease special education placements.

The Human Services Committee is pleased that Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, provides high-quality comprehensive services, augments professional development opportunities, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in these struggling communities and giving these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As leaders of the Human Services Committee, we fully endorse Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application and look forward to supporting its successful implementation.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this initiative that is so critical to the future success of young children in our state.

Sincerely,

Senator Gayle Slossberg
Human Services Committee Co-chair

Representative Catherine Abercrombie
Human Services Committee Co-chair

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Co-Chairs
Senator Danté Bartolomeo
Representative Diana Urban

State Capitol, Room 011
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1591
860-240-0370

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

October 11, 2014

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell, Secretary
U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius,

We, Senator Dante Bartolomeo and Representative Diana Urban, co-chairs of the Connecticut General Assembly's Committee on Children, write to express the strong support of the Connecticut General Assembly's Committee on Children for our state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's robust Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

Despite current efforts, approximately one out of four children in our state enters Kindergarten with skills, knowledge, and behavior that are below expectations – putting them at an immediate disadvantage in reaching their educational and lifelong potential. The Committee on Children is committed to improving early childhood outcomes in Connecticut.

The Committee on Children has the unique opportunity to focus its attention on Connecticut's children, particularly those who are most at risk. Our Committee fully supported formally establishing Connecticut's Office of Early Childhood in statute, expanding high-quality early education to an additional 1,020 low-income children through our School Readiness program, and creating Smart Start, an opportunity for municipalities to expand high-quality early education in public school settings.

The Office of Early Childhood was established with the vision of creating a system to consolidate existing, disparate early childhood programs and services for children from birth to age five - establishing a coordinated system that strives to reduce the academic achievement gap, increase participation in early childhood education programs, and increase parental engagement.

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The Committee on Children is pleased that Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing programs, provide more children with high-quality early education, provide high-quality comprehensive services, augments professional development opportunities, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to expand high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in struggling communities and giving these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As the leaders of the Children's Committee, we fully endorse Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application and look forward to supporting its successful implementation.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this initiative.

Sincerely,

Danté Bartolomeo

Senator Danté Bartolomeo
Co-Chair
Committee on Children

Diana

Representative Diana Urban
Co-Chair
Committee on Children

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Commission on Children

September 25, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy,

The Connecticut Commission on Children strongly supports Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

Our state began school readiness policy with attention to low-income children in our poorest cities. The focus was on access, quality and supply. In 1997, our state stood out. We were the only state assuring care for both three- and four-year-olds, combining dollars between social services and education. We developed local school readiness councils and assured accreditation for school readiness slots. But the overall initiative was based on programs. It was not systemic, across all early care programs.

Under your leadership and that of Connecticut's legislature, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children, who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through the creation of the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), a cabinet-level state agency.

The creation of the OEC takes what our state began and brings it from program policy to a comprehensive system. The Office of Early Childhood brings all the programs serving young children together. It offers a continuum of services from birth to age eight, creates a coordinated early care and education system, and assures our teachers are well-trained and educated. It begins a data and accountability plan, oversees safety standards and the integration of home visitation and early care. This is the whole house approach.

This year, you unveiled your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children, providing universal access to early education for some of our most vulnerable children. And this past spring, you signed a bill creating Smart Start in an effort to increase access to high-quality preschool in our public school system. Early care and education programs, if they are of quality, are equalizers. They level the skills set for formal schooling.

18-20 Trinity St. Hartford, CT 06106 Phone: (860) 240-0290 Fax: (860) 240-0248 Website: cga.ct.gov/coc

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access for low-income families in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

There is mounting evidence that intervention beginning during infancy or preschool age, has a greater impact on child outcomes and families than beginning to provide services at school age. There is evidence across early learning settings that all children who are behind can make gains when they have teachers who know how to actively involve children in learning and have the appropriate supports.

Universal access to high-quality preschool is a key building block in our state's work to close the achievement and opportunity gaps prevailing in our state, for far too long. We thank you for and join you in your strong commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents.

The Commission on Children, a strategic policy arm of the state Legislature, supports this opportunity to expand high-quality preschool in Connecticut through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and strongly support our state's application.

Sincerely,

Elaine Zimmerman
Executive Director

18-20 Trinity Street * Hartford, Connecticut 06106 Phone: (860) 240-0290 Fax: (860) 240-0248 website www.cga.ct.gov/coc/

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
Nancy Wyman
Lt. Governor

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Commissioner

October 9, 2014

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary
United State Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell,
Secretary
United State Department of Health and
Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Burwell:

As the Commissioner for the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, I am proud Governor Dannel P. Malloy has chosen our agency to be the lead for the state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. Connecticut's application not only expands access to High-Quality Preschool Programs to our state's low-income 4-year-olds, but also aims to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, increase compensation for the early childhood workforce and increase the availability of comprehensive services for young children and their families.

Over the past few years, Connecticut has demonstrated a strong commitment to improving the health and educational outcomes of the young children of our state. This past legislative session, the state formally established the first Office of Early Childhood (OEC), a cabinet-level agency created to administer a comprehensive and coordinated system of early childhood services and support for children from birth to age five. Connecticut has also made significant investments to increase access to high-quality early childhood education by expanding its existing State Preschool Program to serve nearly 2,500 additional low-income 3- and 4-year-olds, giving these fortunate young children the start in life they deserve to help them succeed both in the classroom and in life. And lastly, Connecticut has also made the commitment with the creation of Smart Start, a competitive grant opportunity for the state's towns and cities to expand high-quality early education within the public school system.

While all of these improvements are helping many of the state's children, there is still more that needs to be done. With the proposals made in the OEC's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application, Connecticut would not only be able to increase the number of Eligible Children served, it would also be able to improve the quality of many of its existing programs, providing high-quality early education experiences and comprehensive services to young children and their families.

The Preschool Development Expansion Grant would not only allow Connecticut to expand high-

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quality preschool to Eligible Children in our largest city with the greatest unmet need, it would also increase the number of high-quality preschool spaces in the state's Competitive Communities, many of which are seeing growing pockets of poverty that are outpacing the rate of poverty throughout the state. The funding support from the Preschool Development Expansion Grant would give Connecticut necessary resources to not only support 13 Competitive Communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in these struggling towns and giving these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life, but it will also allow us to support our largest Priority Community with the greatest unmet need for state preschool programs.

Connecticut is committed to providing high-quality early education to our state's most vulnerable preschool-age children. I am proud to lend my support to Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application which will work to improve the health, development and educational outcomes for our state's young children, reduce the achievement gap and prepare children for academic and lifelong success.

Sincerely,

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Commissioner

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

October 10, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The State Department of Education expresses its support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. Under your leadership, Connecticut has made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education. This federal expansion grant would build on the state's commitment to provide our high-need children with high-quality early education to ensure they are ready for school and lifelong success.

Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through the establishment of the Office of Early Childhood, a new state agency which we helped to launch and which has statutory authority over early childhood programs. The State Department of Education partners with the Office of Early Childhood to ensure a smooth transition from preschool to kindergarten. Both agencies are working together on several initiatives including: development of a Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (KEA); development of K-3 social and intellectual habits standards that are aligned with the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards; alignment of the age 3 to grade 3 continuum, and enhancing our K-3 literacy work. We are also working collaboratively to implement the Smart Start Initiative to expand preschool programs in our public schools.

This federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant application proposes to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, provide more children with high-quality early education, infuse comprehensive services into programs, and raise the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

As Commissioner of the State Department of Education, I want to thank you for your commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. The State Department of Education stands by our state's application.

Sincerely,

Stefan Pryor
Commissioner of Education

P.O. Box 2219 ● Hartford, Connecticut 06145
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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

September 30, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Office of Policy and Management would like to express its support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. Increasing access to early childhood education is crucial to our efforts to reduce Connecticut's achievement gap, and ensuring kindergarteners demonstrate full readiness for school.

During the last four years, you have championed the principle that all children should enter public school ready to learn and that early education provides the foundation for later success. Children receiving early childhood education are more likely to graduate from high school, less likely to repeat a grade, and less likely to need special education classes. Under your leadership, Connecticut has created a state Office of Early Childhood to coordinate and improve the delivery of early childhood services for Connecticut children, funded 2,020 new slots for early childhood education, and developed a five year plan to provide universal access to high-quality preschool for our most vulnerable children through the creation of over 4,000 more school readiness slots.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application aligns with our vision for a coordinated, effective early childhood education system. It continues to invest in our state's existing preschool program by providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. It also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

We stand in strong support of Connecticut's federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant, and believe it represents our continuing commitment to the health and well-being of all of our state's children.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Barnes
Secretary, Office of Policy and Management

450 Capitol Avenue • Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1379
www.ct.gov/opm

CONNECTICUT HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE

October 7, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, PhD
Commissioner
CT Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

I am writing to express my support for Connecticut's Preschool Development Grant – Expansion Grant application being submitted to the US Departments of Health and Human Services and Education.

Preschool capacity in Connecticut has continued to grow and strengthen over the past 15 years and this opportunity for federal support can only create a stronger and more comprehensive network of preschool services for our state. As the Director of Head Start Collaboration in Connecticut, I look forward to working with the CT Office of Early Childhood and the fourteen high need communities that will participate in this initiative and to providing support in whatever ways requested to align efforts and engage with Head Start programs in the selected communities to do the same.

Please let me know what I can do to partner with you on this promising project.

Sincerely,

Grace Whitney, PhD, MPA, IMH-E® (IV)
Director

Office of Early Childhood, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106
Phone: 860-713-6767 Email: grace.whitney@ct.gov

CHEFA
CONNECTICUT HEALTH AND EDUCATIONAL
FACILITIES AUTHORITY

October 11, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) would like to express its support for Connecticut's application for the Federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

Under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs. This year, you unveiled your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children, providing universal access to early education for some of our most vulnerable children. This past spring, you signed a bill creating Smart Start in an effort to increase access to high-quality preschool in our public school system.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

Through the State's landmark School Readiness Legislation (Public Act 97-259), CHEFA collaborated with the Department of Social Services and State Department of Education to develop three loan programs to finance quality spaces for early education. One of these, the Tax-Exempt Loan Program, has become the principal engine generating early care facilities for low-income children in Connecticut. $76 million has been invested to provide over 5,100 spaces through this program. Each of the facilities is required to demonstrate its commitment to quality through accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

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Tel: (860) 520-4700 • Fax (860) 520-4706
www.chefa.com

Through our partnership with the Office of Early Childhood, CHEFA continues to support the planning and development of quality space for early learning. Our estimate of unmet demand for preschool can help guide the selection of communities most in need of expansion, and our financing programs can provide the additional classroom spaces they need to grow.

Thank you for your commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and we whole-heartedly support our state's application.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey A. Asher
Executive Director
Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority

SERC
EQUITY. EXCELLENCE. EDUCATION.
State Education Resource Center

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The State Education Resource Center (SERC) would like to express support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

Under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, we have made significant progress in developing a coordinated early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through many policy efforts, though none more significant than the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in several communities that have generally not had access to state resources before. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

SERC's work aligns with the priorities of the proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant in a variety of ways. Our mission is to promote excellence in education for all children and youth in the state of Connecticut. As a centralized library and resource center for professionals, families, and community members, SERC provides information, research, and professional development on best practices to better prepare educators to meet the needs of the students they serve. SERC, a quasi-state agency (P.A. No. 14-212) affiliated with the Connecticut State Department of Education, has been serving Connecticut's educators, students, and families since 1969.

- SERC provides high quality professional development for educators in order to expand their depth of knowledge and skills.
- SERC provides a comprehensive system of professional learning for local educational agencies and community organizations that explores the historical underpinnings that have led to institutionalized practices that perpetuate injustice, discrimination, and inequalities for

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www.ctserc.org

targeted individual groups based on their race, disability, economic and social hardship, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, and religious creed.

- SERC is a central resource within the state of CT that disseminates information on cutting-edge policy, research, and practice.
- SERC houses an educational library with an extensive collection of resources geared to both professionals and families.
- SERC hosts a state-of-the-art website.

In addition, SERC maximizes the impact of community, state, and federal resources by collaborating with partners including the Connecticut State Department of Education, the Office of Early Childhood, CT's Parent Training and Information Center, Head Start, the CT Commission on Children, Even Start, the Regional Educations Service Centers, and the Family Resource Center Alliance, among others. SERC is prepared to partner for the successful implementation of the Preschool Development Expansion Grant in any way that may be helpful.

Thank you for your commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant.

Sincerely,

Ingrid M. Canady
Associate Director for Program
SERC

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

September 30, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

As chair of the Child Poverty and Prevention Council, I would like to express my support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for Connecticut 4-year-olds whose income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. Research shows that the lack of quality early education can have a significant impact on children's readiness for school and their potential for lifelong educational and work success. Improving access to early educational opportunities for our most vulnerable children will help ensure that all our kindergarteners, regardless of income, have the skills necessary to begin an effective academic career.

Throughout your administration, you have demonstrated your commitment to the improvement of Connecticut's early childhood education through multiple initiatives, including the creation of the state Office of Early Childhood, the addition of over 2,000 school readiness slots, and the development of a plan to provide universal access to high-quality preschool by 2019. The state's Preschool Development Expansion grant builds on these investments by not only providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities, but also working to improve the quality of existing preschool programs.

The Child Poverty and Prevention Council's purpose is to develop and implement strategies and recommendations to reduce the number of children living in poverty and establish and measure prevention service outcomes that promote the health and well-being of children and families. From our work, we know that poverty is associated with significant negative outcomes for children, including greater risk for poor school performance, behavior problems, and learning disabilities. We also know that children in poverty are more likely to experience poorly performing schools, encounter health problems and food insecurity that can interfere with learning, and endure homelessness or frequent moves that can interrupt education. Since our inception, one of our core objectives has been ensuring affordable early childhood education, and Connecticut's application continues our progress in improving the lives of our state's children and ensuring they have access to opportunities and resources that will help them succeed both in school and in adulthood.

I strongly support Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion grant application and its demonstration of our commitment to ensuring positive outcomes for all of our state's children.

Sincerely,

Anne Foley

Anne Foley, Chair
Child Poverty and Prevention Council

450 Capitol Avenue • Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1379
www.ct.gov/opm

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
Nancy Wyman
Lt. Governor

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D.
Commissioner

October 10, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet (also serving as the State Advisory Council) expresses unequivocal support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. As Chair of the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet, and as Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood, I pledge my commitment to implementing this ambitious and achievable plan to improve outcomes for our 4-year-old children whose families have incomes at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

Under your leadership, Connecticut has made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education. This federal expansion grant will build on the state's commitment to provide our high-need children with high-quality early education to ensure they are ready for school and lifelong success.

Your commitment to early care and education has been evident through the establishment of the Office of Early Childhood, a separate cabinet-level agency that has full statutory and budgetary authority of early childhood programs formerly residing in the Departments of Education, Social Services, Public Health, and the Board of Regents. By bringing early childhood programs under one agency, Connecticut has a unique opportunity to focus on our youngest children and build a better trajectory for their lifelong success.
As Chair of the Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet, and as Commissioner of the Office of Early Childhood, I stand strongly by our state's application.

Sincerely,

Myra Jones-Taylor
Commissioner
Office of Early Childhood
Chair, Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet

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WILLIAM CASPAR GRAUSTEIN
MEMORIAL FUND

October 11, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The storyteller figure symbolizes the values of the Memorial Fund—educating, supporting and inspiring our children.

The William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund would like to express our support for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for 4-year-old children from low-income families in Connecticut. This grant will provide children who face significant structural barriers and gaps in opportunity with access to the high-quality early education needed to prepare them for success in school and life.

Under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education. Your commitment to enhancing the wellbeing of our state's youngest residents has been evident through: your support of the creation of the Office of Early Childhood; your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children; and your signing of a bill this past spring creating Smart Start to increase access to high-quality preschool in our public school system.

The Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program. Connecticut's proposal works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children from low-income families with access to high-quality early education. The proposal also aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation for early childhood professionals. We are thrilled to see that funding will go to programs where early education teacher salaries are comparable to public school teacher salaries.

The William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund works with 52 communities across Connecticut and with other statewide partners to ensure that children of all races and from all economic backgrounds are ready for school by age five and successful learners by age nine. In partnership with the Office of Early Childhood and other funders, we have provided capacity building and funding for 40 communities to establish and support local early childhood councils. These local collaboratives/councils are developing and implementing comprehensive birth-to-age-eight early childhood plans, with strategies built to address the needs of the whole child across the domains of school readiness, health, and family support and parent engagement. Under the school readiness domain, many communities are implementing strategies to improve the quality of early childhood programs at the local level, such as providing high-quality professional development.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to improving the lives of Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool and enhance the early childhood workforce through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant. We stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

R. David Addams
Executive Director

One Hamden Center • Suite 2B • 2319 Whitney Avenue • Hamden, CT 06518 • (203) 230-3330 Voice • (203) 230-3331 Fax
Website: www.wcgmf.org • email: GMFmail@wcgmf.org

October 1, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

United Way of Connecticut enthusiastically supports the application of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood for the Preschool Development Grant-Expansion Grant to expand high quality preschool for low-income four year olds in our state. The State of Connecticut has substantially increased its investment in quality preschool slots to serve an additional 4,000 children over five years. This grant can leverage these previous state investments as well as those by private funders, including multiple local United Ways across Connecticut, to provide young children with more high-quality early education and better prepare them for success in school and life.

Our understanding is that this grant will help to expand the number of new slots in high quality preschool programs and enhance quality by extending slots to full days, limiting class size, employing teachers with Bachelor's degrees or providing comprehensive services in some of our poorest communities.

Connecticut's newly created Office of Early Childhood has already provided crucial leadership and demonstrated real commitment to the goals of serving more children from lower-income families and improving the quality of child care and promoting better outcomes for our young children. OEC is also strengthening the early childhood workforce by raising the states standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals. So, we are confident that this grant will have real impact and substantial benefit for children and their families in Connecticut.

United Way of Connecticut pledges to support the Office of Early Childhood in the successful implementation of this grant. In particular, we will build on our work under OEC's leadership and along with many government and nonprofit partners to support comprehensive services. We will build on our work with the Office of Early Childhood, under the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems initiative (funded by HRSA), to increase the number of early developmental screenings and to strengthen and streamline referrals to services when the need is identified. We will also coordinate our Child Care Provider Orientation training (funded through OEC) to compliment the quality improvement work proposed in this grant. And, United Way of Connecticut will employ our statewide 2-1-1 information and referral system to strengthen linkages to multiple community services to support better preschool outcomes for children. This is consistent with the United Way system goal of promoting school readiness across the state.

We look forward to working with the Office of Early Childhood on this crucial initiative.

Sincerely,

Richard J. Porth
President/CEO

CBIA CONNECTICUT BUSINESS & INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

John R. Rathgeber
President and Chief Executive Officer

October 11, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The CBIA would like to express its support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

Under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's General Assembly, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs. This year, you unveiled your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children, providing access to quality early education for some of our most vulnerable children.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

Thank you for your undying commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

John R. Rathgeber

350 Church Street, Hartford, CT 06103-1126 | 860.244.1900 | 860.278.8562 (f) | cbia.com

CONNECTICUT VOICES FOR CHILDREN

Independent research and advocacy to improve the lives of Connecticut's children

October 2, 2015

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

Connecticut Voices for Children would like to express its support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant, which would allow more of our most at-risk children to attend high-quality preschool, readying them for success in school and beyond.

The research is clear: children who have access to high-quality early education are more likely to graduate from high school; less likely to be retained, need special education services, or become involved with the juvenile justice system; and more likely to have higher lifetime earnings. This is true even and especially when these children live in poverty, have experienced abuse or neglect, have parents with limited education, or are English language learners.

Over the last four years, you and legislators from both sides of the aisle have heeded this research: increasing the number of state-subsidized preschool slots, maintaining high standards for teachers and programs, and creating a new state agency – the Office of Early Childhood – designed to ensure that our early childhood programs are accessible, efficient and effective, and of the highest quality across the board.

We applaud the work that has been done. And yet the job is not yet finished. We need to further increase the number of subsidized preschool seats, so that that all children in the state, no matter what town they live in, can attend preschool. We need higher salaries for preschool staff, so that we can attract and retain teachers with college degrees. We need to ensure that that preschoolers *and their families* can access any and all services they need and to which they are entitled. And we need better data collection and analysis, so that we can identify which programs are having the greatest impact and scale up best practices. We are excited that the state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application recognizes and seeks to address each of these four areas of need.

Connecticut Voices for Children has a deep and broad understanding of the early care and education landscape, combining historical and state-specific knowledge with an awareness of the initiatives that other states are currently undertaking. We are willing and eager to share our expertise with the state as it seeks to do the work proposed in this grant.

Thank you for your commitment to Connecticut's children.

Sincerely,

Cyd Oppenheimer
Senior Policy Fellow

Ellen Shemitz
Executive Director

33 Whitney Avenue • New Haven, CT 06510 • Phone 203-498-4240 • Fax 203-498-4242 • voices@ctvoices.org • www.ctvoices.org

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Fair Haven Community Health Center
374 Grand Avenue • New Haven, CT 06513

Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center, Inc.

October 7, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center (CPAC) offers our strong support for Connecticut's federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant application to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, combined with the steps Connecticut has already taken to improve outcomes for young children, will help provide more young children, including children with disabilities, with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and future school success.

Connecticut has made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. The creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs, has been instrumental in coordinating the myriad of early education programs and services for providers as well as young children and their families. The Office of Early Childhood, working with a variety of stakeholders, including CPAC, has played a pivotal role in ensuring that your commitment to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children is realized. We applaud your efforts to ensure universal access to early education for some of our most vulnerable children, including young children with special needs.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

As Connecticut's federally funded, statewide Parent Training and Information Center, the Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center looks forward to enhancing your early childhood efforts so

that families of young children, especially those who have children who require early intervention or special education services are prepared to advocate for appropriate supports and services to meet the unique developmental needs of their children. We will continue to prepare families who have young children with disabilities and the providers who work with them to develop positive and meaningful relationships so that family engagement is acknowledged and practiced as an essential element of improved child outcomes from the earliest years.

Thank you for your continued commitment to improving outcomes for young children, including those who have disabilities. We strongly support Connecticut's application and are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant.

Sincerely,

Nancy Prescott
Executive Director

Educating, Engaging, and Mobilizing Parents
to Act on Children's Issues

Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

October 11, 2014

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

Our statewide parent-led organization, CT Parent Power would like to express its unequivocal support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to increase high-quality preschool spaces for our low-income parents/families with children age 4 in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide the highest quality care and educational experiences for young children to best prepare them for kindergarten and life long learning.

Your leadership, alongside the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, has made significant progress in improving our state's early childhood system, while increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. Your commitment to enhancing the well being of our state's most vulnerable, our young children, has been evidenced by the creation of our Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs that matter most to our families.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

CT Parent Power has continued to be a full partner in all aspects of our early childhood systems build approach with child/parent voices and actions being at the forefront. CT Parent Power is extremely proud of the bold actions that our state has unveiled under your leadership with a five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool for an additional 4,010 children, providing universal access to early education for some of our most vulnerable children. Moreover, this past spring, you signed a bill creating Smart Start in an effort to increase access to high-quality preschool in our public school system, which our 3,287 CTPP parent members across the state commended you for as we began the process in getting our state closer to establishing our shared vision for all young children to have access to universal care and educational experiences of utmost high quality.

CT Parent Power looks forward to our sustained collective work to expand and improve existing preschool spaces for our 4 year old children from diverse families with an income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, as well as, the expanded and improved preschool spaces being afforded to our most at-risk children with a high quality bachelor's level teacher with appropriate compensation for consistent continuum of quality curriculum and instruction of comprehensive services that maximize a better end result for our most vulnerable, our young children.

We are thrilled to provide any guidance and support to this collective work, as you have shown an unwavering commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. Thank you for supporting this timely opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application to ensure that no young child or family is ever left behind.

Sincerely,

Marilyn

Marilyn Calderón
Executive Director
CT Parent Power

CT Parent Power 110 Bartholomew Ave, Suite 4030, Hartford, CT 06106 (860) 951-2212 ext. 273
marilyn@ctparentpower.org www.ctparentpower.org info@ctparentpower.org

Connecticut Association for Human Services
110 Bartholomew Avenue · Suite 4030
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
www.cahs.org

Casey McGuane, President
James P. Horan, Executive Director
860.951.2212
860.951.6511 fax

October 6, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS) strongly supports Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant promises to advance the process underway to expand Connecticut's early childhood system and ensure high quality early learning and development experiences for many more high-needs children.

For decades, CAHS has worked to improve the quality of and access to early care, and development for low-income children. Throughout this time, studies have consistently shown that early childhood programs can help close academic and achievement gaps for high-needs children, but only if they are of high quality. Unfortunately, too many children living in poverty either have poor access to early childhood programs, or are in childcare settings of low or unknown quality. We know that by providing exceptional experiences for our youngest and most vulnerable children, we will help close the state's large academic achievement and economic gaps. Higher levels of educational attainment will lead to greater opportunity for these children as adults.

We are encouraged that under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for many young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. The creation of the Office of Early Childhood, your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool experiences to many more children, and your signing "Smart Start" into law, are all evidence of your commitment towards providing universal access to early education for our most vulnerable children.

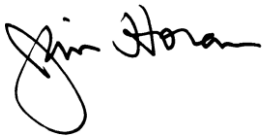
Despite these great strides, we know there is work to be done. There is still a need to provide quality early experiences for all children, including those who live in poverty outside the Priority Districts. We know that early care and education workforce issues, including the need for bachelors level teachers in our early childhood classrooms, will have a significant impact on the

quality and availability of the early care and education workforce. We also recognize that children live within the context of a family. For children to be successful, their families often need access to community supports that lead to a strengthened family.

We are encouraged that the state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application addresses these issues. It builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children who live in underserved pockets of poverty throughout the state. In addition, Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, not only by providing more children with high-quality early education, but also by striving to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals. We are especially enthusiastic that this grant recognizes the importance of providing access to community supports for the families of the participating children. The proposed connections to resources and support services will serve to strengthen both the early childhood experience and the family as a whole.

CAHS is pleased to support this application and will be available to help disseminate information on the OEC's progress and efforts under this grant with our growing 800-member Early Care and Education listserv, as well as our 100-member Provider Caucus. CAHS will work as an advocate, mobilizer, communicator, and convener to ensure the successful implementation of Connecticut's Early Learning Challenge grant, and strongly supports the state's application.

Sincerely,



James P. Horan
Executive Director

Connecticut
Early Childhood
Alliance

October 2, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy,

The Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance would like to express its support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant.

Connecticut has long invested in our youngest children. Strides made in recent years – with strong bi-partisan support from you and our legislative leaders – have resulted in greater access for children and better coordination of our programs. However, we know there is still more to be done. Three important Alliance priorities are addressed in this grant application:

1. providing more children in underserved areas access to high-quality learning experiences,
2. including comprehensive services in early learning settings,
3. and compensating our highly trained and qualified early childhood teachers at levels commensurate with their K-12 peers

We applaud the inclusion of a strong evaluation component for the grant. The collection and analysis of data about the impact of comprehensive services and compensation on the outcomes for children will help inform Connecticut's future practices.

As we learn the impact of this program, the Alliance will work with you and the Office of Early Childhood to build upon the program's findings and bring its elements to scale across the state. If we are successful in doing that, we will have made even more progress towards a strong and comprehensive system of early childhood.

We are excited about the path Connecticut is on. Thank you for your leadership and vision to ensure that Connecticut's youngest residents get a strong start.

Sincerely,

Merrill Gay

Merrill Gay
Executive Director

Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance, 110 Bartholomew Avenue, Suite 4030, Hartford, CT 06106
860.819.3647, www.earlychildhoodalliance.com

President
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Meriden FRC
203-238-2316

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Donna Cavallaro
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860-793-6304

Secretary
Lori Borysewicz
Plymouth FRC
860-283-6167

Treasurer
Gail Nolan
Bloomfield FRC
860-769-5518

September 25, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford CT 06106

Dear Governor Malloy:

The CT Family Resource Center Alliance would like to express its strong support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. Clearly, this grant would further support Connecticut's outstanding efforts to date in improving outcomes for our young children.

Under your strong leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislature, we have made significant progress in improving our early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education. Your dedication to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident with the establishment of the Office of Early Childhood. Your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children shows your commitment to the education of our most vulnerable children. Additionally, the signing of the Smart Star bill will most certainly increase access to high-quality preschool in the public schools.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

Connecticut's Family Resource Centers embody the underlying concept that healthy development and quality education begin with access to quality child care and support services from birth. For over 25 years we have been providing access to a broad continuum of early childhood and family support services which foster the optimal development of children and families. Our programs provide the best possible start for children and families of all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic while targeting our most at-risk children and families. The intent of this grant has the same philosophical foundation as our Family Resource Centers, and we heartily support it.

Thank you for your undying commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

Catherine R. Battista
President, CT Family Resource Center Alliance

Meriden Family Resource Center is a Program of the Meriden Public Schools and is funded by a grant from the Connecticut State Department of Education

CAEYC
The Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children

October 2, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy,

The Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children would like to express its support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant.

Connecticut has long invested in our youngest children. Strides made in recent years have resulted in greater access for children and better coordination of early childhood programs. Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs. However, we know there is still more to be done. Three important CAEYC priorities are addressed in this grant application:

1. A focus on high quality in alignment with NAEYC standards
2. Access to high quality professional development for all staff in all settings
3. Compensating our highly trained and qualified early childhood teachers at levels commensurate with their K-12 peers

We applaud the inclusion of a strong evaluation component for the grant. The collection and analysis of data about the impact of this expansion opportunity on the outcomes for children will help inform Connecticut's future practices.

As we learn the impact of this program, the CAEYC will work with you and the Office of Early Childhood to build upon the program's findings and bring its elements to scale across the state. If we are successful in doing that, we will have made even more progress towards a strong and comprehensive system of early childhood.

We are excited about the path Connecticut is on. Thank you for your leadership and vision to ensure that Connecticut's youngest residents get a strong start.

Sincerely,

Karen Rainville

Karen Rainville
Executive Director

Connecticut Association for the Education of Young Children 7Corporate Drive Unit 118,
North Haven CT 06473
203-821-7216 www.ctaeyc.org

Office: (860) 236-8640
FAX: (860) 236-8628
www.capss.org

CAPSS

Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents
26 Caya Avenue
West Hartford, Connecticut 06110

October 7, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The CT Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) would like to express its unequivocal support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

Under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

CAPSS is committed to a transformation of public education so that, among other things, all children enter formal schooling at age three instead of at age five. What the state has done over the past three years along with what could be done with the funds from a Preschool Development Expansion Grant have and will continue to move CT towards this objective.

We are excited, therefore, about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. Cirasuolo, Ed.D.
Executive Director
CAPSS

Founded 1907

ConnCASE

330 Main Street – Third Floor - Hartford, CT 06106

Phone: 860.548.1747 Fax: 860.541.6484

September 29, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Council of Administrators of Special Education (ConnCASE) would like to express its support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

Thank you for your commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Regan
President

Connecticut
Head Start Association

October 6, 2014

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Head Start Association would like to express its unequivocal support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education.

The CT Head Start Association will:

- Provide expertise and support that promotes effective strategies in delivering comprehensive strategies;
- Assist the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood in reaching and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable children and families;
- Promote early childhood provider participation in the Preschool Development Grant;
- Identify and facilitate linkages to additional resources to expand high quality early learning and development programs;
- Facilitate links to private and philanthropic resources to promote long-term project success as appropriate;

Thank you for your continued commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

Darlene C. Ragozzine, Executive Director
Connecticut Head Start Association

September 25, 2014

Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc.

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP®) of Advanced Behavioral Health (ABH®) Inc. would like to express its unequivocal support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

Under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs. This year, you unveiled your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children, providing universal access to early education for some of our most vulnerable children. And this past spring, you signed a bill creating Smart Start in an effort to increase access to high-quality preschool in our public school system.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

The Early Childhood Consultation Partnership® (ECCP) program is an innovative and nationally recognized evidenced-based program which provides statewide early childhood mental health consultation services to early care and education providers and families of children ages birth to five.

ECCP is notably one of the first statewide, results oriented, data driven Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation programs in the country. The program has clearly articulated outcomes relating to professional development, service delivery of at risk children and their caregivers, and state and local community networking.

313 Cross Street Middletown, CT 06457 T 860.638.5309 F 860.638.5302 www.abhct.com

ECCP works in partnerships at state, local and individual family levels in order to address the social, emotional and behavioral needs of typically underserved high-risk children (e.g. foster children, children with special needs, etc.). We also emphasize the importance of maintaining a workforce that is fully versed in the fields of Early Childhood Mental Health and Early Childhood Education.

The goals of the Preschool Development Expansion Grant are consistent with the goals of the ECCP program and will serve to extend the work of the ECCP by placing more focus upon four year old children and the important adults and early care and education systems in their lives within the School Readiness districts outlined in this application.

Thank you for your undying commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Bicio, LCSW
Director
Early Childhood Consultation Partnership
(ECCP®) and Early Childhood Programs
Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc.
213 Court Street
Middletown, CT 06457
Phone: 860-704-6198

Samuel Moy, Ph.D.
President and CEO
Advanced Behavioral Health, Inc.
213 Court Street
Middletown, CT 06457
Work: 860-638-5309
Fax: 860-638-5302
www.abhct.com

One day, all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.

TEACHFORAMERICA

Secretary Arnie Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Secretary Sylvia Matthews Burwell
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

September 29, 2014

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Burwell:

I am writing today to express Teach For America • Connecticut's strong support for the Connecticut Preschool Expansion Grant application.

Teach For America • Connecticut is dedicated to ending educational inequity by developing teacher leaders who offer their students the opportunity to attain an excellent education, especially for low-income students and students of color who face the systemic challenges of poverty and racism. We believe that an excellent education empowers and supports a child to fulfill her potential and realize her greatest dreams, ensuring she has the opportunity to succeed in higher education and in all areas of life, including academic, personal, social, and political. We are deeply invested in Connecticut's application because we know Connecticut is dedicated to providing access to high quality programs to improve outcomes for young children.

We are inspired by Connecticut's vision to expand pre-K for our state. Currently, our state is serving 45,856 children under the age of 4 with just 9,487 enrolled in the Connecticut School Readiness Program, and this funding will allow us to build upon this success for more children and families. We know this is essential to creating an equitable landscape for all children to have access to a high quality teacher and education.

Teach For America • Connecticut is particularly supportive of this application. We are proud to partner with Kindergarten – 3rd grade classrooms and hope to partner with pre-K programs in the future. In our work, we consistently see the impact of early childhood education in terms of quality and presence, and we feel compelled to provide quality education to the children of Connecticut as soon as possible. We believe through our experience that Connecticut's commitment to serving pre-K children and families will dramatically increase outcomes for our state's children in kindergarten, in third grade, and far beyond.

Teach for America • Connecticut is confident that winning this grant will promote expanded school readiness, and work to ensure expanded equity and access to quality for pre-K students. We appreciate your careful consideration of Connecticut's Preschool Development Grant application.

Sincerely,

Nate Snow
Executive Director
Teach for America • Connecticut

AN AMERICORPS PROGRAM

370 James Street Suite 404 • New Haven, CT, 06513 • P 203.786.5498 F 203.786.5497 • www.teachforamerica.org

LISC

Connecticut Children's Investment Partnership

October 11, 2013

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol,
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Connecticut Children's Investment Partnership, a program of the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) would like to express its support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life.

Under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs. This year, you unveiled your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children, providing universal access to early education for some of our most vulnerable children. And this past spring, you signed a bill creating Smart Start in an effort to increase access to high-quality preschool in our public school system.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

Thank you for your undying commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

Christine Devine

Christine Devine, Director
LISC Children's Investment Partnership

COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY
TEAM
A PATH TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY SINCE 1965

Training, Education and Manpower, Inc.
30 Elizabeth Street, Derby, Connecticut 06418-1846 • (203) 736-5420 Fax (203) 736-5425 • web:www.teaminc.org

The Honorable Governor Dannel P. Malloy
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

October 3, 2014
Re: Preschool Development Expansion Grant

Dear Governor Malloy:

TEAM Inc. would like to express its unequivocal support for Connecticut's application for the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant to expand high-quality preschool for low-income 4-year-olds in our state. This grant, coupled with the great strides Connecticut has made in improving outcomes for the young children of our state, would help to provide young children with high-quality early education and better prepare them for kindergarten and life. Under your leadership and with the support of Connecticut's legislative leaders, we have made significant progress in improving the state's early childhood system and increasing access to high-quality early education for young children who would not otherwise be able to attend preschool. Your commitment to enhancing the well-being of our state's youngest residents has been evident through the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a cabinet-level state agency with authority over early childhood programs. This year, you unveiled your five-year plan to expand access to high-quality preschool to an additional 4,010 children, providing universal access to early education for some of our most vulnerable children. And this past spring, you signed a bill creating Smart Start in an effort to increase access to high-quality preschool in our public school system.

The state's Preschool Development Expansion Grant application builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children in our poorest communities. Connecticut's proposal also works to improve the quality of existing preschool programs, providing more children with high-quality early education, and aims to improve the early childhood workforce by raising the state's standards and compensation levels for early childhood professionals.

TEAM is a 501(c)3 nonprofit and a current Head Start and Early Head Start Grantee in excellent standing, as evidenced by its previous Office of Head Start monitoring reviews, MIECHV (Maternal, Infant, & Early Childhood Home Visitation) monitoring reviews, and ongoing Head Start / Early Head Start outcomes. TEAM is also a current Child Day Care & School Readiness provider serving the Lower Naugatuck Valley & Milford, is a Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Sponsor in excellent standing for eighty-five (85) Family Child Care Homes, and operates multiple Human Services and Family Resource Center initiatives. Specifically, TEAM Inc will:

- Promote early childhood provider participation in the Preschool Development Grant; Identify and facilitate linkages to additional resources to expand high quality early learning and development programs;
- Assist the Office of Early Childhood in reaching and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable children and families;
- Provide expertise and support that promotes effective strategies in delivering comprehensive services;
- Facilitate links to private and philanthropic resources to promote long-term project success as appropriate

Thank you for your undying commitment to improving outcomes for Connecticut's youngest residents. We are excited about the opportunity to further expand high-quality preschool through the federal Preschool Development Expansion Grant and stand by our state's application.

Sincerely,

David Morgan
Vice President – TEAM Inc.

Subgrantees – Letters of Support

The following communities have agreed to participate as Subgrantees and have submitted letters of support:

- Bridgeport
- Derby
- East Haven
- Griswold
- Groton
- Hamden
- Hebron
- Killingly
- Manchester
- Naugatuck
- Seymour
- Torrington
- Vernon
- Wolcott

BRIDGEPORT SCHOOL READINESS

A NEW VIEW OF PRESCHOOL

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The City of Bridgeport is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

_180_ New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
_90_ Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Amy J. Marshall
School Readiness Council Co-Chair

Agnes Dubow
School Readiness Council Co-Chair

Board of Education Administrative Offices
1st Floor, 948 Main St., Bridgeport, CT 06604

(203) 275-1274
(203) 275-1265

DERBY SCHOOL READINESS

"PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER FOR FUTURE SUCCESS"

FAMILY SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Letter of Support

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

October 3, 2014

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The City of Derby's Early Childhood Council is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs. Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

17 New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
18 Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant. We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Beth Colette

Beth Colette – Derby Early Childhood Council Chair

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of East Haven is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a sub grantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

_18_ New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
_18_ Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Joe Ferraiolo School Readiness Council Chair

Town of Griswold

28 Main Street
Griswold, CT 06351
Phone (860) 376-7060, Fax (860) 376-7070

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of Griswold is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

_12_ New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
_21_ Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Erin Palonen, Director of Special Education
School Readiness Council Co-Chairs

Kevin Skulczyck, Griswold First Selectman

Groton Sub Grantee Letter of Support

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of Groton is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a sub grantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

15 Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Kevin Trejo, School Readiness Council Chair

Hamden's Partnership for Young Children

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of Hamden is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

18 New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Susan Rule

Hamden's Partnership for Young Children /School Readiness Council Chair

60 Putnam Ave, Hamden, CT 06517 hamdenkids@gmail.com 203-407-7733

Hebron Public Schools

High Expectations, Bright Futures

Jeffrey R. Newton
Superintendent of Schools

Eric A. Brody, Principal
Gilead Hill School

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of Hebron is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

9 New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
9 Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Barbara H. Wilson
School Readiness Council Chair

Kevin C. Farr
Superintendent of Schools
kfarr@killinglyschools.org

KILLINGLY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Great Things Happen Here!

Steve Rioux
Assistant Superintendent of Schools
srioux@killinglyschools.org

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of
Killingly is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

79 WESTFIELD AVENUE • P.O. BOX 210 • KILLINGLY, CT 06239-0210 • 860-779-6600 • FAX 860-779-3798

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

18 New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
18 Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Mr. Kevin Farr
School Readiness Council Chair

Town of Manchester

41 Center Street • P.O. Box 191
Manchester, Connecticut 06045-0191
www.manchesterct.gov

SCOTT SHANLEY, GENERAL MANAGER

JAY MORAN, MAYOR
TIMOTHY M. DEVANNEY, DEPUTY MAYOR
RUDY KISSMANN, SECRETARY

DIRECTORS
CHERI A. ECKBRETH
STEVE GATES
MARGARET H. HACKETT
SUSAN HOLMES
LISA P. O'NEILL
MARK D. TWEEDIE

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of Manchester is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

_36_ New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
_20_ Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

An equal opportunity Employer

RACIAL UNITY FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY • Manchester, CT •

Town of Manchester

41 Center Street • P.O. Box 191
Manchester, Connecticut 06045-0191
www.manchesterct.gov

SCOTT SHANLEY, GENERAL MANAGER

JAY MORAN, MAYOR
TIMOTHY M. DEVANNEY, DEPUTY MAYOR
RUDY KISSMANN, SECRETARY

DIRECTORS
CHERI A. ECKBRETH
STEVE GATES
MARGARET H. HACKETT
SUSAN HOLMES
LISA P. O'NEILL
MARK D. TWEEDIE

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Shelly Matfess

Shelly Matfess
Manchester School Readiness Council Co-Chair

Barbara Quigley

Barbara Quigley
Manchester School Readiness Council Co-Chair

An equal opportunity Employer

RACIAL UNITY FOR A BETTER COMMUNITY • Manchester, CT •

Naugatuck Discovery

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of Naugatuck is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

_43_ New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

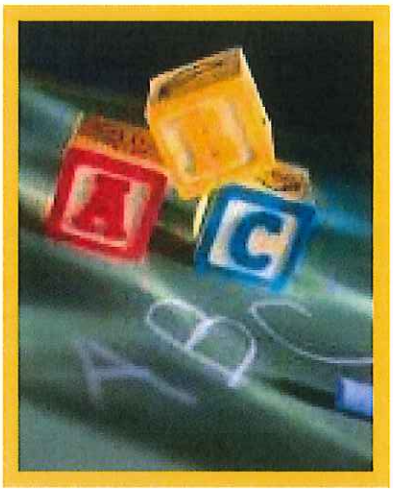
This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

T Huber

School Readiness Council Chair



Seymour School Readiness Council

Letter of Support

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

October 3, 2014

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Seymour Early Childhood Council is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs. Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a sub grantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

5 New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
13 Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant. We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Mary Sue Feige

Mary Sue Feige – Seymour School Readiness Council Chair

Subgrantee Letter of Support Template

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of Torrington is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

_42_ New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
_38_ Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,

Cheryl F. Kleyhon

School Readiness Council Chair

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of **Vernon** is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

21 New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
15 Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

Sincerely,

Alan M. Slobodien

School Readiness Council Chair

October 3, 2014

Myra Jones-Taylor, Ph.D., Commissioner
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Rm. G31
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Commissioner Jones-Taylor,

The Town of Wolcott is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in and support the state's proposed Preschool Development Expansion Grant application. If funded, we believe Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal will greatly accelerate our efforts to expand access to high-quality early education for 4-year-olds and better meet the needs of young children and their families.

We are committed to providing high-quality preschool education. This grant and the collaborative efforts between the Connecticut Office of Early and our community allows us to direct and focus high-quality, full-day early education to children who will be entering kindergarten in the Fall and to provide comprehensive services for families, opportunities for family engagement, family literacy and outreach to low-income families with the highest needs.

Additional supports for professional development, qualifications of the Head Teacher, raising the workforce compensation to match that of our local public school teachers, and additional evaluation tools, demonstrates our high value of early education and comprehensive services for our children.

Connecticut's Preschool Development Expansion Grant proposal builds upon the state's existing preschool program, providing additional access to low-income children across the state. The Preschool Development Expansion Grant will provide Connecticut with the resources necessary to support these communities, expanding high-quality early education for 4-year-olds in our struggling communities and give these young children the opportunities they need to succeed both academically and in life.

As a subgrantee for the Preschool Development Grant- Expansion Grant we are proposing to provide the following:

_9_ New High-Quality Expansion Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children
_9 Improved High-Quality Preschool Spaces for Eligible 4 year old children

This letter serves to assure the State of Connecticut, that we will meet the High Quality criteria listed in the grant and to the program requirements listed in the grant.

We look forward to our continued commitment to serving the needs of children and families.

Sincerely,
Dolores C Slate / Wendie Rodriguez
School Readiness Council Chair