

(b)(6)

State of Illinois

Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge
Application for Initial Funding

From Birth to Kindergarten and Beyond



Office of Governor Pat Quinn
October 19, 2011

CFDA Number 84.412

**State of Illinois
Race To The Top – Early Learning Challenge Application**

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706

Pat Quinn
GOVERNOR

RTTT/Early Learning Challenge Fund
Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan and Secretary Sebelius,

I am pleased to forward for your consideration our State application for the Early Learning Challenge Fund. This application represents the efforts of early childhood leaders, agency staff, and philanthropic supporters from across our state. We have sought input and support from business, civic and legislative leaders and our application encompasses the breadth and depth of that support from all geographic areas of Illinois.

Our application outlines tough but achievable goals that continue the strong commitment to early learning that has been evident since Illinois first funded pre-school more than twenty-five years ago. In Illinois, we recognize that learning begins at birth. Even in difficult times, I continue to keep early childhood programs as one of the highest priorities in the allocation of State resources.

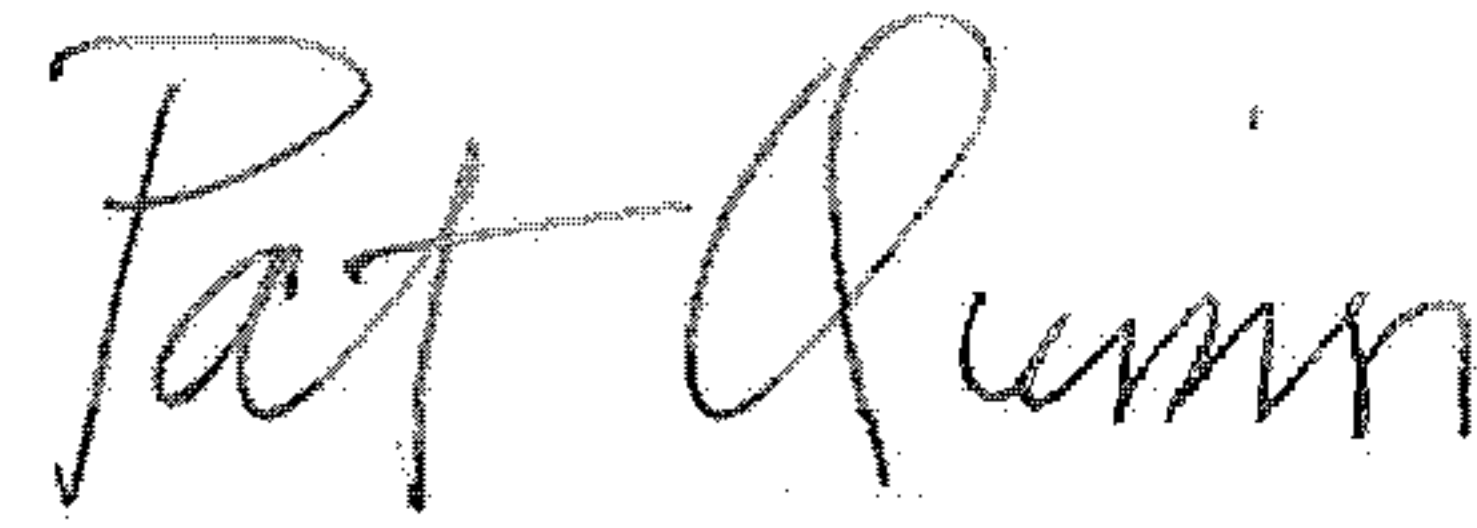
Our plan is structured around three overarching strategic reform priorities: (1) Deepening the integration of state supports to create a unified framework for all early learning and development programs; (2) Connecting the most-at-risk children with the supports and services they need; and (3) Significantly increasing early learning and development program quality.

Activities under these priorities will continue Illinois' long history of early learning system-building, including:

- Implementing a Kindergarten Individual Development Survey as part of the process to help us close the achievement gap in Illinois;
- Integrating our state data systems to incorporate critical early childhood data in our planning and to improve accountability in our programs; and
- Expanding and building upon our programs for training and professional development for early childhood teachers.

We recognize that our goals are ambitious but we are committed to moving forward. I appreciate the strong push from your Departments to again help us set higher goals and achieve better outcomes for all of our children. I believe that we cannot make a more important investment for the future of our State and our nation than the investment that we make in the lives of our youngest children.




Sincerely,


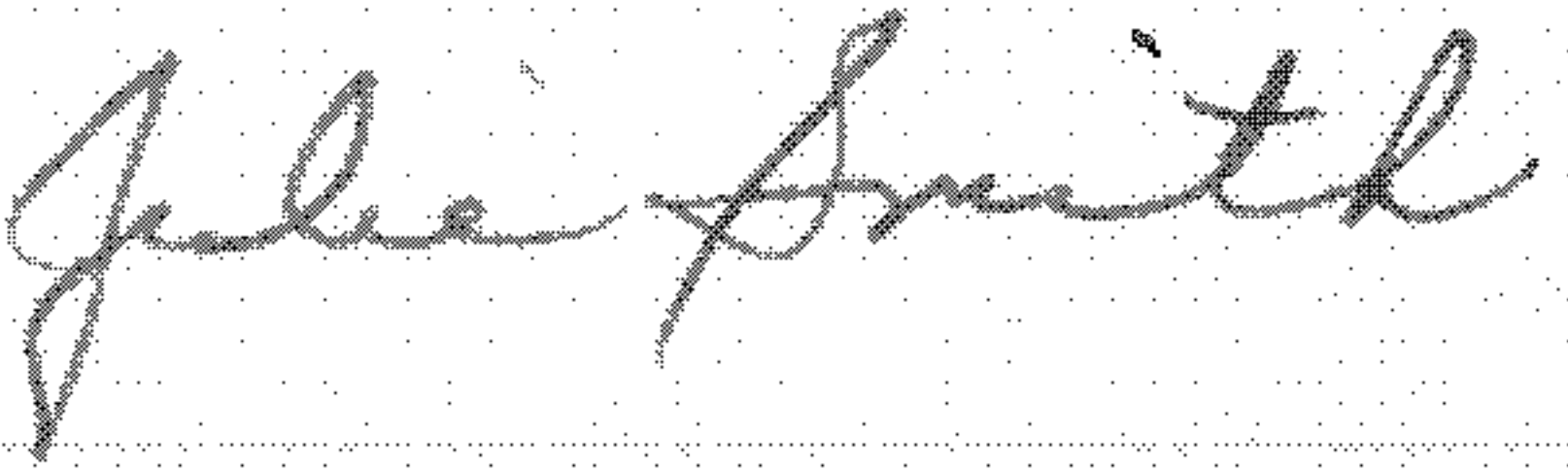
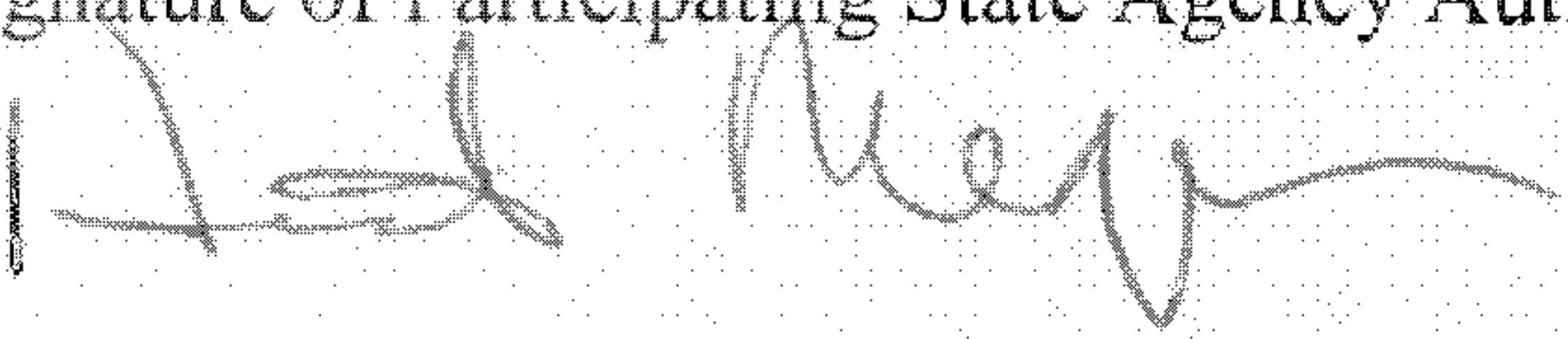
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Quinn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "P" and "Q".

Pat Quinn

Governor

IV. APPLICATION ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS
Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge
(CFDA No. 84.412)

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Office of the Governor Pat Quinn	Applicant's Mailing Address: Office of the Governor 207 State House Springfield, IL 62706
Employer Identification Number: 05-0527061	Organizational DUNS: 806812558
Lead Agency: Illinois State Board of Education Contact Name: Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D. (Single point of contact for communication)	Lead Agency Contact Phone: 217-785-1288 Lead Agency Contact Email Address: Chris.Koch@isbe.net
Required Applicant Signatures (Must include signatures from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. Insert additional signature blocks as needed below. To simplify the process, signatories may sign on separate Application Assurance forms.): To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct. I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:	
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Pat Quinn, Governor	Telephone: 217-782-0244
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor: 	Date: 10/14/11
Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Christopher A. Koch, Ed.D.	Agency Name: Illinois State Board of Education
Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative: 	Date: 10/11/11
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Michelle Saddler	Agency Name: Illinois Department of Human Services
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative: 	Date: 10/11/11

Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): D. Jean Ortega-Piron	Agency Name: Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative: 	Date: 10-14-11
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Julie Smith	Agency Name: Illinois Early Learning Council
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative: 	Date: 10-12-11
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Harriett Meyer	Agency Name: Illinois Early Learning Council
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative: 	Date: Oct 10, 2011

State Attorney General Certification

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General Certification

I certify that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions in its application concerning, State law, statute, and regulation are complete and accurate, and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation:

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General (Printed Name):

Lisa Madigan

Telephone:

312-814-3000

Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General :

Lisa Madigan

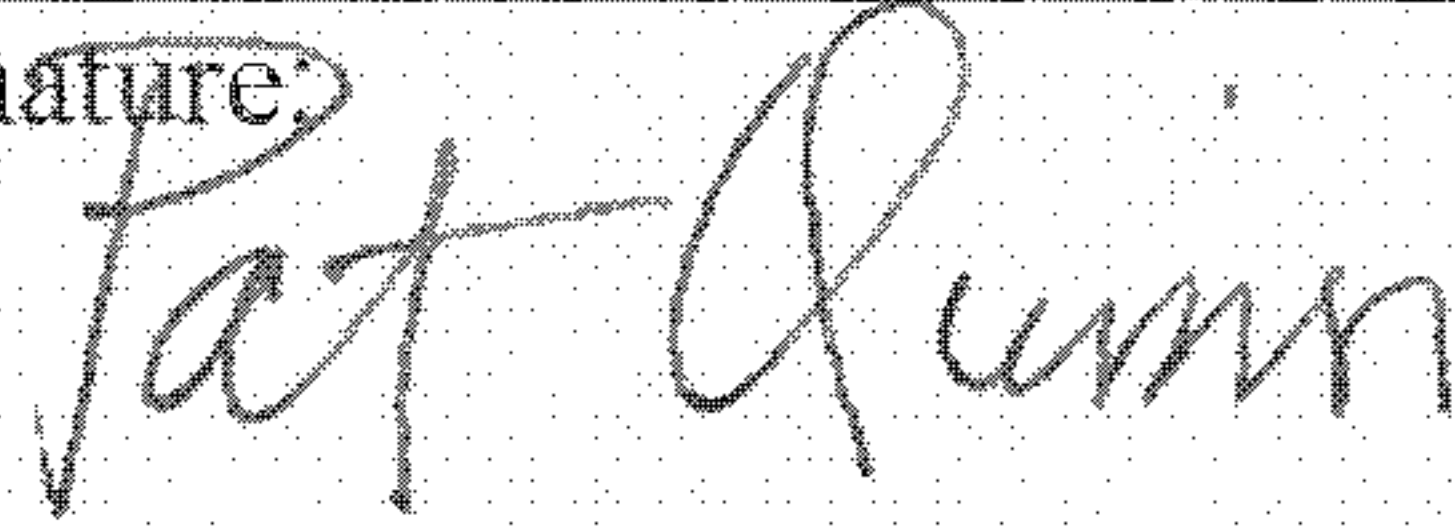
Date:

10-17-11

Accountability, Transparency, and Reporting Assurances

The Governor or his/her authorized representative assures that the State will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B and D (Assurances for Non-Construction and Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards, including Davis-Bacon prevailing wages; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders, and regulations.

- With respect to the certification regarding lobbying in Department Form 80-0013, no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making or renewal of Federal grants under this program; the State will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," when required (34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix B); and the State will require the full certification, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix A, in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers.
- The State and other entities will comply with the following provisions of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), as applicable: 34 CFR Part 74 -- Administration of Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations; 34 CFR Part 76 -- State-Administered Programs, including the construction requirements in section 75.600 through 75.617 that are incorporated by reference in section 76.600; 34 CFR Part 77 -- Definitions that Apply to Department Regulations; 34 CFR Part 80 -- Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments, including the procurement provisions; 34 CFR Part 81 -- General Education Provisions Act—Enforcement; 34 CFR Part 82 -- New Restrictions on Lobbying; 34 CFR Part 85 -- Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement).

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Pat Quinn, Governor	
Signature: 	Date: 10/14/11

V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The State must meet the following requirements to be eligible to compete for funding under this program:

(a) The Lead Agency must have executed with each Participating State Agency a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement that the State must attach to its application, describing the Participating State Agency’s level of participation in the grant. (See section XIII.) At a minimum, the MOU or other binding agreement must include an assurance that the Participating State Agency agrees to use, to the extent applicable--

- (1) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) A set of statewide Program Standards;
- (3) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
- (4) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

List of Participating State Agencies:

Participating State Agency Name (* for Lead Agency)	MOU Location in Application	Funds/Program(s) administered by the Participating State Agency
Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)*	ISBE is a party to the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement, a binding intergovernmental agreement, that is included in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i> .	ISBE is the State of Illinois education agency, and the agency that administers and supervises section 619 of part B of IDEA programs, State funded preschool, home visiting and other birth to three programs funded through the Early Childhood Block Grant, Title I of ESEA, the Child and Adult Care Food Program.
Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)	IDHS is a party to the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement, a binding intergovernmental agreement, that is included in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i> .	IDHS administers and supervises CCDF, part C of IDEA programs, the Head Start State Collaboration Grant, the Title V Maternal and Child Care Block Grant, home visiting programs through Healthy Families Illinois and Parents Too Soon, and the State’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program.
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS)	IDHS is a party to the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement, a binding intergovernmental agreement, that is included in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i> .	IDCFS is the State’s child care licensing agency, and the agency that administers and supervises Child Welfare and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention.

Participating State Agency Name (* for Lead Agency)	MOU Location in Application	Funds/Program(s) administered by the Participating State Agency
Illinois Early Learning Council (IELC)	The Illinois Early Learning Council is a party to the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement, a binding intergovernmental agreement, that is included in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i> .	The Illinois Early Learning Council is the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care.

(b) The State must have an operational State Advisory Council on Early Care and Education that meets the requirements described in section 642B(b) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837b).

The State certifies that it has an operational State Advisory Council that meets the above requirement. The Departments will determine eligibility.

Yes

No

(c) The State must have submitted in FY 2010 an updated MIECHV State plan and FY 2011 Application for formula funding under the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program (see section 511 of Title V of the Social Security Act, as added by section 2951 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-148)).

The State certifies that it submitted in FY 2010 an updated MIECHV State plan and FY 2011 Application for formula funding, consistent with the above requirement. The Departments will determine eligibility.

Yes

No

Reviewer's Guide

State of Illinois Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application

Glossary:

A helpful glossary of terms used in the application, including names of State agencies and programs, is included in the beginning of Appendix Volume I.

Key Acronyms: More information is in the Glossary:

IELC	Illinois Early Learning Council
IDHS	Illinois Department of Human Services
ISBE	Illinois State Board of Education
IDCFS	Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
OECD	Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development
ECBG	Early Childhood Block Grant
CCAP	Child Care Assistance Program
ELD Programs	Early Learning and Development Programs
ELD Standards	The Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards
EC Educators	Early Childhood Educators
ELC	Relating to the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, such as ELC Agreement, ELC Outcomes Measurement System, etc.

Elements, Evidence, Programs, and Populations Tables:

As an aid to the reviewer, the State has included these tables in Criteria (B)(1)-(E)(2) that clearly reference where in the application or appendices Illinois has addressed each element of the criterion, and where it has provided required evidence.

Quick facts about Illinois:

- Approximately 1 million children under age 6
- Just under 40% are Low Income, including 20% in poverty
- Chicago is largest city, and home to 37% of Children with High Needs under age 6
 - The City of Chicago is the largest Head Start grantee, serving nearly half of Head Start participants in the State
 - Chicago Public Schools serves over 25% of Preschool for All participants
- Latino population is growing rapidly across the State, including in suburban and rural communities. About 1 in 4 children born in the past year in Illinois is Latino.

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA

Core Areas -- Sections (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

A. Successful State Systems

(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development. (20 points)

The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's—

(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;

(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;

(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and

(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

Evidence for (A)(1):

- The completed background data tables providing the State's baseline data for--
 - The number and percentage of children from Low-Income families in the State, by age (see Table (A)(1)-1);
 - The number and percentage of Children with High Needs from special populations in the State (see Table (A)(1)-2); and
 - The number of Children with High Needs in the State who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs, by age (see Table (A)(1)-3).
- Data currently available, if any, on the status of children at kindergarten entry (across Essential Domains of School Readiness, if available), including data on the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers.
- Data currently available, if any, on program quality across different types of Early Learning and Development Programs.
- The completed table that shows the number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years (2007-2011) (see Table (A)(1)-4).
- The completed table that shows the number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years (2007-2011) (see Table (A)(1)-5).

- The completed table that describes the current status of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards for each of the Essential Domains of School Readiness, by age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers (see Table (A)(1)-6).
- The completed table that describes the elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-7).
- The completed table that describes the elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-8).
- The completed table that describes the elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-9).
- The completed table that describes all early learning and development workforce credentials currently available in the State, including whether credentials are aligned with a State Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have each type of credential (see Table (A)(1)-10).
- The completed table that describes the current status of postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators (see Table (A)(1)-11).
- The completed table that describes the current status of the State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment (see Table (A)(1)-12).
- The completed table that describes all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State (see Table (A)(1)-13).

Illinois' (A)(1) Response

Illinois' Past Commitment to Early Learning and Development

I. Introduction

Illinois is regarded as the national leader in its comprehensive support for children starting at birth through kindergarten entry and beyond. Illinois has long embraced early childhood intervention as a powerful way to ensure the healthy development of its most at-risk populations and close the achievement gap prior to kindergarten entry. Over the course of three decades of resource development and cross system work by our public-private partnerships, we have developed a compelling, common vision of the universal supports that every child and family *should* receive, as well as the targeted supports that the most vulnerable children and their families *must* receive to ensure they arrive at school safe, healthy, eager to learn and ready to succeed. This vision is deeply informed by the research of many different disciplines and identifies both the early experiences that contribute most to success in school and later life and the strategies that ensure children truly benefit from those experiences.

As the nation's fifth largest state, Illinois is home to just under one million children ages birth to kindergarten entry. Nearly half of these are Children with High Needs, including the 40 percent of children who live in Low Income families. The State is increasingly diverse, with cultural and linguistic minorities accounting for about half of the children entering public kindergartens each year. Approximately 37 percent of the Children with High Needs in the State live in the city of Chicago, but there has been rapid growth in child poverty in the suburbs surrounding the city in the last decade, and the State has struggled to shift resources to these areas to address the growing need. Illinois recognizes that because Children with High Needs comprise half of the State's future workforce, it is imperative that these children are well-prepared in early childhood to succeed in school and later life.

Our State has a long history of innovation, national leadership, and investments in supporting ELD Programs beginning from birth, including:

- **First state** to establish a statutory set-aside to fund services for children from birth to three, irrevocably attaching the hard science of brain development to the State's vision for education funding (1997);

- **First state** to pass legislation which authorized universal high-quality preschool for both three and four year olds (2006);
- **First state** to make health insurance available to all children regardless of family income (2006);
- **First state** to extend its definition of “children of limited English-speaking ability” to include 3- and 4-year olds participating in state-funded preschool programs, thereby requiring school districts to provide them bilingual education services (2009);
- **One of only a few** states that has defined its principal certification as “Preschool to grade 12”, requiring principal candidates to receive coursework and training specifically in early learning and development;
- **The nation’s largest ever** state commitment to the renovation or construction of early childhood facilities in a single state capital budget (2010);
- **Two decades** of investment in research-based home visiting programs and a statewide training system for staff in these programs; and
- **Exceptional investment** in the child care subsidy system, including a network of Child Care Resource & Referral agencies and a nationally recognized, comprehensive professional development system for practitioners.

In Illinois, ELD Programs enjoy strong support across the political spectrum and have grown under both Republican and Democratic administrations. Support also spans across the public and private sector, as the Illinois early learning and development system has benefitted for decades from strong public-private partnerships and significant philanthropic support. The Illinois Early Learning Challenge Plan allows the State to build on this foundation to create an integrated and aligned system for future investments.

II. Illinois’ Past Financial Investment in Early Learning and Development

Beginning in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2003, Illinois began to dramatically increase its investment in ELD Programs, building toward the goal of universal access to high quality preschool and access to birth to three prevention services for all at-risk children. In particular, the State’s primary birth to five funding stream, the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG), grew from \$184,171,800 in SFY 2003 to \$380,261,400 in SFY 2009.

Like many states, Illinois has encountered severe fiscal constraints over the past several years which have affected our ability to continue program expansion; however, Illinois has largely maintained its increased investment in ELD Programs with:

- State ECBG funding levels never dropping below the SFY 2007 level; and
- State spending on Part B remaining relatively flat and State contribution for Part C fluctuating, but remaining at a higher level in SFY 2011 than in SFY 2007.

Illinois leveraged American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds for stability and growth in the early learning and development budget, allowing total spending for child care to increase by 19% and limiting reductions in other programs. For example, Illinois dedicated \$131,472,700 of its ARRA State Fiscal Stabilization Fund — Government Services Fund award (35% of the total) to support early childhood programs, even though these funds could have been used for virtually any type of government service. Unlike other states, Illinois has not had to institute a waiting list for child care assistance during this tough economic climate. In addition, despite the past three years of unprecedented fiscal instability, Illinois has forged ahead with a new national model for early learning investment through the \$45 million Early Childhood Construction grant program.

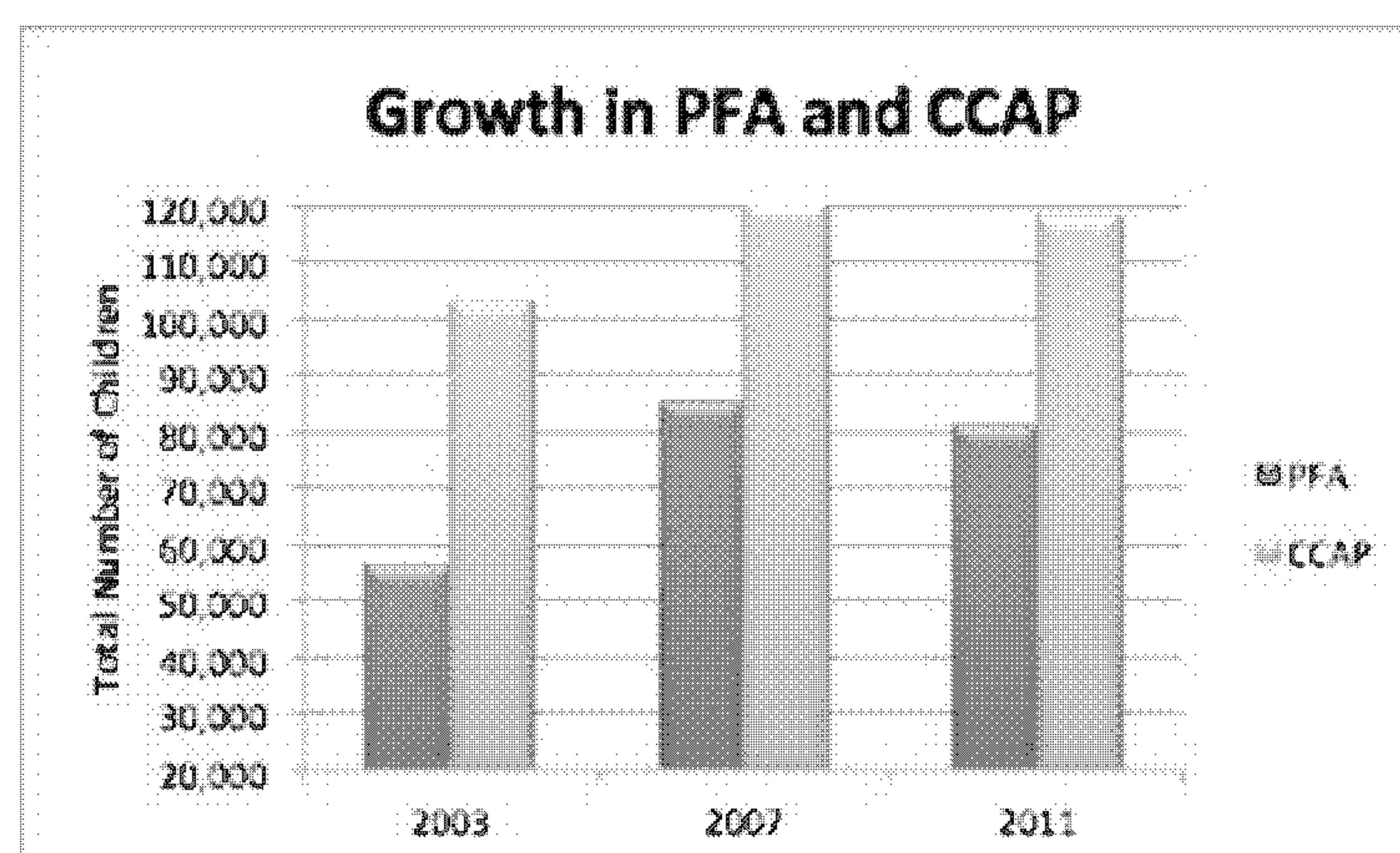
Through the early learning and development systems' funding streams and programs detailed in *Table (A)(1)-4*, Illinois spent \$1,170,455,051 in SFY 2010 (the last year for which expenditure data are fully available), which is \$1,190 per child from birth to kindergarten entry and \$3,003 per Child with High Needs. This compares with \$1,026,247,958 in SFY 2007, which was \$831 per child and \$2,546 per Child with High Needs.

For decades, Illinois' philanthropic sector has supplemented public investments to develop and support early learning systems, high quality programming, workforce development, research and development, and advocacy. Letters from ten Illinois foundations detailing their investments can be found in *Appendix (A)(3)-4*, representing a collective investment since 2007 of over \$72 million. The State is leveraging the philanthropic community's strong commitment to early learning and development throughout this Plan.

III. Illinois' Commitment to Increasing the Participation of Children With High Needs in ELD Programs

In line with Illinois' investments in early learning and development, the State has been able to dramatically increase the overall number of children and Children with High Needs served by the State's ELD Programs.

As later described in this (A)(1), the State's two primary programs for serving Children with High Needs are Preschool for All and the Child Care Assistance Program. The graph below shows that the total number of children participating in these programs has soared from 156,000 children in 2003 to nearly 200,000 children in 2011, a 28% increase. In particular, the total number of children participating in high quality Preschool for All programs grew by 45%, from 56,000 in 2003 to 81,000 in 2011. Even as the State's economy has faltered, Illinois' leadership has focused on maintaining these high participation levels.



IV. Comprehensive Birth to Kindergarten Entry Legislation, Policies, and Practices

In addition to its financial investments, State leadership has strongly supported comprehensive efforts to provide learning from birth to kindergarten and beyond. This support is reflected in the establishment of the Illinois Early Learning Council ("IELC") in 2003, which works in close coordination with other state and local government systems throughout Illinois. In addition, the State has established a series of dedicated funding streams and aligned policies to provide holistic, high quality birth to kindergarten entry services, as well as fully embracing Head Start & Early Head Start as an integral part of the overall State delivery system.

A. IELC: The Lynchpin of a Statewide System

Since the 1998 launch of the privately funded Birth to Three Project (which became Illinois' Build Initiative/Birth to Five Project), Illinois has been engaged in progressively sophisticated work towards building a comprehensive system for families with young children that includes education and care, social and emotional development, maternal and child health and nutrition, specialized services, parenting and family support and community services. This system-building focus led to the 2003 creation of the IELC to guide the State's administration of a high quality, accessible, and comprehensive statewide early learning system. Established by statute, the IELC is comprised of gubernatorial and legislative appointees representing a broad range of constituencies including schools, child care centers and homes, Head Start, higher education, state, local, and federal government agencies, the General Assembly, business, law enforcement, foundations, and parents. The broad and deep committee structure moves forward the work of the IELC and includes over 400 early childhood stakeholders. The IELC also has a statutory seat on the **Illinois P-20 Council**, which was created by statute in 2008 to work towards a seamless and sustainable statewide system of quality education and support from birth through adulthood. Evidence of progress towards better systems integration is 2010 legislation on principal preparation that was supported by both the Early Learning and P-20 Councils, making Illinois one of only a few states to establish a principal certification that extends from *preschool* to grade 12 in order to emphasize the principal's responsibility for integrating early learning and early elementary instruction. (More information on both the IELC and P-20 Council and their respective memberships is found in *Appendix (A)(1)-1* and *(A)(1)-2*.)

Based on recommendations from the IELC, in 2009 Governor Quinn significantly elevated the importance of early childhood within his administration by establishing a new **Office of Early Childhood Development (OEC)** within the Governor's Office. OEC is working to promote the quality and comprehensiveness of the State early childhood system by overseeing State agencies' implementation of birth to five policies and programs, advocating for early childhood within the Governor's Office, and overseeing and supporting the work of the IELC. Given the strong bipartisan support for early childhood in the State, it is expected OEC will be maintained by any future administration.

The IELC, OEC, and State agencies interface with a network of regional- and community-based organizations to provide a statewide early learning system of support. Unlike

many states, Illinois does not have a strong county-based system of government services through which state-funded services are coordinated. Funding for human services programs typically flows directly from State agencies to local service providers, and education funding typically flows directly from the State Board of Education to the 879 local school districts across Illinois. To support coordination at the community level, the State has encouraged and funded the development of a strong network of **Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)** agencies and **Community Collaborations** focused on birth to five years programming and services. The CCR&Rs are the regional “hub” through which families are connected with a full range of child care resources, and through which child care providers receive training, technical assistance, and other resources to enhance program quality and core competencies of educator/caregivers.

Community collaborations in areas of the State with concentrated high needs are also building knowledge and experience in best practice for local systems-integration statewide. Illinois’ **All Our Kids (AOK) Networks** are implementing innovative strategies and modeling best practice to increase families’ access to services and to increase the capacity and coordination of the local service system. As further described in (A)(2), a strategic reform priority of this Plan is to build on local community collaboration networks to connect the most at-risk children with the support and services they need.

B. *Comprehensive programs, with dedicated funding streams, across the birth to kindergarten entry spectrum*

At the foundation of Illinois’ early learning and development system are a series of state-funded programs that provide a range of education, development, and family supports to children from birth to five:

1. The **Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG)**, which includes the **Preschool for All** program and **Prevention Initiative** program (the birth to three set-aside), administered by ISBE;
2. Other birth to three programs, including home visiting programs (**Healthy Families Illinois and Parents Too Soon**) administered by IDHS and the programs administered by IDCFS for vulnerable populations; and
3. The **Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)** administered by IDHS.

In addition, **Head Start/Early Head Start**, administered by 48 Illinois grantees (including the City of Chicago, which administers almost half of the Head Start “slots” in the

State) has long played a significant role in Illinois' early care and education landscape. Separately or in combination, these programs serve approximately 45% of all children ages three and four in the State, and 16% of all children from birth to age three. All of these programs strongly prioritize service for Children with High Needs.

Early Childhood Block Grant: Decades of a State-dedicated Funding Stream

ISBE grants for school-based preschool for children age three to five began in 1985. Recognizing the critical developmental importance of the first three years of life, Illinois concurrently created two programs for families with infants and toddlers: *Parental Training*, offering parenting education classes and parent-child interactive activities and the *Prevention Initiative*, intensive child development and family support services to “at-risk” infants and toddlers. In 1997, the Illinois General Assembly enacted the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG), combining these programs to create a birth to five funding stream. The statute mandated a minimum of 8% of ECBG funding be used to fund programs for infants and toddlers, permanently linking the growth of birth to three programs with the growth of preschool. This provision has radically altered the birth to three policymaking landscape in Illinois and across the country by eliminating competition for funding between age groups. The Illinois General Assembly has since steadily increased the infant/toddler set-aside, raising it to 11% in 2003 and recently acting to increase it to 20% by SFY 2015.

Preschool for All: A Vision for Universal Access, Prioritized for At-Risk Children

In 2006, the Illinois General Assembly resoundingly approved **Preschool for All (PFA)** making Illinois the first state in the nation to authorize and support voluntary, high-quality preschool for all three *and* four year olds while maintaining the set-aside for birth to three programs. PFA was designed to empower parents with a range of program options and settings, from public and private schools to child care centers and other community-based agencies. ISBE's administrative regulations for PFA drive forward high quality learning environments focused on outcomes, continuous program improvement, and instruction informed by standards and assessment. The program has rigorous requirements, including certified teachers and intentional parent education and engagement. While the vision for Preschool for All is universal access, the recent economic crisis has forced the State to focus resources on children at highest risk, who have always been the State's highest priority for services. For example, ISBE re-

competed Preschool for All grants in the spring of 2011, giving priority to high-quality programs that serve at least 80% Children with High Needs.

Recognizing numerous barriers that impede participation of the highest-risk children, ISBE, the IELC, and community agencies have worked hard to develop and implement strategies to engage hard-to-reach families in Preschool for All programs. OECD recently launched a pilot grant program funded through Illinois' State Advisory Council grant to test promising strategies in six communities. In addition, Illinois has a nationally recognized model for collaborative programs, *Community Connections* (see *Appendix (A)(1)-3*), that links family child care with high-quality part-day classroom-based programs and extends the classroom curriculum to the child care setting. Under IDHS policy, local children in family child care homes may attend a half-day Head Start or PFA program without reducing the CCAP payment to the family child care provider. In addition, parents enrolled in approved collaboration programs blending child care funding with PFA and/or Head Start/Early Head Start receive a longer redetermination period and longer grace period for a job search to ensure continuity of children's participation in these programs.

Illinois strongly supports the inclusion of children with special needs in Preschool for All classrooms. Many districts across the State have "blended" PFA classrooms that include a small number of children with disabilities and provide all of the instructional supports these children need; fully 62% of preschoolers with IEPs are in such a setting. In some areas, districts have extended this approach by creating a tuition-based preschool program that meets PFA standards and that blends children with disabilities (who are supported by IDEA funding) with their typically developing peers.

The State has also been responsive to the significant change in our population. As shown in *Table (A)(1)-2*, 9.8% of children from birth to age five in Illinois are English Language Learners (ELLs). The State experienced a 20% increase in ELL students between the 2003-04 and 2007-08 school years. In 2009, the General Assembly amended the Illinois School Code to include preschool students in the definition of Limited English Proficient students, mandating the extension of bilingual services to state-funded, school-based preschool programs and making Illinois the first to offer statewide bilingual preschool.¹ Among the implications of this statutory change is the need for preschool teachers in bilingual settings to have bilingual/ESL approval by

¹ Public Act 95-793, amending 105 ILCS 5/14C-2.

2014. School districts also now have the ability to include preschool children in their headcount when they submit claims for reimbursement for bilingual services.

Birth to Three: Innovative and Intentional

Illinois has earned a reputation as the national leader in supporting early learning from birth to age three through substantial investment, intentional policy-making, and comprehensive systems development to serve infants and toddlers in evidence-based programs. Since 1984, Illinois has been without peer in investments in home visiting as a strength-based, family-centered strategy for reducing child abuse and neglect and promoting child development. In the current fiscal year, Illinois is investing more than \$40 million in evidence-based home visiting programs, enabling organizations and agencies to support 300 programs and provide long-term, intensive services to more than 22,000 at-risk families annually. *Appendix (A)(1)-4* provides more information about Illinois' system for home visiting

As shown in *Table (A)(1)-3*, The Prevention Initiative, the infant/toddler set-aside in the ECBG, is the largest (and fully state-funded) funding stream, enabling school districts and community based organizations to provide parenting education and parent-child interaction activities related to development and nurturing of infants and toddlers using one of four models: Healthy Families Illinois; Parents as Teachers; Center-Based Prevention Initiative (an adaptation of Early Head Start standards); or Baby Talk (described in letter in *Appendix (A)(3)-4*) IDHS also funds evidence-based home visiting programs through Healthy Families Illinois and Parents Too Soon. Illinois has been awarded both MIECHV formula funds as well as competitive funds to implement or enhance evidence-based home visiting programs in a total of nine Concentrated High Needs Communities.

Birth to three is well-integrated into the State's early learning and development governance and management structures. In 2008, through funding from a competitive grant from the Department of Health & Human Services' Children's Bureau, Illinois launched the "**Strong Foundations**" project to enhance the State's existing birth-to-three infrastructure and create an integrated statewide system by coordinating resource allocation, community capacity building, training, data collection, monitoring, and technical assistance. The Strong Foundations Director is a part of the OECD in order to insure alignment of birth-to-three programs with other early childhood services. This focus on systems integration is reflected in the State's establishment of

the **Birth to the Three Training Institute** -- a unified training and technical support system for all home visitors funded through ISBE and IDHS (more information in *Appendix (A)(1)-5*).

State agencies have also placed particular emphasis on delivering high quality birth to three services for its most vulnerable and high-risk populations. For example, IDCFS has developed policies for all children age birth to three who have been found to have been abused or neglected, including wards of the state and those remaining in intact families, to be screened and referred to an early intervention program for comprehensive assessment and services if appropriate. This system has already proven to be highly successful, with more than 2,600 IDCFS-involved children ages birth to five having received screenings and appropriate referrals and services in SFY 2011. In addition, due to a focused effort by State agencies and local networks, 10,000 more infants and toddlers are provided with crucial Part C services today compared with ten years ago.

Child Care Assistance Program: Expansion and Investments

Illinois has also been a national leader in terms of its system of child care subsidies to families and supports for quality enhancement to child care centers and homes. Federal welfare reform legislation in 1996 gave Illinois the opportunity to move forward aggressively to support parents moving from welfare to work and at the same time increase access to early childhood care and education for all low-income working families. Illinois took full advantage of flexibility offered through the Child Care and Development Fund to blend funding streams in the design of a single program with universal eligibility guidelines. Enacted in statute in 1997, the **Child Care Assistance Program** (CCAP) eradicated waiting lists for low-income families by establishing “universal eligibility” for families earning less than half the State median income (equal to approximately 185% of the Federal Poverty Level). At the time, Illinois was only the third state to implement an income-based system (as opposed to eligibility based on TANF status). The Illinois CCAP recognizes the critical importance of family choice and allows reimbursement for all forms of legal care, including centers, licensed family child care homes, and legally license-exempt care. The CCAP program grew rapidly over the years, as IDHS allocated additional TANF funds to child care and as important program enhancements were implemented (*Table (A)(1)-3*). Expansion and innovation in quality initiatives and five reimbursement rate increases since 2008 have been instrumental in building the capacity for higher quality care in centers, licensed, and license-exempt homes.

The child care system has been the incubator for some of Illinois' most important innovations in systems development, including the Quality Counts/Quality Rating System, Gateways to Opportunity, Great START, and Healthy Child Care Illinois.

Head Start and Early Head Start: A Long History of Partnership

Illinois has participated in Head Start since its 1965 inception, and since then it has remained a critical component of the State's early learning and development system. From the beginning, the IELC has had representation from the Head Start community, as well as from the federal Department of Health and Human Services. Preschool for All programs are statutorily required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with their local Head Start agency on a range of issues including improved local planning and collaboration.

Currently, Head Start in Illinois serves more than 42,000 children and their families; approximately 38,000 in Head Start and 4,700 through in Early Head Start. Head Start funding is a cornerstone for a number of early learning programs who braid Head Start funds with state education and child care funds to provide the highest-quality full-day, full-year programs to some of the State's most at-risk children, particularly in low-income neighborhoods in the City of Chicago. The City of Chicago is also using Head Start and Early Head Start expansion funding under ARRA to target homeless children and families in shelter using the Head Start Home Visiting model.

V. Illinois' Building Blocks for a High Quality Early Learning and Development System

The legislation, funding streams, and programs described above create the structural framework for the State's early learning and development system. Within this framework, the State has layered in a series of building blocks to promote quality and integration. Through this Plan, these building blocks will be enhanced and further integrated into a comprehensive high-quality statewide early learning system that targets the State's aggressive outcome goals articulated in (A)(2).

Illinois Early Learning Standards

The Illinois Early Learning Standards were first developed in 2000 and were fully adopted in 2006. The standards, in alignment with K-12 core standards, were not broken out by age level, but instead articulated what children should know and be able to do at the end of the preschool years as they moved into kindergarten. In 2011, Illinois began the process of revising

the 3-5 standards to reflect a growing body of knowledge and experience since the standards were first established. In alignment with this process, a privately funded initiative under the auspices of the IELC has developed Infant Toddler Development standards. The Infant Toddler Development Standards and newly revised 3-5 standards collectively constitute the Early Learning & Development Standards, as described in greater detail in (C)(1).

Comprehensive Program Standards

As described in (B)(1), the Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards (*Appendix (B)(1)-1*) represent Illinois' common definition of and commitment to high quality, comprehensive ELD Programs. These standards build from Birth to Three program standards first developed in 2002 by ISBE.

Strong State Licensing Requirements

Illinois' day care center licensing system was rated by NACCRRRA as fourth-best in the nation,ⁱ behind only the Department of Defense, Oklahoma, and the District of Columbia, based on its strengths in the areas of teacher qualifications, ratios, requirements in six developmental domains, health and safety requirements, and parent communication (see *Tables (A)(1)-7,8,9* and NACCRRRA report in *Appendix (A)(1)-6*). IDCFS, in consultation with the IELC, frequently updates its licensing requirements to reflect expansion of knowledge about best practice, and has initiated a further strengthening of its requirements in October 2011 to address workforce registration requirements, day care center director credentials, TQRIS participation, orientation on the Illinois Early Learning & Development Standards, and requirements for "small" providers. (See proposed IDCFS regulations in *Appendix (B)(2)-1*; note that here and throughout the application, the term "day care" is used when referring to licensing in alignment with Illinois statute and administrative code.)

Quality Rating System and Quality Enhancements

Recognizing the need to encourage and reward programs and providers that exceed licensing standards, IDHS implemented the "Quality Counts" Quality Rating System (QRS) in 2007. Open to all providers, including centers, licensed homes, and license-exempt caregivers, the QRS provides a roadmap and training support for continuous quality improvement and establishes tiered reimbursement for CCAP providers. QRS was developed with four levels (Star 1, 2, 3, and 4) for centers and licensed homes, accompanied by reimbursement rate "add-ons" from 5-20%. Illinois has been intentional in its inclusion of "family friend and neighbor care" by

creating “training tiers” to recognize providers that have completed training modules (see *Appendix (B)(1)-5*).

Using its existing QRS as the foundation, Illinois has developed a redesigned TQRIS (see *(B)(1)*) that will include all ELD Programs (except for home visiting and Part C services) and sets forth a progression of quality criteria to be achieved for each standard at each tier to explicitly spell out the “roadmap to quality”. The TQRIS criteria are organized into the following categories: learning environment; program administration; family engagement; curriculum/child assessment; director qualifications; staff qualifications; staff development; continuous quality improvement; group size and staff/child ratios; screening; health promotion; and record-keeping and data reporting.

Comprehensive Assessment Systems

Illinois has invested in systemic strategies to ensure that all children receive periodic developmental screening using a standardized tool that reliably identifies those children in need of evaluation for potential developmental delays or disabilities. The State has supported and embedded requirements for developmental screening in contracts and/or performance requirements for primary health care, home visiting programs, Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative, and such screening is also required by Head Start and Early Head Start. Comprehensive formative assessment of children’s progress in achieving the benchmarks of the Illinois ELD Standards is also required by Preschool for All, Prevention Initiative, Head Start and Early Head Start, as well as by programs at Star Level 4 or above in the Quality Counts TQRIS. Quality Counts employs valid, reliable instruments administered by trained, reliable raters to determine the environmental quality and the quality of adult-child interactions as described in *(B)(3)*.

Health Promotion Practices

One of the hallmarks of the Illinois early learning system is a focus on the whole child across the broad range of health and development. Multi-year public and private investments in Illinois’ systems-building efforts have led to real and lasting changes in the areas of primary care provision, social-emotional health and development, oral health, and nutrition. The changes have spanned systems—early care and education, Part C, health (Medicaid, Title V, primary/pediatric care), family support, and child welfare. Policy and systems efforts have focused on the areas of screening, treatment, consultation, training, and workforce development. Moreover, Illinois’

strong state system for evidence-based home visiting, AOK networks, and Family Case Management programs are vehicles for coordination and collaboration at the local level to ensure children and their families have full information and access to the wide range of health resources they need.

Illinois has raised the visibility of the connection between maternal health, access to care, and young children's development through effort such as:

- **All Kids** health insurance, which from 2006 to 2011 provided all Illinois children (regardless of income, health, or immigration status) access to health insurance. The recent fiscal crisis forced the State to reduce eligibility to families with incomes up to three times the federal poverty level in 2011.
- State Medicaid policy that allows itemized reimbursement for developmental screening, social-emotional screening, and perinatal maternal depression screening.
- **Enhancing Developmentally-Oriented Primary Care (EDOPC)**, a public-private partnership working to implement a range of strategies in primary care settings to effectively provide comprehensive, developmental health care for infants and toddlers (letters in *Appendix (A)(3)-4* from the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Advocate Health Systems contain additional information).

Children's mental health is another area in which Illinois has been on the cutting edge of innovation and system building. Understanding of and access to appropriate mental health care was identified as a key system gap more than a decade ago. In 2003, Illinois passed the Children's Mental Health Act, creating the **Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership (ICMHP)**, a cross-systems public-private initiative with the charge of implementing a statewide mental health plan for children from birth to age 18. ICMHP has focused on building an early childhood mental health workforce by supporting a statewide network of consultants, participating in leadership of an early childhood mental health credential that is now in the pilot stage, and providing intensive training and support in communities around the State. **Caregiver Connections**, a mental health consultation program for EC Educators, is embedded in each of the 16 CCR&Rs to support social-emotional development in children from birth to five.

Chicago has been at the forefront of health promotion practices focused on nutrition and physical activity. Since 2002 the **Consortium to Lower Childhood obesity in Chicago (CLOCC)** has built a broad based network of over 1,200 organizations, working together to

promote healthy and active lifestyles throughout the Chicago area and is nationally recognized as an outstanding community obesity prevention model. In 2009, Chicago revised its city licensing standards, requiring child care centers to increase physical activity, improve nutritional standards, and reduce screen time for young children. Chicago's standards and training are informing and impacting policy and practice at the state level, and were a model for the recently released national Let's Move Child Care recommendations.

Family Engagement Strategies

At the core of every program and service that comprises Illinois' Early Learning and Development System is the belief that parents are their children's first teachers, and the strength and well-being of the family is of critical importance to optimal child development and therefore school readiness. *Table (A)(1)-9* shows the range of standards and practice across programs.

Over the past several years, **Strengthening Families Illinois (SFI)** has emerged as an effective structure and system for encouraging family involvement and strengthening and supporting families in any early childhood setting throughout the system. SFI tools and training are embedded throughout the Illinois early learning system, including the network of Child Care Resource & Referral agencies, AOK Networks, Illinois Birth to Three Institute, Head Start and Early Head Start agencies, child care centers, and public school programs. Specific family engagement strategies are also required at Star Levels 2 through 5 of the redesigned TQRIS, as described in *(B)(1)* and *(C)(4)*.

Development of EC Educators

Illinois has a nationally recognized, comprehensive professional development system for practitioners working in ELD Programs. **Gateways to Opportunity** is based on a clearly articulated framework that includes a continuum of training, education, and ongoing supports as well as defined career pathways in cross-sector programs, based on increasing qualifications and attainment of credentials recognized in law, regulation, and policy. Illinois' framework, described in detail in *(D)(1)*, begins with paraprofessional credentials at level 1 and extends to level 6 requiring a graduate degree. The Gateways system is closely tied to the 74 two- and four-year colleges in Illinois that offer degrees in early childhood education. **Great START** (Strategy To Attract and Retain Teachers), first enacted into law in 2000, builds upon and complements Gateways by paying wage supplements to practitioners in licensed centers and homes, who complete or continue higher education and remain at the same program. Illinois invests heavily

in ongoing professional development of the early learning and development workforce (see (B)(4), (C)(2), (C)(4) and (D)(2)) through multiple funding streams, addressing different sectors including child care providers, school-based personnel, home visitors, and other EC Educators.

Kindergarten Individual Development Survey

In 2009, the State Superintendent of Education and a coalition of education stakeholders initiated discussion about the need for a statewide kindergarten readiness assessment. The Kindergarten Readiness Stakeholder Committee comprised of school administrators, teachers, university faculty, researchers, and education advocates from across the State issued a set of recommendations in April 2011 to establish the “**Illinois Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS)**” as a developmentally appropriate formative assessment process which will yield data that can be used at multiple levels and for multiple varying purposes, including instructional, policy-making, and resource allocation. As further described in (E)(1), Illinois is moving ahead with an aggressive implementation plan, having secured resources for implementation, commenced the administrative rulemaking process for statewide implementation, and issued a Request for Sealed Proposals for the selection of an instrument and vendor.

Effective Data Practices

As described in (E)(2), the State of Illinois has been working diligently to build a unified early learning data system that will improve instruction, practices, services, and policies. The legal foundation for the Illinois’ statewide longitudinal education data system, the **P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act**, contemplates that early childhood data will be an integral component of the system and provides the IELC with a role in data governance. ISBE’s data warehouse currently includes a full array of Birth to 5 elements, and data sharing agreements are in place to integrate early learning data across systems. The State has established the **Gateways to Opportunity Registry** for the collection of early childhood workforce data, which through this Plan will be expanded to essentially all EC Educators in the State. Early learning program data is currently captured through separate systems at ISBE and IDHS, but will be integrated through this plan as part of the TQRIS redesign. In addition, Illinois has been intensively focused on how data is used by practitioners, and is leveraging significant State and philanthropic investments to extend cutting edge data platforms to early learning through this Plan.

Conclusion: A Strong Foundation for Systemic Reforms

As evidenced in this response and throughout this application, Illinois’ list of investments, innovative policy and practice, and intentionality in early learning are a source of pride in our State. There is also stark recognition that thousands of Illinois children enter kindergarten each year without the developmental foundation for success. It is for these children that hundreds of parents, teachers, policy makers, elected officials, professionals, and advocates have participated in creating Illinois’ blueprint for reaching our vision of all children entering kindergarten safe, healthy, eager to learn, and ready to succeed. Illinois has a tremendous foundation on which we continue to build, day-by-day and year by year. The Illinois Early Learning Challenge Plan will allow our State to make the “big leap forward” in systems building that is required to bring our vision to fruition.

Table (A)(1)-1: Children from Low-Income² families, by age		
	Number of children from Low-Income families in the State	Children from Low-Income families as a percentage of all children in the State
Infants under age 1	73,546 / 181,133	40.6%
Toddlers ages 1 through 2	141,216 / 359,555	39.3%
Preschoolers ages 3 to kindergarten entry	174,975 / 442,915	39.5%
Total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families	389,737 / 983,603	39.6%
<p><i>Source: Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM), 2009 data (2010 not yet available)</i> <i>Note: For children age 5 not yet in kindergarten, 1/2 the number of 5-year-olds was used. This number will vary depending on the month of the year from 1/12 of 5-year-olds to 12/12 of 5-year-olds. Thus the middle variation is used here.</i></p>		

²Low-Income is defined as having an income of up to 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Table (A)(1)-2: Special populations of Children with High Needs		
<i>The State should use these data to guide its thinking about where specific activities may be required to address special populations' unique needs. The State will describe such activities throughout its application.</i>		
Special populations: Children who . . .	Number of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who...	Percentage of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who...
Have disabilities or developmental delays³	55,506*	6.0%
Are English learners⁴	105,424**	10.7%
Reside on "Indian Lands"	N/A	N/A
Are migrant⁵	432***	.00%
Are homeless	1,153****	.12%
Are in foster care	13,295 ⁺	1.4%
<p><i>*Source: ISBE and IECAM, 2010 data</i> <i>**Source: IECAM, 2009 data</i> <i>*** Source: Illinois Migrant Council, 2009 data</i> <i>**** Source: HUD Annual Homeless Assessment Report, 2009 data</i> <i>⁺ Source: Out-of-home placements from the IDCFS FY2012 Budget Book, 2010 data</i></p>		

³ For purposes of this application, children with disabilities or developmental delays are defined as children birth through kindergarten entry that have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

⁴ For the purpose of the application, children who are English Language Learners in Illinois are children who either do not speak English at home and do not speak English well (if they are 5 years old) or whose mother, father, or head of household (in order of preference) does not speak English at home and does not speak English well.

⁵ For purposes of this application, children who are migrant are children birth through kindergarten entry who meet the definition of "migratory child" in ESEA section 1309(2).

Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of ELD Programs, by age.				
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple ELD Programs.</i>				
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age			
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
State-funded preschool <i>Source: ISBE 2010</i> <i>Number is At Risk Children⁶</i>	N/A	N/A	80,101	80,101
Early Head Start and Head Start⁷ <i>Source: Illinois Head Start Association 2010</i>	1,646	5,741	43,404	50,791
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 <i>*Source: Early Intervention Active Cases as of 7/31/11</i> <i>**Source: ISBE as of 12/1/10</i>	2,010*	17,008*	36,488**	55,506
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA <i>Source ISBE Homeless, Migrant, and Pre-K 2011 data</i> <i>* Unduplicated counts are not available</i>	*	*	4,579	4,579

⁶ For the purposes of this chart, “at risk” is defined as those children who because of their home and community environment are subject to such language, cultural, economic and like disadvantages to cause them to have been determined as a result of screening procedures (to be carried out in conformance with Section 235.20(c)(5) of this Part) to be at risk of academic failure. (Section 2-3.71(a)(4.5) of the Illinois School Code). Approximately 70,000 using more limited federal definition of Children with High Needs.

⁷ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of ELD Programs, by age.				
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple ELD Programs.</i>				
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age			
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
<p>Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program</p> <p><i>Data Source and Year: FY11 average monthly; CCTS & Site Administered Child Care Contract Reports</i></p> <p>*Birth to 14 months **15-36 months ***37months-5 years</p>	15,429*	39,531**	63,456***	118,416
<p>Home Visiting Programs</p> <p>Prevention Initiative, Healthy Families Initiative, Parents as Teachers and Nurse Family Partnership.</p> <p>Source: ISBE and IDHS (2010)</p> <p>*Prevention Initiative, an ISBE program, only has total 0-2 child count, so this number of 20,792 is evenly divided between the two categories.</p>	11,151*	11,244*	255	22,650

Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development					
Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start and Head Start⁸	\$574,459	\$582,735	\$609,253	\$609,253	\$670,048
State-funded preschool <i>Preschool for All</i>	\$318,254,500	\$347,861,441	\$380,261,400	\$342,235,300	\$342,235,300
State contributions to IDEA Part C	\$61,041,100	\$71,641,100	\$79,077,200	\$76,709,000	\$67,038,100
State contributions for special education and related services for children with disabilities, ages 3 through kindergarten entry	\$17,650,453	\$17,650,452	\$17,369,463	\$17,369,463	\$17,369,453
Total State contributions to CCDF⁹	\$131,376,743	\$130,270,940	\$128,944,623	\$129,865,148	\$128,650,878
State match to CCDF <i>Exceeded/Met/Not Met (if exceeded, indicate amount by which match was exceeded)</i>	Met	Met	Met	Met	Will be met

⁸ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

⁹ Total State contributions to CCDF must include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), State Match, and any State contributions exceeding State MOE or Match.

Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development					
Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
TANF spending on ELD Programs¹⁰	\$108,531,680	\$168,034,659	\$137,298,713	\$130,225,180	\$55,203,932
Other State contributions <i>Even Start Programs (Title 1)*</i>	\$3,830,620	\$3,479,163	\$3,479,163	\$2,582,905	\$2,511,754
Other State contributions <i>Child Care GRF claimed for TANF MOE</i>	\$230,024,470	\$211,712,541	\$296,548,091	\$298,099,192	\$255,537,217
Other State contributions <i>Infant Mortality/Family Case Mgmt GRF</i>	\$44,253,488	\$45,638,700	\$42,471,763	\$41,273,384	\$41,423,900
Other State contributions <i>Healthy Families Illinois GRF</i>	\$9,950,522	\$9,929,924	\$11,125,683	\$9,454,320	\$8,677,960
Other State contributions <i>Parents Too Soon</i>	\$7,044,612	\$7,112,612	\$7,378,512	\$7,070,812	\$7,094,612
Other State contributions <i>Child Care GRF claimed for Title XX/SSB</i>	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000	\$1,200,000

¹⁰ Include TANF transfers to CCDF as well as direct TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs.

Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development					
Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<i>Other State spending in Child Care not claimed as CCDF</i>	\$11,588,964	\$60,685,429	\$32,928,013	\$27,295,892	\$27,300,000
<i>Early Childhood Construction Grants</i>					\$45,000,000
<i>IDCFS spending (foster care, adoption, protective services, etc.)</i>	\$80,926,347	\$80,098,651	\$86,082,412	\$86,465,202	\$86,717,508
Total State contributions:	\$1,026,247,958	\$1,155,898,347	\$1,224,774,289	\$1,170,455,051	\$1,086,630,662
<p><i>Notes: The State's fiscal year 2011 ends June 30, 2012. Data is shown by FFY and FFY11 data is projected or only for portion of year.</i></p> <p><i>*Even Start has been discontinued for FY12 and future years.</i></p>					

Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in ELD Programs in the State					
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple ELD Programs.</i>					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years¹¹				
	2007	2008	2009¹²	2010¹⁷	2011¹⁷
State-funded preschool <i>(annual census count; e.g., October 1 count)</i> <i>Specify:</i> <i>*At Risk Children¹³</i>	72,769*	79,649*	89,627	80,101	77,499

¹¹ Include all Children with High Needs served with both Federal dollars and State supplemental dollars.

¹² Note to Reviewers: The number of children served reflects a mix of Federal, State, and local spending. Head Start, IDEA, and CCDF all received additional Federal funding under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which may be reflected in increased numbers of children served in 2009-2011.

Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in ELD Programs in the State					
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple ELD Programs.</i>					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years¹¹				
	2007	2008	2009¹²	2010¹⁷	2011¹⁷
Early Head Start and Head Start¹⁴ <i>(funded enrollment)</i>	40,110	39,461	39,461	42,015	42,015
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 <i>(annual December 1 count)</i>	54,800	55,939	55,669	54,700	Not yet available
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA <i>(total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report. Includes Migrant, Homeless and Pre-K data)</i>			4,194	5,170	4,579
Programs receiving CCDF funds <i>(average monthly served)</i>	120,632	117,164	118,660	114,240	118,416
Other Home Visiting Programs Prevention Initiative, Healthy Families Initiative, Parents as Teachers and Nurse Family Partnership Source: ISBE and IHDS	19,483	21,894	22,891	22,650	20,811

¹³ For the purposes of this chart, “at risk” is defined as those children who because of their home and community environment are subject to such language, cultural, economic and like disadvantages to cause them to have been determined as a result of screening procedures (to be carried out in conformance with Section 235.20(c)(5) of this Part) to be at risk of academic failure. (Section 2-3.71(a)(4.5) of the School Code).

¹⁴ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Table (A)(1)-6 : Current status of the State’s ELD Standards			
<i>Please place an “X” in the boxes to indicate where the State’s ELD Standards address the different age groups by Essential Domain of School Readiness</i>			
Essential Domains of School Readiness	Age Groups		
	Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers
Language and literacy development	X	X	X
Cognition and general knowledge (including early math and early scientific development)	X	X	X
Approaches toward learning	X	X	X
Physical well-being and motor development	X	X	X
Social and emotional development	X	X	X

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an “X” in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.</i>					
Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Preschool for All</i>	X	X	X	X	
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹⁵	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part C	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619*	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA**	X	X	X	X	
Programs receiving CCDF funds***					

¹⁵ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.</i>					
Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements:					
Level 1					
Level 2			X	X	
Level 3	X	X	X	X	
Level 4	X	X	X	X	
Level 5	X	X	X	X	
State licensing requirements****					
Other <i>Describe:</i>					
<p><i>*Part B is typically integrated with Preschool for All classrooms</i></p> <p><i>**School districts using Title 1 to fund preschool programs (including the City of Chicago) follow Preschool for All program requirements</i></p> <p><i>*** See licensing requirements and QRIS levels; legally license-exempt providers are not required to have these elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System</i></p> <p><i>**** All licensed programs must participate in the Quality Counts TQRIS as of July 1, 2012. This line reflects Star Level 1, basic licensing requirements. Licensing rules require that parents be involved in and give permission for all child assessments, but assessments are not required for every child. Measures of Environmental Quality and Quality of Adult-Child Interaction are not required unless programs seek a higher star level rating.</i></p>					

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State:					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
State-funded preschool Preschool for All	X	X	X		
Early Head Start and Head Start	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part C**	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619***	X	X	X		
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA****	X	X	X		
Programs receiving CCDF funds*****	X				
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements Level 1	X	*	X		
Level 2	X	*	X		
Level 3	X	X	X		
Level 4	X	X	X		

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State:					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
Level 5	X	X	X	X	
State licensing requirements⁺	X	*	X		
Other State-funded Home Visiting Programs, including Prevention Initiative, Health Families and MIECHV programs	X	X	X	X	

**All licensed and school-based programs are required to annually screen three and four year olds for vision and hearing problems. Developmental and behavioral screening is only required where indicated by "X".*

***Part C in Illinois is a fee-for-service system that does not fund programs but instead reimburses for specific therapeutic services. Comprehensive assessments of children's and families' needs and IFSPs do address health needs.*

****Part B programs are typically integrated with Preschool for All programs.*

*****School districts using Title 1 to fund preschool programs (including the City of Chicago) follow Preschool for All program requirements.*

******See licensing requirements and QRIS levels; legally license-exempt providers are required to self-certify compliance with health and safety requirements.*

⁺All licensed programs must participate in the Quality Counts TQRIS as of July 1, 2012. This line reflects Star Level 1, basic licensing requirements. Licensing rules require that parents be involved in and give permission for all child assessments, but assessments are not required for every child. Measures of Environmental Quality and Quality of Adult-Child Interaction are not required unless programs seek a higher star level rating.

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
State-funded preschool <i>Specify:</i> <i>Preschool for All¹⁶</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent access to program at any time • Ongoing two-way communication with families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent Teacher Conferences • Parent education in child development • Training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten • Intergenerational activities • Parent involvement in decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent Council
Early Head Start and Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent access to program at any time • Ongoing two-way communication with families • Training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten • Intergenerational activities • Linking with community supports and adult and family literacy programs • Parent involvement in decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent Council • Parent leadership development
Programs funded under IDEA Part C <i>Early Intervention¹⁷</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent access to program at anytime • Ongoing two-way communication with families • Intergenerational activities • Parent involvement in decision making
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619 <i>*STARNET program</i> <i>**Early Intervention Clearinghouse</i> <i>*** Part B State Performance Plan</i> <i>**** ISTAC</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing two-way communication with families*, **** • Linking with community supports and adult and family literacy programs*, **, *** • Training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten*** • Intergenerational activities**** • Parent involvement in decision making* • Parent leadership development*

¹⁶ Source: 23 Illinois Administrative Code 235.20.

¹⁷ 325 ILCS 20/11, Ch. 23, par. 4161, Sec. 11. Individualized Family Service Plans.

<p>Programs funded under Title I of ESEA¹⁸</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent access to program at any time • Ongoing two-way communication with families • Linking with community supports and adult and family literacy programs • Parent involvement in decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent Council • Parent leadership development
<p>Programs receiving CCDF funds <i>CCR&Rs and INCCRRA Contracts</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing two-way communication with families • Parent education in child development • Linking with community supports and adult and family literacy programs • Parent involvement in decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent Councils ○ Fatherhood Initiative • Parent leadership development
<p>Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Levels 2-3</i> <i>*Levels 3 and above</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing two-way communication with families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent Teacher Conferences • Communicate with parents in primary language*
<p>Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Levels 4-5</i> <i>*Level 5</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing two-way communication with families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent Teacher Conferences • Communicate with parents in primary language • Parent education in child development* • Training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten* • Intergenerational activities* • Linking with community supports and adult and family literacy programs
<p>State licensing requirements¹⁹ <i>Also QRIS level 1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent access to program at any time • Written plan for encouraging parent involvement • Ongoing two-way communication with families
<p>Other <i>Describe:</i> State Bilingual Education Programs P-12²⁰</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent involvement in decision making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parent Council • Parent leadership development

¹⁸ Title I, Part A SEC. 1118. Parental Involvement.

¹⁹ Source: 89 Illinois Administrative Code 407.200.

²⁰ 23 Illinois Administrative Code 228.30(c)(5).

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials²¹ currently available in the State.				
List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? (Yes/No/Not Available)	Number and percentage of EC Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
ECE Credential	Yes	1,273*	3.5%	<i>Based on estimate of staff in licensed child care centers.</i>
Infant Toddler Credential	Yes	151*	1.6%	<i>Based on estimate of staff serving infants and toddlers in licensed child care centers.</i>
Illinois Director Credential	Yes	478*	12.0%	<i>Based on estimate of directors of licensed child care centers and PFA sites.</i>
ISBE Type 04 Early Childhood Teacher Certification	Yes	758**	100%	<i>Required to work in State-funded preschool programs.</i>
ECE Degrees and certificates awarded by institutions of higher education in Illinois.	Yes	2100***	Not available****	
<p><i>*Total credentials awarded to date.</i> <i>**Count from 07/01/2010 to 06/30/201.</i> <i>*** Count of ECE degrees and certificates awarded in 2010.</i> <i>****Not able to track at this date.</i></p>				

²¹ Includes both credentials awarded and degrees attained.

Table (A)(1)-11: Summary of current postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to EC Educators		
List postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to EC Educators	Number of EC Educators that received an early learning credential or degree from this entity in the previous year*	Does the entity align its programs with the State's current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>
Black Hawk College	8+	YES
Richard J. Daley College	0	YES
Harold Washington College	5+	YES
Elgin Community College	1	YES
Harper College	0	YES
Heartland Community College	3	YES
Highland Community College	0	YES
Illinois Valley Community College	0	YES
Joliet Junior College	0	YES
Lewis & Clark Community College	0	YES
Lincoln Land Community College	1	YES
John A. Logan College	3	YES
McHenry College	0	YES
Moraine Valley Community College	2	YES
Oakton Community College	12+	YES
Rend Lake College	8	YES
Shawnee Community College	2+	YES
Southeastern Illinois College	0	YES
Triton College	3+	YES
Waubonsee Community College	0	YES
Lincoln Christian University	1	YES
St. Augustine College	173+	YES
Chicago State University	39+	YES
Columbia College	23+	YES
DePaul University	78+	YES
Eastern Illinois University	59	YES
Erikson Institute	46+	YES
Governors State University	60+	YES
Illinois State University	85	YES
Kendall College	217+	YES
National Louis University	138+	YES
Northern Illinois University	148+	YES

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Southern Illinois University- Carbondale	46+	YES
University of Illinois- Chicago	20	YES
Rockford College	0	YES
Malcolm X College	NA	NO
Olive Harvey College	2**	NO
Harry Truman College	NA	NO
Kennedy King College	5+**	NO
Danville College	NA	NO
College of DuPage	NA	NO
Illinois Central College	3	NO
Wabash Valley College	NA	NO
Kankakee Community College	NA	NO
Kishwaukee College	1**	NO
College of Lake County	1+	NO
Lake Land College	NA	NO
Morton College	NA	NO
Parkland College	NA	NO
Prairie State College	NA	NO
Richland Community College	NA	NO
Rock Valley College	1**	NO
Carl Sandburg College	NA	NO
Sauk Valley College	NA	NO
South Suburban College	1**	NO
Southwestern Illinois College	1**	NO
Spoon River College	NA	NO
John Wood Community College	NA	NO
Rasmussen College	NA	NO
Bradley University	26+**	NO
Concordia University	38+**	NO
Dominican University	18+	NO
Elmhurst Community College	40+	NO
Greenville College	25+	NO
Illinois College	11+**	NO
Judson University	11+	NO
Loyola University- Chicago	2**	NO
Millikin University	58+**	NO
North Park University	9**	NO
Northeastern University	64+	NO
Olivet Nazarene University	1	NO
Roosevelt University	74+**	NO
St. Xavier University	20+	NO
Southern Illinois University- Edwardsville	104+**	NO
University of Illinois- Urbana/Champaign	42+**	NO
Western Illinois University	15**	NO

Southern Illinois Collegiate Common Market	1**	NO
Lincoln Christian University	3	NO
Ellis University+	1180	NO
<p>+ Includes a duplicated count of individuals receiving credentials and ISBE Type 04 early childhood teacher certification from 7/1/2010 -6/30/11 and all ECE degrees and certificates from institutions of higher learning in Illinois in 2010.</p> <p>**Includes educators that received their credential via the direct route (portfolio submission) which included coursework from these schools which are not aligned/entitled for credentials.</p>		

Table (A)(1)-12: Current status of the State’s Kindergarten Entry Assessment*					
<i>* Assessment is currently in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process (ISBE issued RFP on 10/18/11, see (E)(1)). “Y” refers to requirements of RFP.</i>					
State’s Kindergarten Entry Assessment	Essential Domains of School Readiness				
	Language and literacy	Cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development)	Approaches toward learning	Physical well-being and motor development	Social and emotional development
Domain covered? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Domain aligned to ELD Standards? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Instrument(s) used? (Specify)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evidence of validity and reliability? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evidence of validity for English learners? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evidence of validity for children with disabilities? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
How broadly administered? (If not administered statewide, include date for reaching statewide administration)	14/15 School Year (SY)	14/15 SY	14/15 SY	14/15 SY	14/15 SY
Results included in Statewide Longitudinal Data System? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Table (A)(1)-13: Profile of all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State							
List each data system currently in use in the State that includes early learning and development data	Essential Data Elements						
	<i>Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems</i>						
	Unique child identifier	Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier	Unique program site identifier	Child and family demographic information	Early Childhood Educator demographic information	Data on program structure and quality	Child-level program participation and attendance
ISBE Student Information System (SIS)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Gateways to Opportunity Registry		X	X*		X		
Data Tracking Program (DTP)			X*	X	X	X	
IDHS Early Intervention	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Child Care Tracking System (CCTS)	X		X	X			X
National Lewis-QRS			X			X	
State Provider Database- IDCFS			X				
Licensing Database- IDCFS			X				
<i>*This unique identifier aligns with the unique identifier in DTP. This is what identifies where the individual practitioner works.</i>							

(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals. (20 points)

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Evidence for (A)(2)

- The State's goals for improving program quality statewide over the period of this grant.
 - The State's goals for improving child outcomes statewide over the period of this grant.
 - The State's goals for closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers at kindergarten entry.
- Identification of the two or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (C).
- Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (D).
- Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (E).
- For each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), a description of the State's rationale for choosing to address the selected criteria in that Focused Investment Area, including how the State's choices build on its progress to date in each Focused Investment Area (as outlined in *Tables (A)(1)6-13* and in the narrative under (A)(1)) and why these selected criteria will best achieve the State's ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers.

Illinois' (A)(2) Response

Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals

I. Illinois' Vision for an Early Learning and Development System

Illinois' overarching goal for its early learning and development system is to ensure that every child in the State enters kindergarten safe, healthy, ready to succeed and eager to learn. The Governor, the General Assembly, the IELC, the Participating State Agencies, local government officials, and private sector supporters of this Plan are committed to eliminating the school readiness gap that exists between Children with High Needs and their more advantaged peers at kindergarten entry.

To achieve this goal, Illinois has developed exceptionally broad and deep consensus around its vision of a system of universal supports that should be offered to every child and family, as well as the targeted interventions every Child with High Needs must receive to support early learning and development and school readiness. Based upon research showing the importance of the earliest years of life, the multi-dimensional nature of early development, the centrality of parent-child relationships, and the inter-relatedness of physical, social-emotional, and mental health with early learningⁱⁱ, this vision relies on a well-coordinated, easy-to-navigate system through which every family with children ages birth to kindergarten entry has access to:

- Ongoing preventive health care, including all appropriate well-child care, screenings, and immunizations
- Anticipatory guidance on the development of their child, provided through their primary health care provider as well as through parent-relevant educational media (web sites, newsletters, “warm lines,” videos, etc.)
- Periodic developmental screening to determine whether their child may be exhibiting developmental delays that warrant intervention services
- Information that helps them identify high-quality providers of early childhood education and care
- High quality preschool
- Alignment of instruction and supports as students transition to kindergarten and beyond

This system will provide intensive supports and services to all families of Children with High Needs--low-income families, families that speak a language other than English at home, single parent families, homeless families, families where the parent and/or child has a mental or physical disability, and families involved with the Child Welfare system--to provide access to:

- Support and “coaching” in establishing positive parent-child relationships and providing key early learning experiences for their young child at home (through home visiting and/or supportive parent engagement services in center-based early learning programs)
- Affordable, high quality care for their children while the parents work or attend school or training
- High quality early education services of sufficient intensity and focus to prepare the children for success in school
- Early Intervention and Special Education services to help children overcome disabilities and developmental delays
- “Wrap-around” family support services that continue into elementary school

While Illinois has achieved great consensus around this vision of universal and targeted supports, the State recognizes that it does not yet have either the number of ELD Programs the vision requires, or the systemic quality of programming necessary to support families of Children with High Needs. While substantial additional investment will be required to fully realize this vision, the Early Learning Challenge provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to establish and integrate the elements of a coordinated Early Learning and Development system that are necessary to bring it to scale. The reform measures included within this Plan will develop the system infrastructure necessary to bring this vision of universal and targeted supports to fruition, and establish evidence regarding the effectiveness of the system that the State needs to both inspire and inform future expansions in early learning resources.

II. Illinois’ Early Learning and Development System Needs

Illinois has achieved its national leadership position in early learning and development by consistently, rigorously and fearlessly evaluating its strengths and weakness. The IELC and other State leaders have embraced the Early Learning Challenge as an opportunity to exploit strengths and target weaknesses in order to build toward the State’s vision of universal and targeted supports, including:

Integration of the child care and early education systems

While ISBE's Division of Early Childhood and IDHS' Child Care Bureau have worked collaboratively for more than a decade, they continue to fund largely separate systems of professional development. Monitoring systems for the two funding streams, while using some of the same tools and the same contractor, are also not as integrated as they need to be. Furthermore, while child care programs are able to apply for ISBE Early Childhood Block Grant funding, there is little systemic connection between the child care funding through IDHS and the education funding through ISBE. Greater integration of these funding streams and their associated support structures are needed to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the State's early learning and development system.

Enrollment of Children with Highest Needs

Although Illinois currently has enough publicly funded preschool (Preschool for All and Head Start) "slots" to serve more than 85 percent of the three and four year olds in low-income families across the State, school districts continue to report that many children with the highest needs—those from families in poverty, with very low levels of parental education, and with multiple risk factors—still arrive at kindergarten having received no high-quality early learning services. This is partly due to demographic shifts (e.g., rapid growth of child poverty in suburban communities and immigrant neighborhoods) that have caused a geographic mismatch between where services are plentiful and where demand is growing. Other barriers to participation include lack of awareness of the importance of early learning, lack of transportation, and the need for integrated full day child care. New strategies need to be employed to engage these hard-to-reach families in ELD Programs.

Availability of high quality child care

While Illinois has many excellent child care providers, the State recognizes that there are too few of these to serve the over 485,705 children under age six who need care while their parents work or attend school or training. There is an especially critical shortage of quality care for infants and toddlers. While Illinois' licensing standards set a higher "floor" for quality than most states, too many of the over 3,000 child care centers and over 10,000 licensed family child care homes in the State provide only minimally adequate care. The State's current Quality Rating System, first implemented four years ago, has not been effective in propelling providers to higher levels of quality.

Effective instruction in ELD Programs

Illinois' Preschool for All, Head Start/Early Head Start and accredited child care programs provide what is traditionally regarded as "high quality" early childhood education and care: well organized, appropriately stimulating environments; well-educated staff; appropriate group sizes and staff-to-child ratios; developmentally appropriate curricula; and warm, nurturing teacher-child interactions.ⁱⁱⁱ The most recent statewide evaluation of PFA (Erikson Institute, 2011) clearly shows, however, that these quality features are necessary but not sufficient to ensure school readiness among Children with High Needs.^{iv} In order to close the school readiness gap that research shows has already emerged by age three between the most at-risk children and their more advantaged peers, intentional instruction matched to individual children's needs is required.^v Unfortunately, most EC Educators are not skilled in providing this kind of instructional support. Indeed, most Early Childhood administrators and trainers, and even many Early Childhood faculty in Institutions of Higher Education are not aware of and skilled in strategies to effectively support individual children's learning based on ongoing assessment of children's progress towards ELD Standards.^{vi}

Data integration and availability to support effective systems

While Illinois has made tremendous progress in recent years to establish a state longitudinal education data system, Illinois does not yet have a sufficiently integrated data system to track both children's participation in ELD Programs and their developmental progress. The State lacks robust data systems at the local level that support referral to needed services and subsequent follow-up, coordinated delivery of services, and tracking of outcomes. Local communities need easy access to a wide range of up-to-date indicators of the well-being and school readiness of their children to inform systems building at the local level. The State has commenced the process to establish a statewide kindergarten readiness measure, but needs to bring that work to scale.

III. Illinois' Reform Agenda

Based upon our exceptionally strong history of support for comprehensive birth-to-five ELD Programs and systems, as well as our rigorous assessment of how current programs and systems can be strengthened through this Plan, Illinois has established the following overall goals for improving child outcomes and closing the school readiness gap in our State:

1. Increase the percentage of children who enter kindergarten demonstrating “full readiness” on the KIDS kindergarten readiness measure to no less than 80% of all children and 65% of Children with High Needs within five years of statewide implementation of KIDS.
2. By December 2015, increase to at least 75% the percentage of Children with High Needs who have at least one year of participation in a high-quality (Star Level 4 or 5) ELD Program prior to kindergarten entry.
3. By December 2015, increase to at least 40% the percentage of Children with High Needs who have two years or more years of participation in a high quality ELD Program prior to kindergarten entry.
4. By December 2015, increase to at least 15% the percentage of Children with High Needs who receive five years of high quality early learning services before kindergarten, including home visiting services or Star Level 4 or 5 early care and education in the infant and toddler years.

To achieve these goals and in recognition of the current system’s needs, the State’s early childhood reform agenda is organized around three strategic priorities: (1) deepening the integration of state supports to create a unified framework for all early learning and development systems; (2) connecting the most at-risk children with the services and supports they need; and (3) increasing the quality of both learning environments and instruction in ELD Programs. These strategic priorities cut across various criteria of this Plan, and collectively build toward the State’s vision for an integrated system including quality universal and targeted supports for all children from birth to kindergarten entry and beyond.

Strategic Reform Priority #1: Deepening the integration of state supports to create a unified framework for all ELD Programs

While each of the Participating State Agencies contributes strong building blocks of a statewide system, these building blocks must be further unified into a consistent statewide framework that coherently administers all early learning and development funding streams and support structures. With the Early Learning Challenge application providing an impetus for action, ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS have agreed to dramatically increase the integration of their systems that support ELD Programs, including:

- Monitoring of programs for adherence to funding stream requirements and Tiered Program Standards through the Quality Counts TQRIS (see *(B)(1)-(B)(3)*)
- Support for programs' quality improvement efforts, to be coordinated by the Quality Counts Consortium (see *(A)(3)* and *(B)(4)*)
- Use of the Illinois ELD Standards throughout all ELD Programs in the State (see *(C)(1)*)
- Professional development provided to EC Educators, which will be jointly funded by ISBE and IDHS and coordinated system-wide by the Consortium for Workforce Development (see *(D)(1)* and *(D)(2)*)
- Use of a common statewide metric for measuring kindergarten readiness, the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey ("KIDS") (see *(E)(1)*)
- Data systems that track the services that children and families receive, children's learning and development outcomes, program quality features, and EC Educators credentials (see *(E)(2)*)
- Evaluation to validate the TQRIS and the Kindergarten Entry Measure (see *(B)(5)* and *(E)(1)*)

This deep level of system integration is supported by the establishment of the Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team, which draws together leadership at the highest levels of State government for oversight and decision-making, and the B-8 Interagency Implementation Center, which integrates early learning and development staff into a common interagency structure (see *(A)(3)*). As described in *(A)(3)*, the State will use the ELC Outcomes Measurement System and public report cards to hold itself and local communities accountable for the implementation of this Plan and progress toward system-wide goals, with public reporting specifically on progress toward ensuring every child is ready to succeed in kindergarten and every Child with High Needs has been offered high quality early learning experiences. As described in *(E)(1)*, KIDS will provide the State and local communities with a reliable, valid, and common metric for assessment of children's development at kindergarten entry as well as their growth and development over the kindergarten year. In addition, by establishing a unified framework for state-level funding streams and support structures, ELD Programs at the local level will receive more coherent assistance and be better positioned to collaborate and integrate services in furtherance of the State's goals.

Strategic Reform Priority #2: Connecting the most-at-risk children with the supports and services they need

Despite the substantial increases in investment the State has made over the past decade to expand participation in ELD Programs, a significant proportion of the children who are most at-risk for later school failure still do not receive the early learning services and supports they and their families need to arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed. This is an issue that the IELC has been working to address for several years. The IELC's "Hard to Reach" Subcommittee has developed a toolkit for Preschool for All, Head Start, and high-quality child care programs that will engage multi-risk families and to support children's attendance in their programs. The State and the City of Chicago have invested in Geographical Information Systems that have greatly enhanced their ability to locate services in the areas of highest need. As part of its SAC grant, the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development recently released a request for proposals for grants to move forward with approaches recommended by the IELC's Hard to Reach Subcommittee (see *Appendix (A)(2)-1*). In addition, ISBE recently revised its rules for Preschool for All to give priority for funding to programs that serve at least 80 percent "at-risk" children, and to require that all programs prioritize enrollment for the most at-risk children.

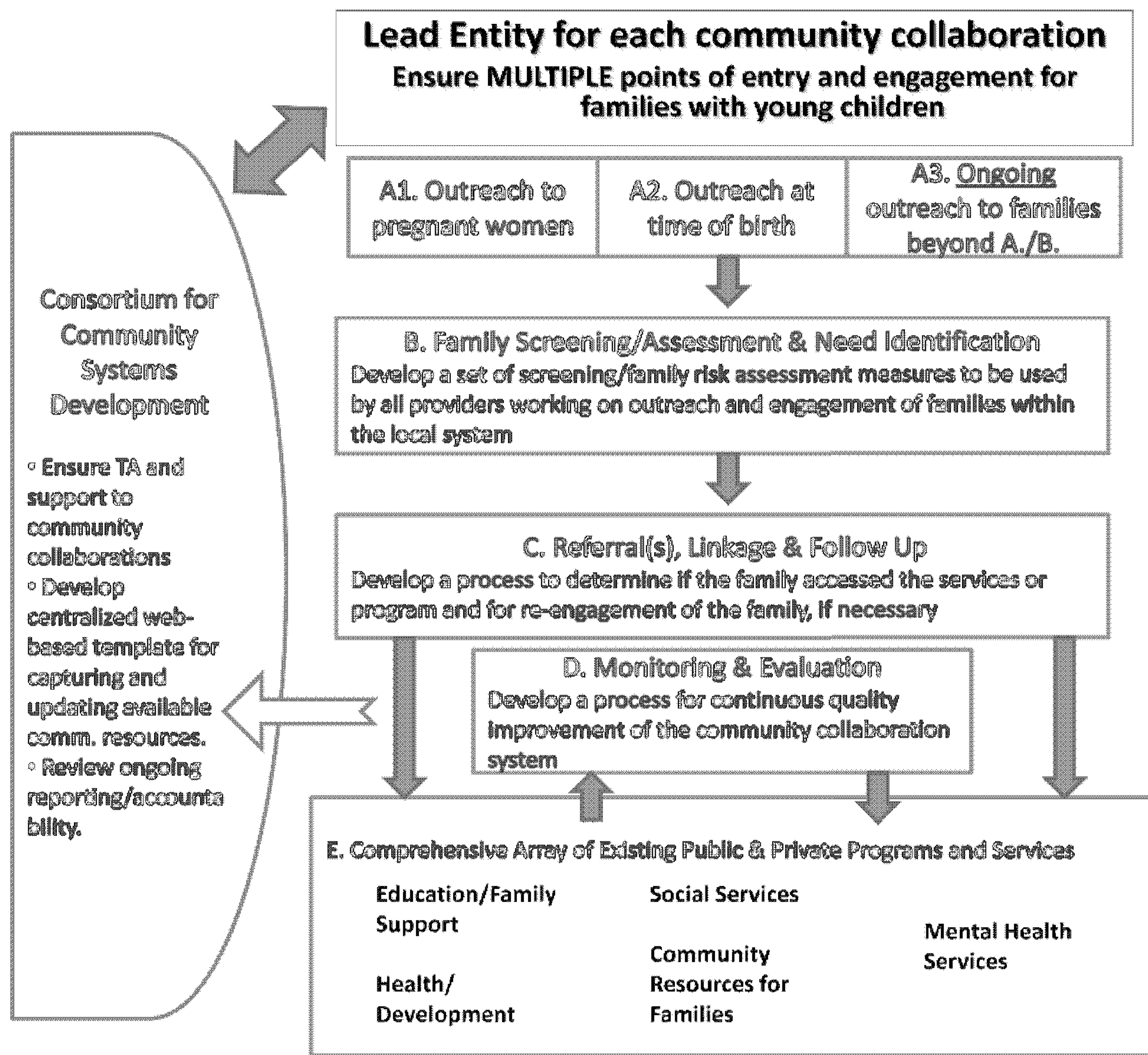
The State recognizes that its existing strategies are not yet sufficient to ensure that the most at-risk young children and their families will be connected to the services they need. Finding every Child with High Needs and connecting them with services requires a systemic effort that spans multiple service delivery systems (health care, education, child care, Early Intervention, Child Welfare, etc.) across the prenatal to kindergarten entry age span. As noted in *(A)(1)*, Illinois does not have an integrated system of local government (for example, at the county level) that is responsible for human services and education and which could be tasked with local early childhood systems integration in a consistent manner across the State. Instead, local collaborations have been developed in many communities to address the need for coordinated services, based on how an area defines a community or region and how services for families are divided and ultimately delivered.

Illinois has begun to develop a number of systemic supports for collaboration. The State has included requirements for collaboration in its grants and contracts for Preschool for All, Prevention Initiative, and home visiting programs. As described in *(A)(1)*, the Strong Foundations Partnership has begun to engage in community capacity building and technical

assistance to build strong local birth to three infrastructures. Through this Plan, Illinois will further formalize and systematize support to local collaborations to create a more effective approach to community collaboration that can help sustain State and local investments for years to come. As depicted in the graphic below, Illinois' framework for community collaborations focuses on the following elements:

- A. Selection of a Lead Entity for each collaboration with responsibility and accountability for developing and overseeing strategic partnerships for improving access to high quality ELD Programs for the most at-risk children;
- B. Coordination of outreach and recruitment activities of existing community resources, including hospitals, to ensure multiple points of entry for families prenatally and with children up to age five, as well maintaining contact with families on through to kindergarten entry;
- C. Adoption of a universal family screening/risk assessment process to be implemented by all providers working on outreach and engagement of families within the local system, to ensure there is "no wrong door" for families to gain entry to a system of supports for their child's early learning and development;
- D. Comprehensive referral, linkage, and follow-up system to ensure families are connected to a wide range of services and supports (with priority given to Children with Highest Need), including a data and information technology platform;
- E. Monitoring and evaluation that includes the tracking of indicators and accountability for outcomes of children's school readiness across the community to drive continuous quality improvement; and
- F. Coordinated State supports through a Consortium for Community Systems Development responsible for providing direct technical assistance to lead entities and driving improved quality in the local systems (see (A)(3)).

Illinois Community Collaboration Model



The State’s most intensive supports for local collaborations provided by this Plan will target fifteen Concentrated High Need Communities (CHNC)--communities that the State will identify through a high need composite index, modeled after the county composite index described in *Appendix (A)(2)-2*. In these communities, the local collaboration will be managed by a lead entity (selected through a competitive-bid process), who must develop community-specific goals and strategies to meet systems-development goals based on local need and infrastructure (see logic model in *Appendix (A)(2)-3*). The State will provide matching funding to support the development of a local community collaboration infrastructure over the course of the grant period and plan for its continued sustainability. By requiring a local match, this Plan will

leverage available local resources and ensure that the entire community (including school districts, municipalities, and health systems) has a stake in improving the collaboration's outcomes. In addition, Chicago's newly elected Mayor recently announced an aligned strategy for community collaborations that will be implemented across the city in parallel to this Plan.

The State's overarching community collaboration strategy cuts across multiple criteria of this Plan, including:

- Connecting families of Children with High Needs with home visiting and high quality early learning programs ((B)(4) and (C)(4))
- Ensuring all children receive developmental screening ((C)(2))
- Developing parent leaders in the local community ((C)(4))
- Coordinating training for EC Educators at the local level ((D)(2))
- Maintaining Data for Community Systems at the local level ((E)(2))

With support from a strong community collaboration infrastructure, the State's families with the highest needs will be connected to the quality early learning and development supports within their community needed to aggressively close the achievement gap that exists in our State prior to kindergarten entry.

Strategic Reform Priority # 3: Increasing Program Quality: From Adequate to Good and from Good to Great

While Illinois has licensing standards that provide a significantly higher "floor" of quality than most states, the State recognizes that many of the full-day ELD Programs that serve children of working parents provide only minimally adequate care. While the State has invested for two decades in a system of quality supports that has grown to include quality enhancement grants, accreditation support, and a robust system of professional development, many programs are not yet providing the level of quality that supports children's healthy growth and development.

Illinois will implement its revised Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System to more effectively propel quality improvement in ELD Programs, and to support programs in moving from "adequate" quality (Star Level 1) to "good" quality (Star Level 4). By mandating participation in the system for all licensed child care providers, informing the public of the Star Level Ratings of providers, and providing the quality supports described in (B)(4), the State will substantially increase the number and percentage of providers with higher quality ratings (see Performance Measures (B)(4)(C)-1).

Illinois already has a very large number of ELD Programs that are “good” quality and adhere to rigorous program standards regarding staff qualifications, use of curriculum aligned with the Illinois ELD Standards, developmental screening of all children, use of formative assessment tools, health promotion practices, family engagement practices, culturally and linguistically appropriate practices, and inclusion of children with special needs. These include Preschool for All programs, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and accredited child care centers. However, as noted above, the State recognizes these programs typically fail to provide the level of instructional support tailored to individual children’s strengths and needs that research shows is necessary to effectively close the school readiness gap. Through this grant, the State will invest in building the professional development systems it needs to help these programs move from “good” to “great,” or from what is traditionally considered a “high quality early childhood environment” to a highly effective early learning intervention (see (B)(4) and (C)(2)). Similarly, the new Illinois Shared Learning Environment (ISLE; see (E)(2)) will support teachers in providing standards-driven instruction that is tailored to the strengths and needs of individual children.

IV. Summary of the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Plan

Across this Plan, Illinois structured its goals and activities under each of the criteria so that, collectively, they constitute a coherent reform agenda aligned to the State’s three strategic priorities. The following chart lists the State’s goals as they relate to each Strategic Reform Priority, which demonstrates both the cross-cutting nature of these overarching priorities and the cohesiveness of the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Plan across the various criteria of this application. These goals summarize the State’s ambitious agenda for the next four years and, together with the activities beneath these goals, establish a clear path forward for achieving improved child outcomes.

<i>Strategic Reform Priority #1: Deepening the integration of state supports to create a unified framework for all ELD Programs</i>
<u>Goal (A)(3)-1:</u> Illinois’ early learning governance structure aligns and coordinates supports, is accountable for outcomes, and is inclusive of stakeholders
<u>Goal (A)(3)-2:</u> State leadership is strongly committed to this Plan, as are a broad array of other public and private partners

<p><u>Goal (B)(1)-1</u>: Coherent, comprehensive, and high-quality Birth to Five Program Standards and tiers of quality within those program standards form the basis for Illinois’ Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(2)-1</u>: All licensed child care centers and homes, all Preschool for All Programs, all IDEA Part B and Title I preschool classrooms, and all Head Start and Early Head Start center-based programs are enrolled in Quality Counts</p>
<p><u>Goal (C)(1)-1</u>: Revised Illinois ELD Standards cover all Essential Domains and are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for infants, toddlers and preschoolers</p>
<p><u>Goal (C)(1)-2</u>: New birth to five ELD Standards are integrated into all ELD Programs</p>
<p><u>Goal (C)(4)-1</u>: Progressively rigorous standards for family engagement and support are implemented in all ELD Programs</p>
<p><u>Goal D(2)-1</u>: Professional development investments are coordinated across funding streams</p>
<p><u>Goal (D)(2)-4</u>: Data systems effectively track Early Childhood Educator development, advancement and retention</p>
<p><u>Goal (E)(1)-1</u>: By no later than the 2014-15 school year, the learning and development status of every child in an Illinois public kindergarten classroom is assessed using a valid, reliable, and appropriate instrument and process, known as the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS)</p>
<p><u>Goal (E)(1)-3</u>: Data collected from KIDS is used to inform statewide education policies and programs, engage the public on kindergarten readiness outcomes, and improve preschool instruction</p>
<p><u>Goal (E)(2)-1</u>: The collection, maintenance, and use of Early Childhood Data is coordinated and integrated across systems, including data maintained by State agencies and Head Start/Early Head Start grantees</p>
<p><u>Goal CPP-1</u>: All “small day care homes” that care for children ages birth to 5 are included within the State’s licensing and inspection system by no later than June 30, 2015</p>
<p><u>Goal CPP-2</u>: All licensed or State-regulated ELD Programs are included in the Illinois Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by no later than June 30, 2015</p>

<p><i>Strategic Reform Priority #2: Connecting the most-at-risk children with the supports and services they need</i></p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(2)-2</u>: Children with High Needs have increased access to high-quality full-day, year round child care, especially in Concentrated High Need Communities</p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(3)-2</u>: A Public Awareness campaign ensures parents have access to information about program quality and licensing history for all ELD Programs</p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(4)-3</u>: At least 45% of low-income children age 3 and 70% of low-income children age 4 are enrolled in a high-quality Early Learning and Development Program (Star Level 4 or 5)</p>
<p><u>Goal (C)(4)-2</u>: Community Collaborations and their partner organizations engage fragile or isolated families and increase their participation in high quality ELD Programs and support services.</p>
<p><i>Strategic Reform Priority # 3: Increasing Program Quality: From Adequate to Good and from Good to Great</i></p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(3)-1</u>: The number of center-based and school-based ELD Programs that are assessed through Quality Counts is dramatically increased</p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(4)-1</u>: The number and percentage of full-day, year-round ELD Programs that are at the highest tiers (Star Levels 4 and 5) of quality in Quality Counts is substantially increased—moving programs “from adequate to good”</p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(4)-2</u>: At least 25% of ELD Programs receiving PFA, PI and/or Head Start/Early Head Start funding move to Star Level 5 in Quality Counts—moving programs “from good to great”</p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(5)-1</u>: A validation study of Quality Counts measures whether the system effectively differentiates levels of program quality</p>
<p><u>Goal (B)(5)-2</u>: A child outcomes study of Quality Counts measures whether the system positively impacts developmental outcomes and trajectories for young children</p>
<p><u>Goal (C)(2)-1</u>: The number of EC Educators that are highly skilled in using formative assessments to inform individualized instruction aligned with the Illinois ELD Standards is increased by 800</p>

<u>Goal (C)(2)-2</u> : The number of leaders of ELD Programs (principals, directors, education managers, curriculum coordinators, etc.) that are highly skilled in supporting standards-oriented early childhood instruction is increased by 200		
<u>Goal D(1) -1</u> Illinois' Workforce and Knowledge Competency Framework ensures that Educators have the knowledge and skill they need		
<u>Goal D(1) -2</u> : An increased number of EC Educators obtain credentials and degrees aligned with Illinois' WKCF		
<u>Goal (D)(2)-2</u> : An increased number of EC Educators progress to higher levels in the Gateways Credential Framework and/or obtain ESL/Bilingual Endorsements		
<u>Goal (D)(2)-3</u> : Training and professional development opportunities in critical areas of need are more effective		
<u>Goal (E)(1)-2</u> : KIDS administration improves the observational capabilities of teachers, provides information that can be used to improve and align instruction, and actively includes families in the process		
<u>Goal (E)(2)-2</u> : The Illinois early learning data system generates information that is timely, relevant, and accessible to support continuous improvement and decision making		
Rationale for Choosing Focused Investment Area Criteria:		
Criterion/Investment Area	Chosen?	Rationale
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality ELD Standards.	Yes	ELD Standards are at the core of a standards-driven approach to system improvement and integration. Illinois has revised its ELD Standards, including new infant-toddler guidelines, and has a plan for completing benchmarks and integrating the revised standards into all ELD Programs.
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.	Yes	Illinois considers the use of assessments to support effective instruction to be central to ensuring Children with High Needs are ready for school, and the State has a plan to dramatically increase the number of EC Educators that have these skills.
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health,	No	Illinois is a national leader in integrating early learning, health, and developmental health.

behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.		However, there were no activities related to this Criterion that were required to meet the State’s strategic reform priorities and that were not included in other areas of the Plan.
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.	Yes	Illinois cannot connect the most-at-risk children with the supports and services they need without a strong and comprehensive approach to family engagement. Illinois recognizes its need to better engage fragile and hard-to-reach families in high quality ELD programs and has a plan for doing so.
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	Yes	Illinois has a plan to build upon and extend its strong WKCF to ensure more EC Educators have the skills they need to support children and families. A skilled workforce is key to improving program quality.
(D)(2) Supporting EC Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.	Yes	Illinois has a plan to integrate its current training resources across funding streams, thereby freeing up resources for more intensive professional development approaches that will allow programs to move from “adequate to good” and especially “good to great”.
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children’s learning and development at kindergarten entry.	Yes	A statewide kindergarten readiness measure is necessary to assess whether early learning and development investments are leading to the desired outcomes, as well as to better align early childhood and K-12 systems. Illinois is well down the path to implement the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) beginning in 2012.
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	Yes	Quality, integrated data systems are needed at the State and local level to track participation in ELD Programs and understand and improve children’s developmental progress. Illinois has a plan to build upon its award-winning data structure for K-12 education to integrate early learning data and support high quality instruction.

Identification of the two or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (C):

Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (D) the State is choosing to address

- (C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality ELD Standards.
- (C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.
- (C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.
- (C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.

Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (D):

Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (D) the State is choosing to address

- (D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.
- (D)(2) Supporting EC Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused Investment Area (E):

Please check the box to indicate which selection criterion or criteria in Focused Investment Area (E) the State is choosing to address

- (E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.
- (E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.

(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State. (10 points)

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (*e.g.*, policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

Evidence for (A)(3)(a) and (b):

- For (A)(3)(a)(1): An organizational chart that shows how the grant will be governed and managed.
- The completed table that lists governance-related roles and responsibilities (see Table (A)(3)-1).
- A copy of all fully executed MOUs or other binding agreements that cover each Participating State Agency. (MOUs or other binding agreements should be referenced in the narrative but must be included in the Appendix to the application).

Evidence for (A)(3)(c)(1):

- The completed table that includes a list of every Early Learning Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State and indicates which organizations and councils have submitted letters of intent or support (see Table (A)(3)-2).
- A copy of every letter of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils. (Letters should be referenced in the narrative but must be included in the Appendix with a table.)

Evidence for (A)(3)(c)(2):

- A copy of every letter of intent or support from other stakeholders. (Letters should be referenced in the narrative but must be included in the Appendix with a table.)

Illinois' (A)(3) Response

Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State

This Plan's governance structure is at the heart of Illinois' strategic reform priority to deepen the integration of state supports to create a unified framework for all ELD Programs. Illinois' organizational structure for managing the grant builds directly on the State's existing, tested infrastructure for early learning governance through the IELC and OECD (see *(A)(1)*). The strong commitment to this Plan by State agencies, the IELC, and the Governor's Office is reflected in the terms and conditions of the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement (the "ELC Agreement"), attached as *Appendix (A)(3)-1*. In addition, Illinois has built a strong coalition of public and private partners that will support the State in successful implementation.

Goal (A)(3)-1:

Illinois' early learning governance structure aligns and coordinates supports, is accountable for outcomes, and is inclusive of stakeholders

Illinois' governance structure to effectively carry out this Plan includes (1) a leadership team that is closely aligned with the IELC structure and Participating State Agency leadership, (2) a new interagency implementation center that will carry out the directives of the leadership team and manage the Plan's implementation, and (3) three consortia that establish an integrated system of support to local communities and programs for the key reforms in this Plan, as well as a fourth consortium to drive system improvement through high-quality research and evaluation. This organizational structure is depicted on the diagram included in *Appendix (A)(3)-2*.

Activity (A)(3)-1.1:

Establish the Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team

The Governor and the Participating State Agencies have established an Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team—a small group of key decision-makers from both the public and private sector—to provide guidance and oversight for the implementation of this Plan (see ELC Agreement, IV.A, *Appendix (A)(3)-1*). The Leadership Team includes a "Core Leadership Group" tasked with acting on key decisions relating to the Plan's management and implementation, including: the IELC Co-Chairs, who also co-chair the Leadership Team; the

State Superintendent of Education; the Secretary of IDHS; the Director of IDCFS; and the Illinois Head Start State Collaboration Office Director. Additional public and private sector representatives serve on the Leadership Team's "Policy & Implementation Advisory Group," which includes: (i) community and program leadership from the City of Chicago, suburban Concentrated High Need Communities, and Concentrated High Need Communities outside of the greater Chicago metropolitan area; (ii) private sector leadership from the nonprofit, business, and philanthropic sectors; and (iii) higher education leadership (including community colleges and other institutions of higher education). The OECD Director staffs the Leadership Team and provides the linkage to the Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center, discussed in *Activity (A)(3)-1.2*. During the grant period, the Leadership Team will meet monthly to frame and act on key policy decisions and oversee progress across all areas of this Plan. By including all key State decision-makers on the same body, the Leadership Team structure ensures that necessary action can be taken in a timely manner to support continued progress on the State's ambitious reform agenda.

Outcomes Measurement System. The Leadership Team will rely on continuous monitoring and performance management as a critical guide for decision-making. An "**ELC Outcomes Measurement System**" will allow the Leadership Team to track both process and outcome indicators over the course of the grant period to assess the progress of the State, communities, and programs in meeting the goals, addressing objectives, and undertaking activities outlined in this Plan. The System will incorporate all of the federally required and State-developed performance measures specified through this Plan, and will also include supplemental indicators each agency has developed as part of the State's Budgeting for Results process (a budgeting method established by the Governor's Office of Management and Budget that requires each State agency to develop outcomes-oriented performance measures across all programs).

Coordinated Early Learning Budget Proposal. Building from the Budgeting for Results process, the ELC Agreement includes a commitment by the Leadership Team to establish, commencing with the budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2012, a coordinated interagency early learning budget proposal. Instead of the prior "siloes" budgeting process, moving forward the Chief Financial Officers from ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS will work in consultation with the Leadership Team and other stakeholders to submit a unified proposal that

identifies operational redundancies, better aligns existing programs, and jointly considers the need for new programs in furtherance of the reform agenda articulated in this Plan. By addressing inefficiencies in the current early learning budgeting process, the Leadership Team will be better positioned to make recommendations to the Governor, legislature, and the private sector on the resources necessary to carry out and sustain this Plan's activities.

Stakeholder Engagement and Involvement. The Leadership Team will have primary responsibility for ensuring the IELC is fully engaged with the Plan's oversight and implementation, and will frame key issues for input and action by the IELC and its committees. As the Team's Co-Chairs also serve as the Co-Chairs of the IELC, the Leadership Team builds on the longstanding governance role served by the IELC, whose membership is structured to ensure representation from ELD Programs, EC Educators, parents and families, and other key stakeholders. The Scope of Work for the IELC included within the ELC Agreement provides the IELC and its committees with involvement and responsibilities across all areas of this Plan.

In addition to its close alignment with the IELC, the Leadership Team will also interface directly with the Illinois P-20 Council (described in (A)(1)). One of the private sector members of the Leadership Team will be designated as the Team's liaison with the Illinois P-20 Council. In addition, the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff for Education (as the Co-Chair of the Leadership Team) and the State Superintendent will serve as liaisons to the P-20 Council's Joint Education Leadership Committee, which is comprised of the leadership from all of the State's educational and economic development agencies. Through these points of connection to the Illinois P-20 Council, this Plan will remain aligned with the State's broader education reform activities and the Leadership Team will receive input from a broad range of public and private stakeholders.

Public Reporting on Implementation. As a further method to directly engage families and other members of the public, the Leadership Team will oversee a system of public reporting on this Plan's implementation that is aligned with the P-20 Council's redesign of district and school report cards. From May through September 2011, a committee of the Illinois P-20 Council convened a broad range of stakeholders to redesign the State's report cards with a focus on providing parents with more usable information. Early childhood stakeholders were actively engaged throughout the development of the redesigned report card, and the final

recommendations included two key metrics directly aligned with the reform agenda set forth in this Plan:

1. The P-20 Council committee recommended inclusion of a metric called “Students who are ready for Kindergarten,” which has been integrated with the State’s plan for the implementation of a kindergarten readiness measure as described in (E)(1); and
2. On the report card for elementary schools, the P-20 Council recommended a new metric detailing the percent of “Students Experiencing Preschool.” Using data that is further integrated and captured as part of this Plan, the Leadership Team will seek to report on (i) Birth to Three and preschool participation, and (ii) participation by Children with High Needs in high quality programs.

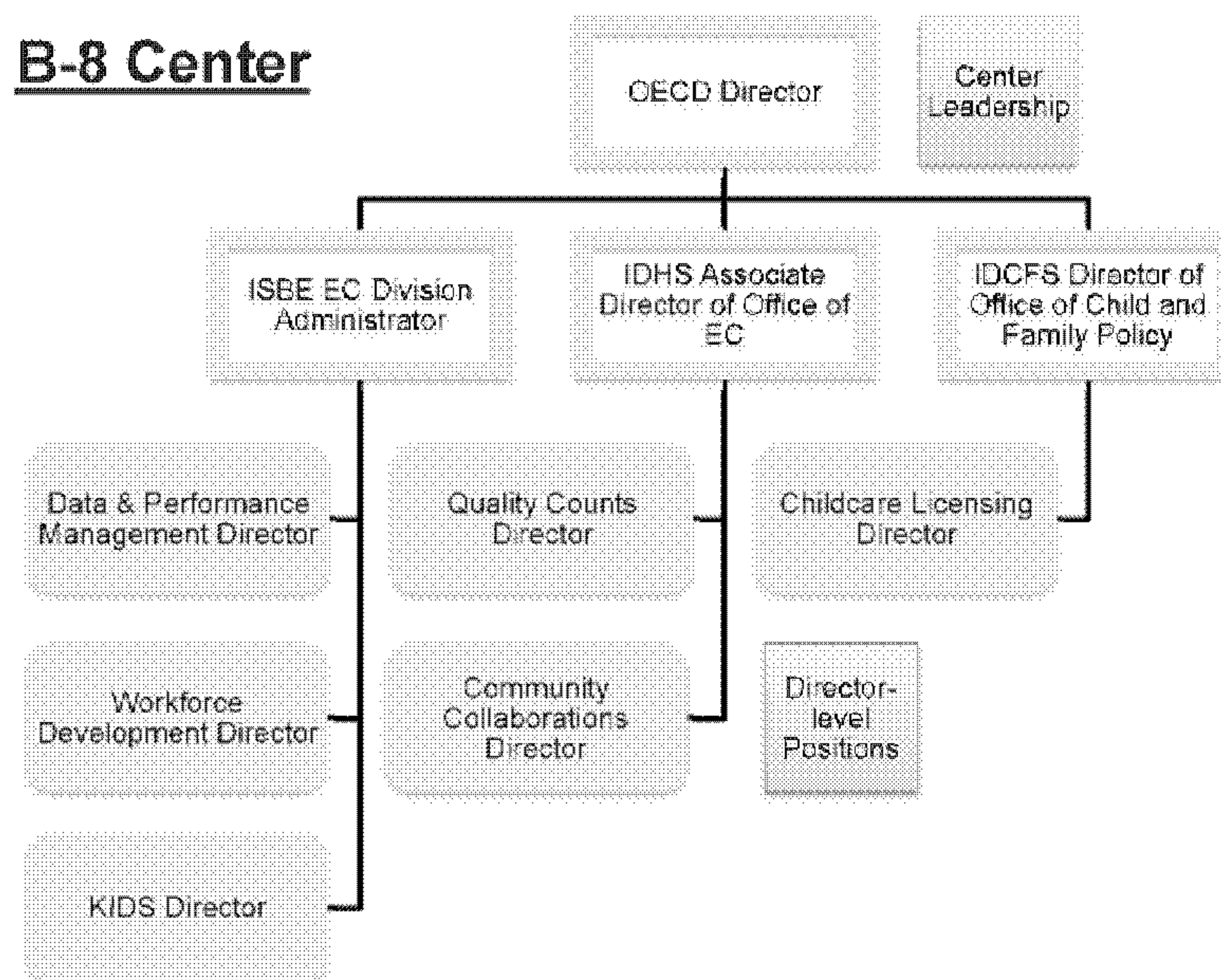
In addition to the above metrics, outcomes information from the ELC Outcomes Measurement System will be presented through publicly available scorecards on this Plan’s implementation. Collectively, these public reporting strategies will facilitate direct engagement in this Plan by families and the general public, and more broadly foster a performance measurement culture across the Illinois early learning system.

Activity (A)(3)-1.1 Rationale: <i>A clear leadership structure that includes key decision-makers and stakeholders is necessary to successfully implement this Plan</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Establish the Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team	Completed	N/A
(2) Procure external contractor; design the ELC Outcomes Measurement System	Jan - Sept 2012	Leadership Team, external contractor
(3) Utilize the ELC Outcomes Measurement System for continuous monitoring and performance management	Oct 2012 - end of grant period	Leadership Team, B-8 Center
(4) Develop coordinated Early Learning Budget proposal	Nov 2011 - Jan 12 (and in each following year)	ISBE, IDHS, IDCFS, in consultation with Leadership Team
(5) Public reporting on ELC outcomes; aligned with P-20 Council reporting	Jan 2013 - end of grant period	Leadership Team

Activity (A)(3)-1.2:
Carry out the Plan’s Activities through The Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center

Through the ELC Agreement, the Governor’s Office and Participating State Agencies have established the Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center (B-8 Center), which is an

interagency management unit with primary executive responsibility for carrying out the grant activities and the directives of the Leadership Team. The B-8 Center combines early learning management staff from across State agencies into a coordinated structure with a common performance management and accountability system and integrated “business” processes, as further described below.



The B-8 Center is led by the OECD Director, with deputy leadership from ISBE’s Early Childhood Education Division Administrator, IDHS’ Associate Director of the Office of Early Childhood, and IDCFS’ Director of the Office of Child and Family Policy. The Center’s leadership will work with six Directors to spearhead the Plan’s implementation and ensure alignment across the intersecting work of State agencies and the Early Learning Quality Consortia described in *Activity (A)(3)-1.3*. The specific responsibilities for each of the Director positions are delineated in the ELC Agreement (see *Appendix (A)(3)-2; IV.B*). Each Director also has specific project management responsibilities with respect to this Plan’s budget, as detailed in the budget narrative.

Common Performance Management and Accountability System. The ELC Outcomes Measurement System described in *Activity (A)(3)-1.1* will serve as the B-8 Center’s tool for gauging progress toward this Plan’s implementation in an aligned manner. As part of the commitments made in the ELC Agreement, the Governor’s Deputy Chief of Staff for Education and the heads of ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS have agreed to base the annual performance evaluations of the B-8 Center leadership team in substantial part on achievement of the

interagency outcomes defined through the ELC Outcomes Measurement System. Similarly, each Director will be held accountable for successful interagency outcomes within the Director’s area of responsibility. That way, each individual within the Center will have a direct stake in improved system outcomes beyond the purview of their individual agency’s policies and programs.

Integrated Business Processes. During the first six months of the grant period, the B-8 Center will develop a plan for “business process” integration across the Participating State Agencies that addresses coordinated procurement and contracting procedures, common performance dashboard systems, aligned early learning regulatory and legislative activities, and cross-agency IT systems that facilitate integration and collaboration. The Civic Consulting Alliance, a Chicago-based nonprofit organization with extensive experience in intergovernmental systems alignment, has agreed to provide pro bono assistance for the business process integration planning. (See CCA letter of support, *Appendix (A)(3)-4.*) This plan will be presented to the Leadership Team and IELC, and funding is allocated in the budget for carrying out its recommendations. As further described in *(E)(2)*, the Participating State Agencies have also agreed to establish three primary systems for the State’s management of early learning data which will foster a coordinated data management and use approach across the agencies.

Activity (A)(3)-1.2 Rationale: <i>The work of early learning management staff must be integrated and aligned across State agencies</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Establish the legal framework and commitment to the B-8 Center	Completed	N/A
(2) Use the ELC Outcomes Measurement System to guide program and policy implementation	Oct 2012 - end of grant period	B-8 Center
(3) Develop plan for business process integration	Jan - Jun 2012	B-8 Center, Civic Consulting Alliance
(4) Implement business process integrations	Jul 2012 - Jun 2013	B-8 Center

Activity (A)(3)-1.3:
Provide Coordinated Implementation Supports for Key Reforms through Early Learning Quality Consortia

Illinois has a long history of public-private partnerships to support the State’s early learning system, including the use of agreements between State agencies and nonprofit

institutions or universities to serve as an arm of the State for providing direct assistance to educators, programs, and communities. However, due to a prior lack of coordination among State agencies, separate agreements within the same substantive area have evolved and led to disjointed service delivery to the field. To tackle this problem and to provide high-quality, coordinated and consistent support for the implementation of this Plan's key reforms, the State's governance structure relies on the establishment of three Early Learning Quality Consortia: (1) Consortium for Workforce Development; (2) Quality Counts Consortium; and (3) Consortium for Community Systems Development. These consortia will not establish an entirely new support infrastructure; rather, the work of the consortia will focus on aligning and coordinating existing and future State supports that lead to more efficient and improved services for ELD programs, educators, and ultimately families.

Each consortium will be managed by the B-8 Center through a State contract with a lead entity, which must be a nonprofit organization or institution of higher education with a proven track record of providing high-quality support in the area of focus. The lead entities will have responsibility for: (i) developing and implementing an alignment plan to coordinate work across existing agreements; (ii) developing outcomes metrics for the particular area for inclusion in the ELC Outcomes Measurement System; (iii) managing a steering committee with representation from each of the primary service providers in the area of focus, Participating Agency staff, and other appropriate stakeholders; (iv) advising the B-8 Center and Leadership Team on the integration of service delivery mechanisms for future procurements; and (v) where appropriate, developing new services to address gaps in the current support system.

A fourth consortium, the Consortium for Early Learning Research, will have primary responsibility for overseeing and coordinating three comprehensive research-based evaluations described in this Plan. This Consortium will be modeled after the highly-regarded Consortium on Chicago School Research, and will capitalize upon the nationally leading early childhood scholars and research institutions located within the State. In addition to providing oversight for the research projects in this Plan, the lead entity for this Consortium will: (i) manage a steering committee including representation from research institutions, early childhood scholars, state and local officials, and practitioners; (ii) establish and manage a research agenda focused on how policies and programs impact child outcomes and school readiness; (iii) facilitate the data sharing arrangements with the State needed to support the projects in this plan and others aligned

to the research agenda; and (iv) develop methods to communicate research findings in a way that informs ongoing practice, policy development, and program implementation.

<u>EARLY LEARNING QUALITY CONSORTIA: PURPOSE AND AREAS OF FOCUS</u>
<p>Consortium for Workforce Development (CWD):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasked with establishing a coordinated statewide early childhood educator support system designed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assist educators to advance through the State’s workforce knowledge and competency framework, and ○ Build professional development systems needed to strengthen the quality of instruction across all program types. • Initial focus on the integration of workforce development services IDHS supports through the Gateways to Opportunity system (see <i>(D)(1)</i>) and the training and technical assistance ISBE supports for Birth to Three and preschool programs. • Will launch the Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood Teaching & Leading (see <i>(C)(2)</i>).
<p>Quality Counts Consortium (QCI):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will oversee and administer the State’s TQRIS system and support the efforts of ELD Programs to move from “adequate to good” and “good to great.” • Initial focus on the integration of services through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ISBE’s and IDHS’ existing agreements for monitoring of ELD Programs, and ○ IDHS’ agreement for the administration of the Quality Counts system (i.e., taking applications and issuing star levels).
<p>Consortium for Community Systems Development (CCSD):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will create a systemic approach to supporting local collaboration across the wide range of early childhood programs and services • Supports based on the State’s community collaboration model described in <i>(A)(2)</i>, focused on Strategic Reform Priority 2. • Primarily focus on the establishment and support of a community collaboration infrastructure in Concentrated High Need Communities (see <i>Appendix (A)(2)-2</i>) • Also offer technical assistance to support community collaboration networks across the State.
<p>Consortium for Early Learning Research (CELR):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will have primary responsibility for overseeing and coordinating three comprehensive research-based evaluations described in this Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TQRIS Evaluation, described in <i>(B)(5)</i> ○ KIDS Evaluation, described in <i>(E)(1)</i> ○ Illinois supplement to the National Survey of Early Care and Education (NSECE)-- the first national survey of child care supply and demand in more than 20 years (see <i>Appendix (A)(3)-3</i>) • Will oversee other aligned qualitative and quantitative research projects approved by CELR’s steering committee. • Will work closely with the Leadership Team to use these evaluations to better understand the status of the State’s current early learning and development system, identify the impact of the strategies undertaken through this Plan, and inform the need for continued and expanded State investments.

Activity (A)(3)-1.3 Rationale: <i>Coordinated and consistent support must be provided to communities and programs to carry out this Plan</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Draft Request for Proposals for Lead Entities for Consortia	Jan-Feb 2012	B-8 Center, Leadership Team
(2) Issue RFPs and select Lead Entities	March- June 2012	B-8 Center, ISBE, IDHS
(3) Lead Entity alignment planning, development of performance metrics, and establishment of steering committee	July 2012 - Dec. 2012	Lead Entities, managed by B-8 Center, oversight by Leadership Team
(4) Consortia operations	Jan 2013 - end of grant period	Consortia, managed by B-8 Center, oversight by Leadership Team

Goal (A)(3)-2:

State leadership is strongly committed to this Plan, as are a broad array of other public and private partners

The public and private partnership that has coalesced around this Plan is well-positioned to write the next chapter in Illinois’ history of early learning leadership through deep, systemic changes. This commitment is reflected both in the strength and breadth of commitments made by State leadership in the ELC Agreement, as well as the detailed and persuasive letters of support from numerous stakeholders.

Activity (A)(3)-2.1:

Execute and implement the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement

The ELC Agreement, set forth in *Appendix (A)(3)-1*, binds ISBE, IDHS, IDCFS, the IELC, and OECD to the implementation of this Plan. While OECD does not meet the definition of a “Participating State Agency” as it does not administer public funds, it is included as a Party to the Agreement as it has clear responsibilities relating to the governance and administration of this Plan. This Agreement includes assurances and responsibilities derived from the model MOU included within the application, as well as much more detailed provisions that specifically define a governance structure; establish expectations for the Outcomes Measurement System, joint

budgeting activities, and public reporting; and detail data governance and sharing procedures critical to the establishment of a unified early learning data system. The Agreement includes a dispute resolution process that makes the Core Leadership Group of the Leadership Team responsible for resolving disputes that may arise during the course of implementation of the grant. Any and all disputes will be brought forward to the Core Leadership Group by the OECD Director, and the entire team will provide input on the dispute. However, if there is disagreement among the Core Leadership Group, the final decision will be made by the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff for Education.

While the ELC Agreement includes detailed scopes of work to carry out this Plan, it is much more than just a vehicle for carrying out a federal grant. In fact, the ELC Agreement specifically provides that key commitments and agreements will remain in effect regardless of the State's receipt of Early Learning Challenge funding. As is true across this Plan, Illinois utilized the opportunity of the Early Learning Challenge to target a specific need—insufficient state-level alignment and coordination—and create a structure that better supports the State's overall goals for improving child outcomes.

Activity (A)(3)-2.3:
Continue to Engage A Broad Array of Public and Private Stakeholders in the Plan's Implementation

As the result of the IELC's and Participating State Agencies' extensive outreach efforts, a broad group of stakeholders have partnered with the State in support of this Plan's priorities and objectives. Numerous stakeholders were directly engaged through the IELC's deep involvement in the development of this Plan. The IELC's committees, which collectively include over 400 members from across the early learning spectrum, served as forums for the discussion and formulation of critical policy decisions and program details. The IELC's Executive Committee met weekly during the application development period to advise on each of the significant policy changes. The Participating State Agencies convened advisory bodies and solicited input from stakeholders on critical policy issues relating to their respective programs. In addition, the State established a website that enabled members of the public to provide suggestions and comment on priorities for the application that directly informed the Plan's development.

Appendix (A)(3)-4 contains letters of support from over 90 organizations. The letters of support demonstrate enthusiasm for the Plan from the early learning community, legislative

leadership, higher education institutions, advocacy organizations, and the business and civic community. Each supporting organization has pledged to perform specific roles and tasks to actively participate in the Plan. For example:

- Chicago Public Schools will pilot the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey in 2012-13 and fully implement in 2013-14;
- The Illinois Board of Higher Education will work to increase the number of higher education institutions that align their coursework with the Gateways credential framework; and
- The McLean County Family Child Care Association pledges to take a leadership role in that county to promote TQRIS and help families understand the rating system.

In addition to this support, a bipartisan group of legislative leaders have all formally expressed their backing for this Plan, building on the State's strong record of bipartisan support to promote a nationally leading early learning and development system.

The following quotations from letters of support highlight the broad and deep support for this Plan, as well as a number of specific commitments. The State will continue to engage all stakeholders throughout the Plan's implementation, and understands that stakeholder buy-in and ownership is necessary for the Plan to be successful.

With a renewed focus on preparing our students for kindergarten, Chicago recognizes both the need for high-quality programming and the importance of reaching our most at-risk students. Illinois' application was written to meet these important aims. That is why Chicago will advocate for the State's vision and stands ready to take the lead on its implementation.

- Rahm Emanuel, Mayor, City of Chicago

As Illinois' second largest city . . . Aurora has a large stake in any state-wide efforts improve early learning services for our youngest citizens.... I am particularly excited about Illinois' visionary plan to support community collaborations in areas of the state where the needs of young children are too great for any single program, organization, or agency to address alone.

- Thomas J. Weisner, Mayor, City of Aurora

The State's proposal demonstrates your willingness to pursue new resources, explore innovative solutions, and align the myriad of existing programs to achieve better results. We look forward to partnering to achieve these objectives through the Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge.

- Lawrence J. Morrissey, Mayor, City of Rockford, Illinois (3rd largest city)

The Illinois Head Start/Early Head Start community has agreed to participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and will be anxious to move from star level 4 to star level 5, thus from good to great. The Association has already moved to align trainings with the

Gateways to Opportunity Registry system and will continue to support individual programs with their membership in the Registry.

- Chuck Parr, President, Board of Directors, Illinois Head Start Association

The IFT ... supports initiatives for statewide expansion of quality research-based professional development opportunities aligned with Illinois' workforce knowledge and competency framework to implement intentional teaching strategies and skills.... IFT is proud of our active participation and involvement with the ELC and ISBE.

- Daniel J. Montgomery, President, Illinois Federation of Teachers

As a business committed to high quality public education; as a funder of early learning education in Illinois; as an advocate for reform that leads to better options for our youngest students; ... Boeing enthusiastically supports Illinois' "Race to the Top/Early Learning Challenge" application.... By focusing on continuous improvement through the expansion of the Quality Rating and Improvement System to include Preschool for All, Head Start and all licensed child care, Illinois is raising the bar for instruction and program provision.

- Rick D. Stephens, Senior Vice President, Human Resources & Administration, Boeing

The efforts in Illinois focused on early childhood serve as a model for the cross-systems collaborations we need to build for children of all ages.... In short the work of Voices is the work of the RTT/ELC and we are ready and eager to offer our expert resources, energy, skills and leadership to actively support an even stronger early childhood experience for our most at risk children and their families.

- Kathy Ryg, President, Voices for Illinois Children

We look forward to building on our decades-long relationships with the public and private partners that are committed to implementing the state's plan to ensure that all high need children have access to high quality early learning and development programs that prepare them for successful entry into kindergarten and beyond.

- Diana Mendley Rauner, Ph.D, President, Ounce of Prevention Fund

This proposal is an audacious, broad and deep vision for closing the achievement gap....

- Nivine Megahed, Ph.D, President, National-Louis University

Illinois' private, philanthropic community has worked closely with each other and the State to invest significant, coordinated resources to help achieve its goals... The State has shown enormous leadership....

- Phyllis Glink, Executive Director, The Irving Harris Foundation

Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities	
Participating State Agency	Governance-related roles and responsibilities
Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)	ISBE is the Lead Agency for this application. It is the State of Illinois education agency, and the agency that administers and supervises section 619 of Part B of IDEA programs, State funded preschool, home visiting and other birth to three programs funded through the Early Childhood Block Grant, Title I of ESEA, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The State Superintendent is a member of the Core Leadership Group of the Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team and its staff are assigned to the Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center. Its specific governance-related roles and responsibilities are detailed in the ELC Agreement in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i> .
Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)	IDHS is the state agency that administers and supervises CCDF, part C of IDEA programs, the Head Start State Collaboration Grant, the Title V Maternal and Child Care Block Grant, home visiting programs through Healthy Families Illinois and Parents Too Soon, and the State’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Its Secretary is a member of the Core Leadership Group of the Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team and its staff are assigned to the Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center. Its specific governance-related roles and responsibilities are detailed in the ELC Agreement in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i> .
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS)	IDCFS is the State’s child care licensing agency, and the agency that administers and supervises Child Welfare and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention. Its Director is a member of the Core Leadership Group of the Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team and its staff are assigned to the Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center. Its specific governance-related roles and responsibilities are detailed in the ELC Agreement in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i> .
Illinois Early Learning Council (IELC)	The IELC is the State’s primary council for oversight and administration of the State’s early learning and development system, and is the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. Its Co-chairs serve as Co-chairs of the Core Leadership Group of the Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team. Its specific governance-related roles and responsibilities are detailed in the ELC Agreement in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i> .
Other Entities	
State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care	The State advisory council on early childhood education and care is the IELC. See above.

<p>Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD)</p>	<p>OECD is the executive office responsible for promoting quality, consistency, and alignment within the State’s early childhood system. As OECD is an integral part of the governance structure for this plan, OECD is a party to the ELC Agreement. Its specific governance-related roles and responsibilities are detailed in the ELC Agreement in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-1</i>.</p>
<p>Head Start State Collaboration Office</p>	<p>The Head Start State Collaboration Office Director serves on the Core Leadership Group of the Leadership Team, and the Office will contribute to all aspects of the Plan.</p>
<p>Illinois Community College Board (ICCB)</p>	<p>The Illinois Community College Board will appoint a representative of community colleges to the Leadership Team Policy & Implementation Advisory Member Group. In its letter of support, ICCB agrees to support the provision of training for early childhood professionals, and has agreed to revise the rules and guidelines governing the structure of various EC Educator programs to improve articulation.</p>
<p>Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE)</p>	<p>The Illinois Board of Higher Education will appoint a representative of institutions of higher education (other than community colleges) to the Leadership Team Policy & Implementation Advisory Member Group. In its letter of support, IBHE agrees to support increasing the number of institutions that have aligned their coursework with credentials, strengthen the Illinois Articulation Initiative by adding a specific program track for degrees in early childhood education, and support the continued development of early childhood faculty in areas of need.</p>
<p>State Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA</p>	<p>The Illinois Interagency Council on Early Intervention is the federally-mandated advisory board to the Illinois Early Intervention Program, which serves families of children from birth to age 3 who have developmental delays or disabilities, or who are at risk for developmental delays. The Illinois RTT/ELC proposal has a focus on these early years and will build on Early Intervention efforts to identify high need children and families for referral and follow-up. The Chairperson of the Council serves as a member of the IELC and will provide ongoing support to Illinois’ RTT/ELC plan.</p>

<p>Child Care Advisory Council</p>	<p>The Child Care Advisory Council acts as an advisory board to the Secretary of the Department of Human Services on policy and issues that impact the Child Care Program. In addition, the Federal Government requires public input for the State Plan for Child Care and this is done, in part, through the Advisory Council. There are currently 38 appointed members including representatives from the ISBE, IDCFS, Head Start, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, City of Chicago- Department of Family & Support Services, child care center and family home providers, child care advocacy agencies, United Way and mental health consultant representation. The Quality Assurance and Capacity Committee of the IELC was instrumental in the initial planning as well as implementation of Quality Counts QRS in 2007. As future changes to Quality Counts QRS are implemented, the Committee will be integral in assisting with providing input on marketing Quality Counts to families, and giving input on some of the final pieces of the System including requirements at the higher Star Levels.</p>
<p>Illinois Capital Development Board</p>	<p>For the past two and a half years, the Capital Development Board (CDB) has worked with the IELC Space Capacity Committee to help with the roll-out of the \$45 million Early Childhood Construction Grant program. In its letter of support, the CDB has agreed to support the inclusion of a program’s participation and level in TQRIS as an additional grading criteria in future funding cycles.</p>
<p>Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services</p>	<p>In its letter of support, the Department of Healthcare and Family Services commits, to the extent permissible by law, to share data to ensure children with highest needs have health care services, and to support community collaborations as they track the disposition of referrals and monitor outcomes. The Department also commits to supporting the states community collaboration strategy through incentives in its Primary Care Case Management Program and through investments in <i>All Kids</i> to support the goal of having more high need children screened, referred, and receiving ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well child care.</p>

Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local ELCs (if applicable)	
List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State	Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix (Y/N)?
AOK Networks	Yes (4)
Chicago Coalition of Site-Administered Programs	Yes
City of Chicago	Yes
Child and Family Connections (umbrella is the Bureau of Early Intervention, IDHS)	Yes
Council for Exceptional Children (Illinois Subdivision)	No
Family Child Care Associations* --McLean County Family Child Care Association --Southside Professional Network Association --Springfield Home Day Care Provider's Association	Yes
Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children	Yes
Illinois Association of School Administrators	Yes
Illinois Early Learning Council	Yes**
Illinois Education Association	Yes
Illinois Federation of Teachers	Yes
Illinois Head Start Association	Yes
Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA)	Yes
SEIU	Yes
<p><i>*There is no statewide umbrella organization representing family child care associations. Three associations from different part of the states are a representative sample of associations.</i></p> <p><i>**The ELC Agreement constitutes the letter of support.</i></p> <p><i>Illinois has no formal system of Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, other than the Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA is the umbrella). Appendix (A)(3)-4 contains a list of Illinois organizations that are part of, represent, or have a connection to the Early Learning and Development System. The letters are found in Volume II of the Appendix.</i></p>	

(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant. (15 points)

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (*e.g.*, CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

(1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;

(2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and

(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by ELD Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Evidence for (A)(4)(a):

- The completed table listing the existing funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan (see *Table (A)(4)-1*).
- Description of how these existing funds will be used for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.

Evidence for (A)(4)(b):

- The State's budget (completed in Criterion VIII).
- The narratives that accompany and explain the budget, and describes how it connects to the State Plan (also completed in Criterion VIII).

Illinois' (A)(4) Response

Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant

Illinois will use the RTTT-ELC grant, as described in the State's budget and accompanying budget narrative, to carry out this Plan and achieve its overall goals for improving child outcomes and closing the school readiness gap. As this Plan constitutes the State's early childhood reform agenda, whenever feasible Illinois will coordinate, reallocate, or repurpose early learning and development funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with its activities and objectives.

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Illinois has a long history of using State early learning and development funding for systems building initiatives consistent with many of the activities described in this Plan over and above funding to directly serve children. For example, the State's investment in the development of its home visiting workforce is unparalleled, and ISBE's integration of birth to three programs into the Student Information System is groundbreaking. Moving forward, as described in (A)(3), the Outcomes Measurement System and Coordinated Early Learning Budget Proposal will provide the mechanisms through which State system investments can be better aligned in support of this Plan.

(A)(4)(a)

Demonstrate how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan

I. Specific Allocation Commitments

In the State's budget tables and narratives, the Participating State Agencies have already identified a number of specific opportunities for allocating existing state or federal funds in support of this Plan's activities, as described below.

ISBE

- ISBE currently spends \$1 million/year for monitoring Preschool for All programs. Under this Plan's budget, \$1 million/year of State funds will be used to establish the integrated Quality Counts monitoring process described in *Activity (B)(3)-1.1*.

- Over the past five years, ISBE has averaged \$700,000/year for evaluations of early learning programs. Under this Plan's budget, \$700,000/year of State funds will be used to support the TQRIS validation and child outcomes study described in *(B)(5)*.
- In recent years, ISBE has allocated a portion of State Early Childhood Block Grant funds for Gateways to Opportunity scholarships to support Preschool for All educators seeking to obtain new credentials and endorsements. Under this Plan's budget, \$2 million in State funds will be used to promote EC Educators career enhancement through the Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship Fund, with a focus on supporting educators to obtain English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual approval or endorsement (see *Activity (D)(2)-2.2*).
- ISBE secured \$1,523,500 in the current State fiscal year budget for implementation of a kindergarten readiness measure. Under this Plan's budget, that same level of State funding will be used each year to carry out the implementation of the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey, as described in *(E)(1)*.

IDHS

- IDHS currently spends over \$11 million/year on the Quality Counts – Quality Rating System (QC-QRS). These funds support the infrastructure of the QC-QRS, Mental Health Consultants, Child Care Nurse Consultants, Infant Toddler Specialists and program improvement grants. These initiatives will be re-focused to support the newly created Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) as described in *(B)(1)*.
- Over the past several years, IDHS has been supporting Gateways Credential Development and related supports for child care practitioners seeking credentials and degrees in early childhood education or child development. Currently, this allocation is just over \$2.2 million. IDHS will continue to support the credential development outlined in *(D)(1)*, and the eligibility guidelines for programs such as the Gateways Scholarship Program will focus on credentials and degrees necessary to move programs from adequate to good and good to great.
- IDHS currently spends just over \$1.7 million on activities related to the Gateways to Opportunity Registry, including administrative costs and providing statewide training through the local CCR&Rs and other contractors. This support will continue as it expands as outlined in *(D)(2)*.

- The All Our Kids (AOK) Early Childhood Networks are a foundation for community collaborations (see (A)(2)) in 13 communities across the State. In the current State fiscal year budget IDHS will spend over \$800,000 for support of these community collaborations, and this support will continue throughout the grant period.

IDCFS

- IDCFS is responsible for day care licensing, which is accomplished through State General Revenue funding. IDCFS has committed to integrate licensing with the TQRIS as described in (B)(2) and to extend licensing to small family day care homes as described in *Competitive Preference Priority 2*.
- IDCFS administers the Strengthening Families program, which includes learning networks across the State that build capacity for parents to effectively engage with ELD Programs. Under this Plan's budget, Strengthening Families funding will also provide a foundation for the work of local community collaborations in their efforts to engage parents of High Need Children (see *Activity (C)(4)-2.3*).

II. Commitments to Leverage State and Federal Funding

In addition to the above specific allocations, the Participating State Agencies will use and leverage multiple other funding streams in support of activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan. As this Plan's priorities build from existing State investments and are aligned with the State's overall early learning reform priorities, funding through this grant will accelerate, rather than redirect, State system improvement strategies that are well underway.

State Early Childhood

Funding through the Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) program is being leveraged for activities across this Plan, as demonstrated by the specific allocation of ECBG funds specified above, and the use of ECBG regulations to promote and expand TQRIS, unified program standards, and unified Early Learning & Development Standards.

CCDF

Many of the Goals and Activities in this Plan—providing supports and incentives for ELD Programs to increase quality, removing policy barriers to access to high quality programs, TQRIS program quality assessments, and the Gateways system of credentials and scholarships—build upon work that has been completed with Illinois' Quality Set-Aside for CCDF over the

past decade. These Quality funds will continue to be dedicated to the priorities identified in this Plan.

Title I

Title I, Part A funds can be utilized by districts to support interventions at the early childhood level to help all children have the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach proficiency on challenging state and academic standards and assessments. Typically this is done by extending the Preschool for All program.

Title II

ISBE uses Title II funding to support two programs for EC Educators, both of which align to the goal and objectives of this Plan. ISBE provides Title II funding to recruit and support candidates applying for National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification, which is available for teachers at all levels, including early childhood. Professional development and growth available through NBPTS supports EC educators seeking to deliver high-impact individualized instruction, including effective use of formative assessments (see (C)(2)). Through Title IIA, ISBE funds systems for mentoring of P-12 teachers and principals that align to best practice standards. Both of these programs will be integrated with other EC Educator supports under the direction of the Consortium for Workforce Development.

IDEA Part B Preschool Funds

IDEA Part B Preschool Flow Through Funds provide supplemental funds to ensure that all children with disabilities ages 3 through 5 receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. As described in (A)(1), Illinois strongly supports use of these funds by districts to establish “blended” Preschool for All classrooms that include a small number of children with disabilities with their typically developing peers. IDEA Part B Preschool Discretionary funds will be used to support district programs that coordinate with the standards implementation and instructional supports included within this Plan.

Head Start Collaboration

The Head Start Collaboration Director will be part of the ELC Leadership Team as described in (A)(3), and will support the development of “braided funding” models as described in (B)(2) and (B)(4).

State Advisory Council funding

State Advisory Council funding supports the OECD Director as well as several initiatives that directly support the implementation of this Plan, including the “Hard to Reach” pilot project grants (see (B)(4)) and many of the activities to establish a unified early learning data system (see (E)(2)).

Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

As described in (A)(1) and (C)(4), the State’s MIECHV-funded programs are integrated into this Plan.

Title V MCH Block Grant

IDHS uses Title V/Maternal Child Health Block Grant to fund the Family Case Management program through local health departments, federally qualified health centers and community-based agencies. The primary goal is to ensure income-eligible pregnant women and infants have access to health care services, including periodic developmental screening and perinatal maternal depression screening. In SFY 2011, approximately 64,000 infants received developmental screenings through this program. Under this Plan, Family Case Management Agencies will work closely with community collaborations in Concentrated High Need Communities to develop local processes to ensure all children are identified, screened, and appropriately referred to services.

TANF

As noted in *Table (A)(1)-4*, Illinois devotes a very significant portion of its TANF grant to supporting access to ELD Programs.

Medicaid

Illinois’ Medicaid program provides itemized reimbursement for developmental screening for young children, and developmental screening is a required service under the State’s Primary Care Case Management model.

Child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act

The Family Advocacy Centers (see (C)(4)) funded by IDCFS will serve as a foundation for Community Collaborations in many Concentrated High Need Communities. In addition, IDCFS’ innovative approach to ensuring that all children involved in child welfare services are screened and connected to preventive and therapeutic services directly supports this Plan’s

strategic priority of ensuring that Children with High Needs receive appropriate services that support their school readiness.

Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) funding

Through two existing SLDS grants, ISBE has: (i) enhanced ISBE's Student Information System (SIS) to collect data on children from birth to three that are participating in programs funded by ISBE's Early Childhood Block Grant (ISBE SIS already collected preschool data); (ii) funded the ISBE Data Warehouse Project, which is modeled after Common Education Data Standards (CEDS), and which will include early childhood data; and (iii) funded the rewrite of ISBE's Teacher Systems, which will expand participants to include staff from early childhood programs.

State Transitional Bilingual Education

State Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) funding is available to help local school districts cover the excess cost of providing instruction and support to meet the language needs of English language learners (ELLs) in preschool through 12th grade, as required by Illinois law.²² As the result of Illinois' national leadership in extending TBE funding to preschool, the number of preschool students identified as ELLs in the TBE program will increase and more State funds will be used to provide needed services to this growing population of young children.

III. Foundation and Other Private Funding Sources

As described in (A)(1) and evidenced by letters of support in *Appendix (A)(3)-4*, Illinois' philanthropic community is heavily invested in forward-thinking systems-building initiatives and have made commitments to future funding as well. For example, the McCormick Foundation, which has invested \$28 million since 2007 towards improving public policy, creating public awareness, and building a quality early learning infrastructure, has pledged to continue investing at least \$6 million annually towards that mission. On a smaller, but just as significant, scale, the Gustafson Family Foundation will align its grant-making with the State's goals to support early childhood programs operating in the top tiers of the TQRIS or actively working to increase their Star Level. Significant philanthropic investment in a statewide instructional improvement technology platform is being leveraged to extend high quality instructional supports to EC Educators and parents (see *Activity (E)(2)-2.2*).

²² 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, authorized by Article 14C of the School Code.

(A)(4)(c)

Demonstrate that the State Plan can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Programs will be maintained or expanded

Illinois' Plan does not allocate grant funds for serving additional children or the creation of new, unsustainable, programs. Early on, the State recognized that this Plan's budget should focus on one-time systems building expenditures and the establishment of support structures at the state and local level that can be transitioned to existing funding streams after the end of the grant period. The IELC has continued its strategic planning and stakeholder engagement processes to identify ways that, in parallel to this Plan's implementation, additional Children with High Needs can be served through the State's early learning system.

The State's approach to funding allocation, as demonstrated throughout the plan level and individual project level budget summaries, supports ongoing sustainability of its investments:

- Year 1 (2012): Planning and establishment of Plan projects, programs and activities, including development of the State infrastructure needed for ongoing support.
- Year 2 (2013): Intensive implementation of Plan projects, programs and activities. The largest allocation of grant funds will be allocated during this period.
- Year 3 (2014): Continuation of Plan projects, programs and activities implemented during Years 1 and 2. These projects, programs, and activities will begin to see a deceleration in the amount of grant funds received. The programs and activities must begin to focus on self-sustainment after Year 4 using other federal, State, and local sources.
- Year 4 (2015): Projects, programs and activities funded through this Plan will transition to non-grant funding sources and will implement self-sustaining strategies.

Major proposed grant expenditures, such as including all programs into TQRIS and data integration projects, require a large up-front investment but can be continued after the grant period through pre-grant appropriation levels. For multiple projects, the State is incorporating matching fund expectations that progressively increase over the course of the grant period to facilitate a transition to other funding streams. For example, the budgets for all of the Early Learning Quality Consortia, described in *Activity (A)(3)-1.3*, include a 25% matching expectation

in Year 3 and a 50% matching expectation in Year 4 as the lead entities secure support through other funding streams for activities beyond the grant period. Similarly, the funding for community collaborations includes a 50% local match expectation, by year 4 as the entire community must have a stake in the collaboration’s long-term continuation.

To the extent State funding over and above current appropriations is needed to maintain the systems put in place through this grant, the more efficient budget requests resulting from the Coordinated Early Learning Budget Proposal process will both free up funding needed for these systems and position State leadership to advocate for necessary funding. With strong support for this Plan from Governor Quinn, the Participating State Agencies, Illinois General Assembly leadership, Mayor Emanuel, and other local elected officials, Illinois fully expects that the State system investments made through this Plan will be continued.

In addition, State leadership has closely partnered with the private sector throughout the development of the current Illinois early learning system. A broad spectrum of private organizations have coalesced around this Plan’s priorities, and have committed to support its implementation (see *Activity (A)(3)-2.3*). The Illinois philanthropic community has made impressive investments in Illinois early learning systems in recent years and has also committed to partner with the State to carry out this Plan. This high level of private sector support will ensure that this Plan’s investments continue into the future, regardless of changes in political leadership.

Finally, the State anticipates that this Plan’s strong focus on research and evaluation will validate that its strategies are resulting in the desired goals for improving child outcomes and closing the school readiness gap. Armed with this evidence, public and private stakeholders will be positioned to advocate for the continuation of this Plan’s strategies and call for expanded services needed to fully realize Illinois’ vision of universal and targeted supports for all children.

Table (A)(4) – 1 Existing other Federal, State, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.					
Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 2012	Fiscal Year 2013	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2015	Total
ISBE: Preschool for All Funds	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	4,000,000

State of Illinois Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application

ISBE: Early Childhood Block Grant	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000	2,000,000
ISBE: Program Evaluations	700,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	2,800,000
ISBE: KIDS	1,508,500	1,888,500	1,598,500	1,508,500	6,504,000
ISBE: Illinois Shared Learning Environment	4,000,000	4,000,000	4,000,000		12,000,000
IDHS: Quality Counts Rating System*	11,392,500	11,392,500	11,392,500	11,392,500	45,570,000
IDHS: Credential Development*	2,520,000	2,236,000	2,203,000	2,203,000	9,162,000
IDHS: Gateways Registry*	1,708,000	1,708,000	1,708,000	1,708,000	6,832,000
IDHS: All Our Kids Networks	1,054,914	1,054,914	1,054,914	1,054,914	4,219,656
DCFS: Licensing			2,304,694	2,304,694	4,609,388
DCFS: Strengthening Families	1,628,276	1,628,276	1,628,276	1,628,276	6,513,104
Private Funds: IL Shared Learning**	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	10,000,000

**Includes federal funds through CCDF.
The above-referenced funds, as reflected in the Criterion VIII Budgets, will be used to achieve the outcomes set forth above in Criteria (A)4(a). These funds will be used to support the following State Plan projects: establishing the integrated Quality County monitoring process, supporting the newly created TQRIS system and corresponding validation study, providing scholarships towards ESL/Bilingual endorsements, implementation of a kindergarten readiness measure, credential development, registry and licensing expansion and strengthening of community collaborations and learning networks.*

***Specific philanthropic supports will be used to support the Illinois Shared Learning Environment as further discussed in Criteria (E)(2). A \$100 million philanthropic commitment has been made to support a multi-state implementation.*

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. (10 points)

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

- (1) ELD Standards;
- (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;
- (3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;
- (4) Family engagement strategies;
- (5) Health promotion practices; and
- (6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for ELD Programs.

Evidence for (B)(1):

- The completed table that lists each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State and the elements that are included in those Program Standards (ELD Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, Qualified Workforce, Family Engagement, Health Promotion, Effective Data Practices, and Other), (see *Table (B)(1)-1*).
- To the extent the State has developed and adopted a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System based on a common set of tiered Program Standards that meet the elements in criterion (B)(1)(a), submit--
 - A copy of the tiered Program Standards;
 - Documentation that the Program Standards address all areas outlined in the definition of Program Standards, demonstrate high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards, and are linked to the States licensing system;

Documentation of how the tiers meaningfully differentiate levels of quality

Illinois' (B)(1) Response

Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Illinois has a long history of setting a high “floor” for quality through the program standards it has put in place for the many ELD Programs that are funded by the State. As regulations for child care licensing, preschool funding streams, home visiting programs, and early intervention services have been developed and revised through the years, the State has focused on ensuring that programs are of sufficient quality to support the growth and development of young children. For example:

- **Child Care Licensing**: Key strengths of Illinois' nationally lauded Day Care Center Licensing System include the requirements that: lead classroom teachers have at least 6 credit hours of early childhood education or the equivalent; program activities must address all six developmental domains (social, physical, language/literacy, cognitive/intellectual, emotional and cultural); health and safety standards be met, including all 10 basic standards tracked by NACCRRA; comprehensive background checks are completed for all staff; the program has daily/frequent communication with parents and a written plan for parent involvement; and annual hearing and vision testing for all children ages three and four is conducted.
- **Preschool for All**: Illinois' voluntary preschool program for three and four year old children meets all the quality features recommended by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)^{vii} except providing a daily meal, and requires: classroom teachers with an Early Childhood Teaching Certificate; teacher aides with a Child Development Associate (CDA) or equivalent level of education; class size limited to 20 with an adult-to-child ratio of 1:10; curriculum based on Illinois ELD Standards; comprehensive screening and assessment of every child; and parent education and engagement services.
- **Home Visiting**: All of the State funding streams that support home visiting programs (MIECHV, Prevention Initiative, Healthy Families Illinois, Parents Too Soon) require

that programs implement with fidelity a research-based model proven effective in supporting children's early growth and development. Illinois has invested heavily in the professional development of home visitors, including providing training to ensure that they are fully prepared to implement the various program models.

- Early Intervention and Special Education: Both Part B and Part C meet rigorous program standards including staff-to-child ratios, family engagement and support, and professional development. Children receiving services under Part C and Part B in Illinois participate in both child outcomes and family outcomes surveys to measure their level of satisfaction with the programs and child progress. Sixty-two percent of preschoolers statewide with Individual Education Plans are receiving services in inclusive PFA classrooms.

Goal (B)(1)-1:

Coherent, comprehensive, and high-quality Birth to Five Program Standards and tiers of quality within those program standards form the basis for Illinois' Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

Activity (B) (1)-1.1:

Establish and Adopt the Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards as the Foundation for Illinois' Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

Common Program Standards: Illinois' coherent and comprehensive vision for effective, high-quality Early Childhood and Development Programs is expressed in the **Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards** (see *Appendix (B)(1)-1*). First developed in 2002 as Birth to Three Program Standards for Prevention Initiative programs funded through the ISBE, these standards have recently been revised to apply to all ELD Programs for children ages birth through kindergarten entry that are funded by the State. The standards include curriculum (aligned to the State's ELD Standards for Birth to Three and Three to Five); developmental monitoring (child screening and assessment); continuous program improvement processes; family and community partnerships; and health promotion. The standards also specifically include the expectation that programs will meet the needs of children with disabilities or other special needs and children and families whose home language is not English, and that programs will demonstrate respect for families' culture in meaningful ways.

In the ELC Agreement, ISBE and IDHS have committed to the use of the Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards for their respective birth to five funding streams. For ISBE, this includes Prevention Initiative, Preschool for All, and Part B of Section 619 of IDEA. For IDHS, this includes MIECHV programs, Healthy Families Illinois, Parents Too Soon, Part C Early Intervention, and non-relative care through the Child Care Assistance Program. ISBE has commenced the regulatory process required by the Illinois Administrative Procedures Act to adopt the Program Standards into the Illinois Administrative Code, with the full process required by State law anticipated to be completed by spring 2012 (see ISBE regulatory amendments submitted to the Secretary of State, *Appendix (B)(1)-2*). A thorough crosswalk of the Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards with the requirements of the home visiting program models funded by IDHS has been completed, and this process confirmed that all of the models, when implemented with fidelity, met the requirements of the Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards. The IDCFS licensing requirements for day care homes and centers address and incorporate all of the Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards, as shown in the crosswalk in *Appendix (B)(1)-3*.

Activity (B) (1)-1.2:
Redesign Quality Counts to Advance the State’s Early Learning Reform
Agenda

The Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards are not intended to be the “Tiered Program Standards” required for this criterion, but rather represent Illinois’ common definition of and commitment to high quality, comprehensive ELD Programs. The Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System described below specifies the “Tiered Program Standards” required for this criterion.

Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System—History: Illinois launched “Quality Counts,” its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care providers, in FY 2008 with the goals of educating child care providers and parents about what constitutes high-quality, supporting providers in increasing quality, and recognizing and rewarding providers who had achieved high levels of quality (see *Summary of Planning Process for Quality Counts* in *Appendix (B)(1)-4*). The scope of Quality Counts is notable because it provides not only “Star Levels” for child care centers and licensed family day care homes, but also “Training Tiers” for license-exempt family, friend and neighbor child care providers.

The Quality Counts system for centers was initially available only to those programs for which at least 25% of their enrollment was receiving subsidy through the CCAP. In November 2009, participation was expanded such that currently all full-day programs may participate, but the system did not include part-day programs, including school-based Preschool for All programs and part-day Head Start programs. Participation in the current system has been voluntary, and participation rates have been fairly low to date. Focus groups have shown that among the reasons for low participation are a reluctance to enter the system at a low star rating (rather than remaining unrated), confusion about programs' eligibility to participate, and a perception that there was little benefit to participation for programs that did not serve a high concentration of families receiving CCAP.

Redesign process: After four years of implementation, it is clear that Illinois' Quality Rating System is not achieving the goals for which it was created. Our current system has not sufficiently engaged the child care community to participate, did not create enough incentives to move the lowest quality centers up to acceptable standards (from "adequate" to "good"), and did not have a way for programs to move from "good to great." More importantly, the current system focuses only on child care, and thereby fails to serve our strategic reform priority of integrating child care, Preschool for All/Prevention Initiative and Head Start/Early Head Start into a coherent early learning system. This federal opportunity allows us to boldly re-envision our plan. The opportunity also falls at a time of new mayoral leadership in Chicago whose administration has a deep commitment to early childhood standards and rating systems and communicating this information to families (see Mayor Emanuel letter of support, *Appendix (A)(3)-4*).

The IELC, together with the participating State agencies, has developed a plan to reform Quality Counts to be a highly effective inter-agency system for monitoring and supporting quality in all ELD Programs (excluding home visiting programs and individual fee-for-service therapy provided through IDEA Part C Early Intervention). The State has commenced the regulatory process required by the Illinois Administrative Procedures Act to ensure that all state-funded, licensed, and regulated programs participate in the system by no later than June 30, 2015, with the majority of center-based programs being required to enter the system as of July 1, 2012 (see *(B)(2)* and *Competitive Preference Priority 2*). The revised Quality Counts criteria for the 1-Star, 2-Star, 3-Star and 4-Star Level for centers (i.e., classroom-based programs) are included in *Appendix (B)(1)-5*. The criteria for Star Level 5 are currently under development (see

description of elements to be included in *Appendix (B)(1)-5*) and the final set of Star Level criteria will be completed and approved by December 15, 2011. Documentation that the criteria address all areas outlined in the definition of Program Standards, demonstrate high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards, and are linked to the State’s licensing system is included in *Appendix (B)(1)-6*.

Note: Activities (B)(1)-1.1 and (B)(1)-1.2 will be completed prior to the beginning of the grant period, therefore no responsibility and timeline chart has been included here.

Activity (B)(1)-1.3:
Implement the new Quality Counts Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and revise as necessary after two years of implementation

The primary work during the first year of the grant period will be to “roll out” the new set of criteria for Star Levels for center-based programs, including providing orientations to the new system for all eligible programs and enrolling all Preschool for All and Head Start programs in the system. Year two will be focused on continued implementation of the system and expansion of centers enrolled (as centers renew their licenses), as well as completing the first wave of the validation study of the TQRIS (see *(B)(5)*). Year three of the ELC grant will include continued implementation of the Quality Counts TQRIS rating system for centers and schools, as well as a thorough review and revision of the Star Level criteria based on the results of the initial validation study. Year four will include implementation of the further revised Quality Counts TQRIS.

Activity (B)(1)-1.3 Rationale: <i>New levels more clearly delineate quality criteria and are relevant to all types of classroom-based ELD Programs</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Disseminate information to all ELD Programs about the new system of Star Levels and the program types now eligible to participate in the TQRIS (INCCRRA to develop materials prior to 12/31/11)	Jan-Mar 2012	INCCRRA, Head Start Collab Office, ISBE
(2) Develop new protocol for programs (including PFA & HS) to enroll in TQRIS and integrate process for receiving rating with monitoring process for PFA; enroll all Head Start and Preschool for All Programs	Jan-Jun 2012	ISBE, IDHS, IDCFS, INCCRRA
(3) Implement revised Star rating process for center-based programs	Jul 2012	IDHS, ISBE, INCCRRA

(4) Complete initial phase of Validation Study, including analysis of quality demonstrated by programs with each type of accreditation, PFA & HS	see (B)(5)	Evaluation Contractor
(5) Convene workgroup to further revise Quality Counts Star Level criteria	Sep-Dec 2013	IDHS, ISBE, QCC
(6) Develop materials, processes, etc. needed for implementation of further revision to Star Levels	Jan-Jun 2014	QCC
(7) Implement new Star Level criteria	Jul 2014	IDHS, ISBE, QCC
(8) Complete phase II of Validation Study, including analysis of quality demonstrated by programs with each type of accreditation, PFA & HS	see (B)(5)	Evaluation Contractor
(9) Convene workgroup to further revise Quality Counts Star Level criteria based on research regarding criteria most associated with child progress; approve revised criteria	Sep-Dec 2015	QCC, IDHS, ISBE

Activity (B)(1)-1.4:
Revise Quality Counts criteria for Family Child Care Homes and integrate Quality Counts into the Day Care Licensing system

A thorough revision of the Quality Counts criteria for Family Child Care Homes must also be completed during the grant period. Licensed Family Child Care (LFCC) providers have participated in the current Quality Rating System at even lower rates than centers and license-exempt family, friend and neighbor child care providers. The reasons for their low participation include reluctance to enter at a low star rating, lack of awareness of the system, and lack of skills required by the Star Levels.

The current criteria for LFCC providers were designed as “stair steps” to the high level of quality represented by National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation. The State recognizes that the goal of accreditation is appropriate for many LFCC providers who are highly qualified and provide exceptional learning environments for children. As such, Illinois plans to continue to include in its Star Level Criteria for LFCC levels that recognize this level of quality. These Star Levels will continue to require on-site ratings that include the FDCERS & BAS (see (B)(3)) and/or evidence of accreditation.

At the same time, the State also recognizes that while LFCC providers provide safe, nurturing care that is responsive to families’ needs and preferences, the majority of them are not interested in obtaining formal credentials and implementing formal curriculum within their child care program. For these providers, and for nearly all license-exempt Family, Friend, and

Neighbor providers, the State needs a TQRIS that focuses on basic quality features and that rewards home child care providers for forming relationships with high-quality part-day preschool providers and ensuring that children enroll in and attend high-quality preschool. A Licensed Family Child Care Star Level Criteria task group will be created in January, 2012 and will develop the new criteria by April, 2012.

Activity (B)(1)-1.5 Rationale: <i>New criteria are needed to reflect the multiple ways in which LFCC providers can effectively support children's early learning and development</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Convene workgroup to revise Quality Counts Star Level criteria for LFCC providers	Jan-Apr 2012	QCC, IDHS, ISBE
(2) Develop materials, processes, etc. needed for implementation of new Star Levels	May-Jun 2012	QCC
(3) Disseminate information to LFCC Programs about the new system of Star Levels	Jul-Dec 2012	INCCRRA, IHSA, ISBE, CPS
(4) Implement revised Star rating process for LFCC programs	Jan 2013 and forward	QCC

Summary--Criterion (B)(1)

The development of the new interagency Quality Counts TQRIS is core to Illinois' Reform Priority #1: Deepening the integration of state supports to create a unified framework for all ELD Programs. The Birth to Five Program Standards and the new Star Level criteria will provide the roadmap to guide all efforts to improve program quality across ELD Programs in the State.

SELECTION CRITERION (B)(1)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
(a) Demonstrate that TQRIS tiers include all required elements	Described in <i>Activities (B)(1)-1.2</i> and <i>(B)(1)-1.3</i> . Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth to Five Program Standards (<i>Appendix (B)(1)-1</i>) 	<i>Appendix (B)(1)-5</i> Chart of Star Levels for Centers and Homes
(b) Demonstrate that TQRIS levels have standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children	Described in <i>Activities (B)(1)-1.2, (B)(1)-1.3, and in Appendix (B)(1)-6</i> Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 3 	<i>Appendix (B)(1)-5:</i> Chart of Star Levels for Centers and Homes And <i>Appendix (B)(1)-6:</i> Meaningfully Differentiate Quality Note: NAEYC accreditation criteria and HS Performance Standards are incorporated in tiers as Star Level 4; Level 5 goes beyond nationally recognized standards for quality
(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for ELD Programs.	Described in <i>Activities (B)(1)-1.2, (B)(1)-1.3, (B)(1)-1.4</i> and in Competitive Priority 2 Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELC Agreement 	<i>Appendix (B)(2)-1:</i> IDCFS Licensing Rule changes
INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES	Birth to Five Program Standards apply to all ELD Programs in Illinois (see ELC Agreement and <i>Activity (B)(1)-1.1</i>) Quality Counts tiers apply to licensed child care programs, Preschool for All, center-based Head Start/Early Head Start, Title I and Part B programs	
ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS	The Birth to Five Program Standards include requirements that programs provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services (see <i>Appendix (B)(1)-1</i>); Star Level 5 (see <i>Appendix (B)(1)-4</i>) will require home language support for English learning children and inclusion of children with disabilities	

Table (B)(1)-1: Status of all Program Standards currently used in the State							
List each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State; specify which programs in the State use the standards	Program Standards Elements²³ <i>If the Program Standards address the element, place an "X" in that box</i>						
	Early Learning and Development Standards	Comprehensive Assessment Systems	Qualified workforce	Family engagement	Health promotion	Effective data practices	Other
Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards¹	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Quality Counts TQRIS Star Level Criteria	X	X	X	X	X	X	
IDCFS Licensing Standards for Centers and Homes²	See Note	See Note	X	X	X	X	
Head Start Performance Standards³	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<p><i>Note:</i></p> <p>¹Used by State Board of Education funded Preschool for All, Prevention Initiative programs (home visiting and center-based programs), and IDEA Part B programs, and by all home visiting and CCDF-funded programs administered by IDHS (see MOU).</p> <p>²IDCFS initiated regulatory amendments to its licensing standards for centers and homes require orientation on the ELD Standards (see Appendix(B)(2)-1) All licensed programs must participate in the Quality Counts TQRIS as of July 1, 2012. This line reflects Star Level 1, basic licensing requirements, which directly addresses all areas except assessment. Licensing rules require that parents be involved in and give permission for all child assessments, but assessments are not required for every child.</p> <p>³Used by Head Start and Early Head Start programs.</p>							

²³ Please refer to the definition of Program Standards for more information on the elements.

(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.
(15 points)

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded ELD Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

- (1) State-funded preschool programs;
- (2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;
- (3) ELD Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) ELD Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) ELD Programs receiving funds from the State’s CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (*e.g.*, maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of ELD Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Illinois’ (B)(2) Response

Promoting participation in the State’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

Illinois’ Foundation for Success

Illinois’ original Quality Counts system, as noted above, has been administered by the IDHS, and was designed for full-day child care centers, homes, and family, friend and neighbor child care providers. The system has been a voluntary system, with the key incentive for participation being enhanced reimbursement rates for providers receiving voucher payments through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Participation has been fairly low, as shown in the baseline numbers for Performance Measures (B)(2)(c).

Goal (B)(2)-1:

All licensed child care centers and homes, all Preschool for All Programs, all IDEA Part B and Title I preschool classrooms, and all Head Start and Early Head Start center-based programs are enrolled in Quality Counts

Illinois has recently redesigned the Quality Counts system as a jointly administered program of IDHS and the ISBE. This redesign, as described in (B)(1) above, extends participation in this TQRIS to all ELD Programs in the State (except home visiting programs and individually-provided therapeutic services through IDEA Parts C and B), including licensed day care centers and homes, Preschool for All programs, and Head Start/Early Head Start programs.

As Illinois expands participation in TQRIS through this Plan, the State's strong investments and policies for its Child Care Assistance Program, as described in *Activity (B)(2)-2.1*, will provide increased access to high quality care for Children with High Needs.

Activity (B)(2)-1.1:

Enroll all licensed child care providers, all ISBE-funded preschool programs, and all Head Start/Early Head Start programs in the Quality Counts TQRIS

The redesign of Quality Counts includes the requirement that every licensed day care center, day care home, or group day care home be automatically enrolled in the TQRIS upon license renewal or initial licensing (see IDCFS regulatory amendments, *Appendix (B)(2)-1*). Licensed child care centers and licensed family child care homes will be invited and encouraged to enroll in Quality Counts immediately. If they do not enroll voluntarily before their first license renewal that occurs after June 30, 2012, they will automatically be enrolled as a "1-Star" provider. Licenses are renewed every three years, so by June, 2015, all licensed providers will be enrolled in the Quality Counts system.

Similarly, all Preschool for All programs will be included in Quality Counts as of June 30, 2012 (see ISBE regulatory amendments, *Appendix (B)(1)-2*). All Head Start and Early Head Start programs in the State have also agreed to be part of Quality Counts and to enroll by June 30, 2012 (see letter of support in *Appendix (A)(3)-4*).

The City of Chicago and the Chicago Public Schools are requiring all centers that they directly fund (together more than 20% of all center-based/school-based programs in the State) to enroll in the Quality Counts system no later than July 1, 2012 (see Mayor Emanuel letter of

support, *Appendix (A)(3)-4*). Across the State, providers will be incented to participate as early as possible. As of June 30, 2012, grants for quality improvement and training, etc. (see *(B)(3)* below) will only be available to providers participating in Quality Counts.

Activity (B)(2)-1.1 Rationale: All programs must be enrolled in the TQRIS for the system to have maximum effectiveness in raising quality across all programs in Illinois		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Enroll all Head Start and Preschool for All Programs in Quality Counts program information system	Mar-Jun 2012	ISBE, CPS, HS Collab Office, IDHS/INCCRRA
(2) Enroll all child care centers funded by the City of Chicago in Quality Counts, and continue to enroll centers who volunteer to participate	Mar-Jun 2012	Chicago DFSS, IDHS/INCCRRA
(3) Intensively market Quality Counts to all child care providers to encourage early enrollment in the system	Jan-Dec 2012	IDHS, ISBE, IDCFS
(4) Enroll licensed child care providers in Quality Counts, either voluntarily or as they complete relicensing	Jul 2012– Jun 2015	IDHS/INCCRRA

Goal (B)(2)-2:

Children with High Needs have increased access to of high-quality full-day, year round child care, especially in Concentrated High Need Communities

As noted in *(A)(1)*, Illinois invests heavily in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) for low-income families in which all parents are working or attending school or training. Eligibility for CCAP is set at 185% of Federal Poverty Level, and there is no waiting list for the program. Currently, approximately 36% of the estimated 265,000 Illinois children under age 6 whose families are eligible for CCAP receive subsidies through the program. Approximately 49% of these children are enrolled in licensed child care centers, and 24% are enrolled in licensed day care homes. Approximately 27% of children under age six in the CCAP program are cared for in license-exempt family, friend and neighbor care (in the child’s home or provider’s home), with more than three-quarters of these cared for by relatives.

Activity (B)(2)-2.1:

Build upon Illinois’ existing supports for quality

Reimbursement Rates: Provider reimbursement rates have been raised every six months over the past two years, with current rates about 9% higher than at the beginning of 2010. Rates

vary by age of child served, with centers paid approximately 40% more per day to care for children under two than for children ages three and four. Rates also vary by county to reflect the differences in the cost of providing care in different areas of the State. A recent report by the National Women's Law Center showed that Illinois' reimbursement rate (in the Chicago metropolitan area) is seventh-highest in the country, and that our highest local gap between market rate and reimbursement rate--approximately 20%-- is about average among states.^{viii}

Illinois has implemented several strategies to reimburse child care providers for the true cost of quality services and thereby make high-quality services more accessible to low-income families. First, CCAP provides rates enhancements for centers that serve a large proportion at infants and toddlers and for serving children with disabilities. Second, through Quality Counts, providers have received Tiered Reimbursement based upon their Star Level. Third, Illinois has encouraged programs to "braid" together multiple funding streams to fund high quality services, especially for the most at-risk children. Families enrolling children in a "Collaboration Model" program combining CCAP funding with Head Start/Early Head Start and/or Preschool for All/Prevention Initiative have longer eligibility redetermination cycles (one year versus six months) and longer eligibility during a job search (60 days versus 30 days).

Family Co-Payments: CCAP requires families to pay a co-payment that is based upon family size, income, and the number of children receiving care. The co-payment is as little as \$1 per month for families with incomes below the Federal Poverty Level, and is at most 10% of the families' income. The National Women's Law Center report showed that Illinois has the fourth-lowest co-payment in the country for a family of three with one child in care and an income of 150% of the Federal Poverty Level.^{ix}

Ensuring availability of services in high-need communities: Illinois has created innovative Geographical Information Systems to inform the distribution of Preschool for All, Prevention Initiative, and other early learning funding. These systems allow for the comparison of the need for high-quality early learning services (as determined by number of children by age at various income levels, number of linguistically isolated households, number of children in working families, and number of children receiving Early Intervention services) to the availability of services ("slots" available by age in licensed child care centers, license-exempt centers, and licensed homes; Prevention Initiative and Preschool for All slots; and Head Start and Early Head Start slots; and home visiting program slots) at the county, township, municipality,

Zip Code and (in Chicago) Community Area level. These systems are publicly available websites that allow for transparent analysis of the need for additional early learning services in specific communities. ISBE recently used these systems to inform the selection of grantees when it re-competed Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative programs for FY2012. Over the course of this grant period, a program's TQRIS rating will be added to the information publicly available on this sites, allowing a deeper analysis of the relationship between program quality and availability in high-need communities.

Activity (B)(2)-2.2:
Revise reimbursement policies and rates to better reflect the true costs of providing high quality (Star Level 4 and above) care

Develop funding models: Building upon the work of the Alliance for Early Childhood Finance (a national early childhood reform think tank), Illinois will complete an analysis of the full cost of operating a full-day, year-round program for children ages birth to five that meets the criteria of each of the Quality Counts Star Levels in the various regions of the State (Chicago, suburbs, downstate cities, and rural areas). The State will then develop several funding models for programs that serve primarily Children with High Needs and for those that serve a small percentage of Children with High Needs, including multiple funding streams such as CCAP reimbursement, Head Start/Early Head Start, and Preschool for All/Prevention Initiative funding.

Based upon these models, Illinois will revise its tiered reimbursement rate policies to ensure that programs receive sufficient funding to provide Children with High Needs with the high quality early learning experiences they need. It is anticipated that this revision will be largely cost-neutral, involving the shifting of existing resources toward those programs that provide the highest level of quality rather than providing rewards for providers who offer quality that is only minimally higher than licensing standards require.

Expand use of “braided” funding: There are a large number of programs in the City of Chicago that “braid” funding from multiple sources to provide high quality, full-day, year-round child care to Children with High Needs (see (B)(4) for more information). The City, through its role as Head Start grantee and through the Chicago Public Schools, has proactively sought partners that provide full-day, year round care and has intensively supported these braided program models. In a few other communities across the State, school districts have similarly sought out and actively supported partnerships with community-based providers. In the balance

of the State, however, only a few community-based child care providers have accessed Preschool for All funding either through school district partnerships or directly from ISBE.

Illinois will support the development of additional programs using multiple funding streams in several ways. First, the Community Collaborations described in (A)(2) will identify community-based providers that have the capacity to implement programs that can meet Preschool for All/Prevention Initiative and/or Head Start/Early Head Start program standards. The Collaborations will work with local school districts and Head Start/Early Head Start grantees to develop collaborations with these community-based providers. Second, ISBE will strongly prioritize full-day, year-round programs in future competitions for expanded Preschool for All funding, as reflected in ISBE’s scope of work included within the ELC Agreement (see *Appendix (A)(3)-1*).

Remove policy barriers to enrollment in high quality full-day programs: Illinois will further remove policy barriers to continuous enrollment in full-day, year-round high quality ELD Programs. Specifically, children that are enrolled in programs that are rated at Star Level 4 and above will be approved for full-time attendance irrespective of the parents’ work hours. For example, if the parents’ works schedule includes a mix of days and evenings, the program would be reimbursed (and their child would attend) on a five-day-per-week schedule rather than only for the specific days the parent was working. This will be particularly helpful in ensuring that children whose parents work non-traditional and frequently changing work schedules are able to participate in high quality early learning programs. Similarly, children of teen parents who are completing high school will be eligible for full-year services regardless of whether the teen is enrolled in school or working during the summer months.

Activity (B)(2)-2.2 Rationale: <i>High quality programs must be funded to support the true cost of their services</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Complete study of costs of high-quality program models	Jul-Dec 2012	IDHS, ISBE, IELC Oversight & Coord. Cmte.
(2) Develop funding models combining multiple funding streams and/or quality supports	Jan-Jul 2013	IDHS, ISBE, IELC Oversight & Coord. Cmte.
(3) Support development of braided funding in additional programs through Community Collaborations	Jul 2013 and ongoing	CCSD

(4) Prioritize funding for full-day programs in future expansions of PFA funding	Depends upon appropriations	ISBE
(5) Implement policy changes to support participation in high-quality early learning programs	Jul 2012 and ongoing	IDHS

Activity (B)(2)-2.3:
Address gaps in availability of facilities for high quality programs

As noted in (A)(1), the State set aside \$45 million in *Illinois Jobs Now!*, its current capital program, to fund the renovation or construction of early childhood facilities in the most underserved communities with high concentrations of Children with High Needs. The program will fund the new construction or renovation of existing early childhood facilities and these funds will be prioritized for providers who demonstrate the ability to increase capacity to provide a high quality early learning and development program to Children with High Needs. Public school districts, licensed and license-exempt private nonprofit child care centers are eligible to apply. Grantees will be awarded up to \$5 million with a 10% local match required. Over 275 providers signed up for a webinar to learn about the capital program RFP process, a fact that highlights the intense need for additional facilities for early learning programs in Concentrated High Need Communities across the State. Applications are currently being accepted and the first round of funding will be distributed in 2012 (see letter of support from the Capital Development Board in *Appendix (A)(3)-4*).

Activity (B)(2)-2.3 Rationale: <i>New or renovated facilities will be needed to serve children in communities with large and growing numbers of Children with High Needs</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Implement first round of funding for Early Childhood Capital Program	Jan-Mar 2012	ISBE, Capital Development Board (CDB)
(2) Implement second round of funding for Early Childhood Capital Program	Jan-Mar 2013	ISBE, Capital Development Board (CDB)

Summary--Criterion (B)(2)

The goals presented in this Criterion--enrolling all ELD Programs in Quality Counts and ensuring that Children with High Needs in working families are able to access programs in the highest tiers of the TQRIS--directly address all of Illinois' Reform Priorities. Enrolling all programs in Quality Counts is critical part of integrating across funding streams for early

childhood. Removing barriers to accessibility is key to connecting the children to the supports they need. Finally, developing adequate funding models is critical for helping programs move from adequate to good, and from good to great. Each of the strategies presented here will contribute to the goals of ensuring children receive multiple years of high quality services, and to narrowing the school readiness gap in Illinois.

SELECTION CRITERION (B)(2)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded ELD Programs participate in such a system	Described in Activity (B)(2)-1.1 with rules changes included in <i>Appendices (B)(2)-1</i> and <i>(B)(1)-2</i> Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELC Agreement • Competitive Preference Priority 2 • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 2 • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs	Described in Activities (B)(2)-2.1, (B)(2)-2.2, and (B)(2)-2.3 Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of ELD Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program	Described in Activities (B)(2)-2.1, (B)(2)-2.2, and (B)(2)-2.3 Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 3 	Performance Measure <i>Table (B)(2)(c)</i>
INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES	Quality Counts will include all licensed child care programs, Preschool for All, center-based Head Start/Early Head Start, Title I and Part B programs	
ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS	Quality Counts includes all group ELD Programs, including those serving children with special needs and those serving culturally and linguistically diverse populations	

Performance Measures for (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of ELD Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System											
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of programs in the State	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of ELD Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2012		Target - end of calendar year 2013		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Preschool for All</i>	1,573	1,573	100	1,573	100	1,600	100	1,625	100	1,675	100
Early Head Start and Head Start ²⁴	870	25	3	870	100	870	100	870	100	870	100
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C ^a	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619 ^b	see PFA line				100		100		100		100
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA ^c	see PFA line				100		100		100		100
Programs receiving from CCDF funds— licensed centers	2,668	267	10	933	35	1,467	55	2,135	80	2,700	100
Programs receiving from CCDF funds— licensed family child care homes	6,300	58	1	2,200	35	3,150	50	4,410	70	6,300	100
Other <i>Describe:</i>											
<p><i>[Please indicate if baseline data are actual or estimated; describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information; and please include any definitions you used that are not defined in the notice.]</i></p> <p>^aAll IDEA Part C services in Illinois are provided on a fee-for-service, individual basis. There are no classroom-based programs funded by the state to provide Part C services, and therefore there are no programs that it would be appropriate to include in the Quality Counts TQRIS.</p>											

²⁴ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

^b*The classrooms that will participate in the TQRIS are included in the Preschool for All count above as they are blended classrooms providing an inclusive “least restrictive environment” for children with special needs*

^c*Title I funds are used to expand Preschool for All, and therefore these programs are counted in the Preschool for All count above*

(B)(3) Rating and monitoring ELD Programs. (15 points)

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of ELD Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the ELD Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in ELD Programs (*e.g.*, displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting ELD Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Illinois' (B)(3) Response

Rating and monitoring ELD Programs

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Illinois' Quality Counts system has always emphasized the use of valid, reliable tools administered by highly trained monitors to measure program quality. In the existing QRS system for child care providers, IDHS contracts with the McCormick Center at National Louis University to conduct the on-site program monitoring visits using the ERS tools, the PAS and the BAS. Similarly, ISBE contracts with the McCormick Center to conduct monitoring visits that include ERS assessments for Preschool for All providers. These contracts set specific benchmarks for the quality of administration of the rating tools, including monitors achieving and maintaining at least 85% inter-rater reliability with an anchor. Programs are visited once every three years, unless they require a "re-rating" visit sooner.

Goal (B)(3)-1:

The number of center-based and school –based ELD Programs that are assessed through a valid and reliable process is dramatically increased

Activity (B)(3)-1.1:

Develop integrated Quality Counts monitoring process

Illinois’ redesigned Quality Counts program will continue to rely on valid, reliable tools administered by highly trained monitors. As described in (B)(1), and reflected in the revised set of Star Level criteria in *Appendix (B)(1)-5*, Quality Counts will use the Environmental Rating Scales, Program Administration Scale, Business Administration Scale, and Classroom Assessment Scoring System. In addition, ISBE and IDHS have agreed to establish a single, integrated monitoring systems for Quality Counts, that will both serve as the State’s TQRIS monitoring process and its compliance process for all state-funded preschool programs. (See ELC Agreement, ISBE and IDHS Scopes of Work, *Appendix (A)(3)-1*.)

Because the Quality Counts TQRIS has until now been a voluntary system with few potential negative consequences for providers, there currently is no formal appeals process for a provider who believes they have been incorrectly rated. Illinois will develop a formal appeals process by June 1, 2012 to ensure that the system will provide accurate ratings of quality.

Star Ratings in the Quality Counts system will be valid for a period of three years, during which time programs will be required to submit an annual report demonstrating continued compliance with program quality features at their Star Level such as staff qualifications, group size and ratios, use of curriculum aligned with Illinois ELD Standards, and implementation of nutrition and activity guidelines. Programs at Star Level 4 and above must complete an annual program self-assessment and submit documentation of this assessment as part of this annual report. Programs will be required to reapply for a Star Rating and have a new monitoring visit if they change facilities within the three year period.

Activity (B)(3)-1.1 Rationale: *Programs with multiple funding streams will be able to undergo single monitoring process*

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop unified rating visit protocol for assessing programs’ compliance with both Star Level criteria and all criteria required for programs receiving ISBE funding	Jan – Apr 2012	ISBE & IDHS

(2) Integrate monitoring process for City-funded Chicago programs, including the Head Start self-assessment validation, Preschool for All/Prevention Initiative funded through CPS, and child care contract compliance, into the Quality Counts TQRIS	Jan- Apr 2012	Chicago Mayor's Office
(3) Develop an appeals process for programs that believe their program has received an inaccurate Star Level rating	Jan - Jun 2012	ISBE & IDHS

Activity (B)(3)-1.2:
Implement Quality Counts monitoring process using valid, reliable tools administered by trained assessors.

Assessments Tools

The following assessment tools are used to measure the quality of ELD Programs offered in centers, schools, and/or family child care homes across the State (see *Appendix (B)(3)-1* for summaries for each instrument, as well as additional background information on the PAS and BAS).

Quality of the Classroom Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale—Revised. • Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale—Revised. • Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale—Revised • School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale.¹
Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). • <i>also assessed through subscales of ERS tools</i>
Program Administration ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Administration Scale (2nd edition) (PAS)². • Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care (BAS).
<p>¹ (Part of rating for centers that also see school aged children) ² Includes implementation of quality features such as use of screening tools, comprehensive assessments, family engagement strategies, and continuous program improvement planning</p>	

Assessor Training and Reliability

Assessors must be accountable for conducting accurate Quality Rating assessments. To this end, the contract with the quality rating assessment provider will require that all assessors achieve and maintain a minimum of 85% inter-rater reliability with an anchor in the use of the

Environment Rating Scales, including the ITERS-R, ECERS-R, FCCERS-R, SACERS, CLASS, PAS, and BAS.^x Reliability checks will be required every 6-10 assessments.

Data entry and management

Data from the ERS, CLASS, PAS and BAS ratings will be entered into computerized templates of the instruments decreasing the amount of time spent in scoring and increasing reliability of the data generated.

The computerized data system creates reports for local program administrators and executive leadership of organizations being assessed that provide detailed analysis of the strengths and concerns noted by assessors. These reports will be especially useful in informing the “Road Map to Quality” continuous improvement plans for each early learning program (see (B)(4) and (E)(2)).

Activity (B)(3)-1.2 Rationale: <i>Assessment with the ERS, CLASS, PAS and BAS tools provides the foundation for continuous program improvement</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Increase number of assessors trained to complete assessments of classrooms and programs	Jan. -Sep 2012	Assessment Contractor
(2) Add CLASS to monitoring protocol for PFA programs and child care centers seeking 5-Star ratings	By July 1, 2012	ISBE and IDHS
(3) Assess programs for Star Ratings	July 1, 2012 and ongoing	Quality Counts Director

Goal (B)(3)-2:

A Public Awareness campaign ensures parents have access to information about program quality and licensing history for all ELD Programs

Illinois’ efforts to date largely have been focused on increasing the supply of high quality early learning programs. While these efforts have provided access to needed services for thousands of families and will be expanded, the State also needs to increase the demand for high quality early care and education. Helping parents, as the consumers of early education services, understand the importance of quality and giving them tools to more easily recognize it can drive the market towards providing that quality. Effectively influencing market forces can help advance and sustain the demand for, and therefore the provision of, high quality early learning.

Although Illinois recognizes the importance of a strong public awareness component to an effective TQRIS, the State has not yet invested heavily in ensuring that parents are aware of

the Star Level ratings of the programs in their communities and so has had no impact on the demand for quality among consumers. The State made a strategic decision to postpone such a public awareness campaign until the system reached a “critical mass” of participating programs in all areas of the State. After four years of implementation of the initial Quality Counts QRS, Illinois is now ready to implement a vigorous public awareness campaign to ensure that parents are aware of the quality rating data and licensing history of all ELD Programs in which they may consider enrolling their child. Equipped with this information, parents will be better able to demand high quality, thereby giving providers a market-based incentive to provide it.

Even without a large public awareness campaign, Illinois Quality Counts has implemented a variety of tools to help inform parents about the quality of programs. The Quality Counts website provides an overview of the rating system and lists the ratings of all participating child care providers. When parents contact the CCR&Rs for child care referrals, they receive information about Quality Counts and about the star ratings of any participating providers that may be able to meet their needs. Letters are sent to parents when their program has enrolled in the Quality Counts program and participating programs have window clings that display their rating.

In addition, IDCFS currently posts the full licensing history of all licensed child care providers, including all licensing violations and their disposition, on its Sunshine Accountability Website. Parents are able to search this database by address and/or name to find information about providers, but the website is not yet parent friendly because it lists code violations by Administrative Code reference rather than in everyday language and it is hard for parents to understand whether identified problems have been adequately addressed.

Activity (B)(3)-2.1:
Develop and implement a Public Awareness campaign plan

The TQRIS in Illinois will be supported by a comprehensive Public Awareness plan that will be designed, developed and implemented in a cross sector, cross system process overseen by the IELC’s Public Awareness Committee, which has successfully developed statewide campaigns which support the Preschool for All program. The Public Awareness Committee includes public, private and philanthropic representatives that have both direct communications experience and on-going relationships with program and communications experts within

government agencies, public and private broadcasting networks, and print media. The State will vigorously pursue private sector support (both financial and in-kind) for this effort.

The campaign will focus on targeting families at places they visit as a part of their everyday schedule and will include social media sites, public service announcements, billboards and printed materials (brochures, flyers, etc.) in multiple languages, taking into account Illinois' cultural and linguistic diversity. It also will raise the visibility of Quality Counts through branded materials for display and distribution by early education providers and early childhood membership organizations.

As part of this effort, the State will devote existing internal resources to emphasize the importance of programs achieving upper level star ratings. For example, high ranking State officials personally will award 5-star certificates to the first programs to achieve that level. State agency press releases, made available to local media, will announce the awarding of 5-star certificates and explain the importance of high quality early learning. The State also will ensure that information on Quality Counts is available to parents seeking state assistance, whether through the local CCR&R when the parent is applying for child care subsidy or through other contractors or state offices offering supportive services.

Activity (B)(3)-3.1 Rationale: <i>Parents are not currently aware of the Quality Counts system</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop campaign plan and procure contract for implementation	Jan-Jun 2012	IDHS, IELC, ISBE Public Awareness
(2) Develop materials to educate parents and the general public about Quality Counts—produce in multiple languages	Jul-Dec 2012	IDHS, ISBE, Contractor
(3) Multi-media campaign to publicize Quality Counts	Jan 2013 and ongoing	IDHS, ISBE, Contractor, IELC Public Awareness

Activity (B)(3)-2.2:
Develop a parent-friendly website that includes both Quality Counts and licensing violation information

Illinois will build upon its existing Quality Counts, individual CCR&R, and IDCFS Sunshine websites to create a unified, parent-friendly website where parents can access

information about all of the ELD Programs in their local communities, including their Star Level ratings and history of licensing violations. This website will continue to be supplemented by CCR&R Parent Counselors that will help parents understand and make use of the information available on the website. The presentation of IDCFS licensing information will be redesigned to be more understandable and useful to parents of very young children. The website will be optimized so that it is fully accessible from mobile phone devices, which will enable near-universal access by families of all income levels.

Activity (B)(3)-1.2 Rationale: Information is currently difficult for parents to access		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Create unified website for Quality Counts and licensing information (include mobile phone access)	Jan-Jun 2012	IDHS, IDCFS, ISBE
(2) Include center and school based programs quality ratings on website	Jul 2012 and ongoing	IDHS, ISBE
(3) Include licensed family child care homes quality ratings on website	Jul 2014 and ongoing	IDHS, ISBE

Summary--Criterion (B)(3)

Illinois has implemented a system for rating and monitoring its ELD Programs using valid, reliable tools administered by well-trained assessors. Through this Plan, the State will further integrate its monitoring system across programs funded by IDHS and ISBE, directly addressing Strategic Reform Priority 1, integrating State systems and supports. In addition, building upon the already implemented Sunshine web site that provides public access to licensing violations, the State will conduct an aggressive public awareness campaign to maximize the demand for high quality early learning services. This will address Strategic Reform Priority 2, connecting the most-at-risk children to the supports they need.

SELECTION CRITERION (B)(3)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
A system for rating and monitoring the quality of ELD Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and	Described in Activity (B)(3)-1.1 and (B)(3)-1.2 and Appendix (B)(3)-1 Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive Preference 	None

SELECTION CRITERION (B)(3)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
<p>Improvement System by--</p> <p>(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the ELD Programs with appropriate frequency</p>	<p>Priority 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	
<p>(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in ELD Programs and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting ELD Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.</p>	<p>Described in <i>Activities (B)(3)-2.1</i> and <i>(B)(3)-2.2</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 2 • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
<p>INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES</p>	<p>Quality Counts will include all licensed child care programs, Preschool for All, center-based Head Start/Early Head Start, Title I and Part B programs</p>	
<p>ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS</p>	<p>Quality Counts includes all group ELD Programs, including those serving children with special needs and those serving culturally and linguistically diverse populations</p>	

(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality ELD Programs for Children with High Needs. (20 points)

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the ELD Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for ELD Programs to continuously improve (*e.g.*, through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality ELD Programs that meet those needs (*e.g.*, providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of ELD Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in ELD Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Illinois' (B)(4) Response

Promoting access to high-quality ELD Programs for Children with High Needs

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Supports for Improvement

Illinois' commitment to quality and continuous improvement in early childhood care and education is reflected in the wide range of supports provided to ELD Programs. These current supports include:

- Training: IDHS and ISBE both fund extensive training opportunities for EC Educators throughout the State. As described in (D)(2), These trainings are offered for staff at multiple levels of expertise, including trainings that are appropriate for highly experienced early childhood professionals with advanced degrees in early childhood education.
- Illinois Birth to Three Institute (IBTI): ISBE contracts with the Ounce of Prevention Fund to provide comprehensive training to all Illinois home visiting programs as well as

to center-based Prevention Initiative programs. A description of IBTI is included in *Appendix (A)(1)-5*.

- Technical Assistance: Each CCR&R has at least one of each of the following technical assistance providers who provide on-site assistance to child care providers and who are regularly available for phone support:
 - *Nurse Consultants*: Assist providers in ensuring a healthy environment for children and in developing appropriate accommodations for children with special health needs.
 - *Social-Emotional/Mental Health Consultants*: Provide training on positive social-emotional supports for all children and families, on managing behaviorally challenging children.
 - *Infant-Toddler Consultants*: Provide training and on-site technical assistance to support developmentally appropriate services for infants and toddlers (emphasizing primary caregiving, continuity of care, and effective use of caregiving routines to support growth and development)
- QRS Specialists: These Specialists provide orientations to the Quality Counts system and rating process, and guide providers through the process of completing a program self-assessment, planning for the rating visit, completing the required documentation, and developing program improvement plans. Programs are required to attend training on the specific rating tools that will be involved in their rating assessment visit.
- Grants: Child care providers can access Quality Counts grants that support program quality improvement. Training Grants support professional development for staff, on ERS tools Competitive Grants offer funding for such quality enhancements as indoor and outdoor equipment, minor facility renovations, and other upgrades that are often difficult for programs to fund through their regular operating budgets. Priority for these grants is given to programs serving high percentages of children receiving CCAP (subsidy), and the grants must be tied to enhancements needed to support moving up levels in the QRS.
- Gateways to Opportunities Scholarship Program: The Gateways Scholarship Program pays a percentage of the cost of the tuition and fees based on an eligible EC Educator's income. Scholarships are available across a wide range of educational levels, including beginning practitioners seeking a CDA or AA degree up through practitioners who

already have a Bachelor's Degree and are working on an Early Childhood teaching certificate, ELS/Bilingual endorsement, and/or Masters Degree in Early Childhood Education. This scholarship program is jointly funded by the IDHS Child Care Bureau and the ISBE Early Childhood Division.

Accreditation Support: The Statewide Accreditation Mentoring (SAM) project provides support and assistance to child care/early education programs in achieving those accreditations that are recognized in Quality Counts. Programs may also apply to receive financial assistance for accreditation application fees through their local CCR&R.

Local School District Supports: Many school districts in the State have developed strong systems for supporting quality in preschool classrooms. These school districts provide additional support and technical assistance to these teachers to ensure the quality of the services children and families receive. For example, the Chicago Public Schools (which serves approximately 37% of Children with High Needs in Illinois) provides intensive coach-mentoring to teachers based upon the scores each classroom receives when monitored using the CLASS. Coach-Mentors visit classrooms as often as once per week to assist teachers in building their skills in classroom management and intentional instruction (see *Appendix (B)(4)-1* for description of monitoring and coaching process).

Incentives for CCAP Providers to Implement High Quality Programs

Higher Subsidy Reimbursement Rates: Providers that have achieved a Star Level rating receive a higher CCAP reimbursement rate. As described in *(B)(2)*, this rate structure will be re-evaluated as part of the workplan for this grant.

Compensation: The Illinois Great START program provides wage supplements to providers in full-day, year-round programs (including Family Child Care) based on their education levels and continued employment. For example, a teacher with a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education who has been working in a center for more than one year can receive a semi-annual bonus of \$1,575 (see full chart of supplements in *Appendix (B)(4)-2*). This strategy has been helpful in narrowing somewhat the salary gap between early childhood professionals working in community based child care programs and public schools.

Multiple Funding Streams to Support Quality and Increase Accessibility for Working Families

Braided funding for centers: As described in *(B)(2)*, a key strategy for funding programs to provide quality full-day, year-round services in Illinois has been to encourage programs to

“braid,” or layer, CCAP with Preschool for All (or Prevention Initiative for birth to three) and/or Head Start/Early Head Start grant funds to fund the full range and intensity of services that children and families need. Across Illinois, approximately 20% of Preschool for All slots and 30% of Head Start slots are provided in full-day, full-year settings.

Community Connections Preschool Model: Community Connections Preschool, developed by Illinois Action for Children, connects Children with High Needs in home-based child care with part-day classroom-based preschool programs (see full description in *Appendix (A)(1)-3*). Three- and four-year-old children in child care homes are transported to a half-day Preschool for All or Head Start classroom four or five days per week. In addition, a certified preschool teacher visits the home child care providers to coordinate curricular activities, bringing materials and resources to the home environment. This teacher also addresses the needs of any infants and toddlers in care, and guides the provider to give them extra attention during the half-day periods when preschoolers are away at class. Currently, 400 preschool-aged children are served through the Community Connections model.

Strategies to Support Participation in High Quality Programs Among “Hard to Reach” Families: As noted in *(A)(2)*, the State has identified the under-enrollment of Children with Highest Needs in high quality programs as a key issue to be addressed in its overall early childhood reform agenda. Illinois has been working to address this issue for several years, including developing a “toolkit” of strategies for programs seeking to engage multi-need families; tools for WIC, TANF and other social service providers to use to inform parents about the importance and availability of early learning programs; and a grant program to pilot innovative strategies for engaging the “hardest to reach” families in programs.

Goal (B)(4)-1:

The number and percentage of full-day, year-round ELD Programs that are at the highest tiers (Star Levels 4 and 5) of quality in Quality Counts is substantially increased-moving programs “from adequate to good”

Activity (B)(4)-1.1:

Support programs interested in moving to a higher star level

Roadmap to Quality: As described above, Illinois currently provides programs with a wide range of quality supports, including training, consultation and grants. These quality supports will be integrated to provide early childhood programs a “Roadmap to Quality” that will

more effectively support program in moving to higher Star Levels of quality. The following chart summarizes the process a program will undergo when they indicate they would like support in moving to a higher rating (note: all processes except orientation session and application/rating are optional for programs):

Step	Activities	Description
1. Indicate interest in moving up	1a. On-line overview	A brief overview of the system, its benefits, and the process
	1b. Initial application to begin process	Allows CCR&R Quality Counts Specialists to assess what supports may be needed/desired
2. Decide target star level	2a. QRIS orientation session/ Mentor-coach assigned	Recaps the overview and helps providers begin to think about differences in star levels. Sets the stage for the initial observation and assigns a mentor/coach.
	2b. Initial outside observation/ Decide target star level	A well-structured, unofficial observation that will help provider decide target star level in conjunction with mentor/coach
3. Learn about requirements for target level	3a. Training cohort	Program leader will join cohort and participate in training series focused on requirements and assessment instruments for target star level
4. Make program improvements	4a. Improvement planning with mentor/coach	Use initial observation results or previous assessment results from Quality Counts (if recent) to guide improvement planning
	4b. Carry out program improvement activities	Activities could include staff training, coach/mentoring for teaching staff, program changes, etc; Quality Counts competitive grants available to support improvements
5. Apply	5a. Apply for program assessment	Apply through Quality Counts or seek accreditation

The Roadmap to Quality will be supported by the data systems enhancements that are described in (E)(2), and will be incorporated into the portal for program directors within the Illinois Shared Learning Environment (ISLE; see *Activity (E)(2)-2.2*). Program directors will have secure, online access to detailed reports of the findings from their Star Level rating assessment, and these reports will be hyperlinked to resources that support improvements in any noted areas of weakness.

Activity (B)(4)-1.1 Rationale: <i>Programs need a clear pathway for quality improvement.</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop new orientation to Quality Counts—web-based and training sessions	Jan-Mar 2012	ISBE, IDHS, INCCRRA

(2) Contract with and train additional Mentors	Apr-Dec 2012	CCR&Rs
(3) Recruit centers to participate in training cohorts	July 2012 and ongoing	CCR&Rs
(4) Integrate “Roadmap to Quality” into ISLE	by July 2013	ISBE

Activity (B)(4)-1.2:
Integrate training supported by ISBE, IDHS, and Head Start/Early Head Start grantees through the Gateways Registry and align trainings with credential requirements

Through this grant, the Consortium for Workforce Development (CWD; see (A)(3)) will develop a unified annual plan for early childhood training that is funded through ISBE and IDHS. CWD will work with Head Start/Early Head Start grantees to ensure they are included in the annual plan, so that the efficiency of the resources that these grantees devote to training and technical assistance can also be maximized. It will also work with community colleges across the State to maximize the availability of coursework that leads to the Gateways credentials. A key objective of CWD will be to dramatically increase the number of EC Educators that hold the credentials that are required for staff in the highest tiers of the Quality Counts TQRIS, as a lack of available qualified staff is the most common obstacle to increased quality that programs cite (see (D)(2) for implementation steps related to training).

Activity (B)(4)-1.3:
Increase the number of programs that are “braiding” multiple funding streams to support high quality

See *Activities (B)(2)-2.2* and *(B)(2)-2.3*.

Goal (B)(4)-2:
At least 25% of 40% of ELD Programs receiving PFA, PI and/or Head Start/Early Head Start funding move to Star Level 5 in Quality Counts—moving programs “from good to great”

Illinois is fortunate that early childhood programs in the State were awarded a total of 14 Early Reading First (ERF) grants from 2002 to the present. Through these grants the State has learned a great deal about what is required to move programs from providing early childhood education and care that is of “good” quality to providing “great” instruction that is effective in

accelerating the development of at-risk children and closing the school readiness gap. As both the ERF grants and a great deal of recent research has demonstrated, raising the achievement of young high-need students before they enter kindergarten requires teachers and early childhood leaders to be more effective in their work.^{xi} Intensive coaching and mentoring can promote early childhood leaders' and teachers' ability to focus on raising student achievement and improving teacher effectiveness.^{xii}

Activity (B)(4)- 2.1:
Provide intensive professional development to Star Level 4 programs to raise the level of instructional quality they provide

The need for more effective support for learning in early childhood classrooms is clear. In recent assessments using the CLASS, for example, over 60% of CPS classrooms' scores and 70% of Chicago Head Start classrooms' indicated minimal intentional support for children's learning.^{xiii} Developing effective early childhood pedagogical skills requires focused professional development over a long period.^{xiv} As described in (C)(2), CWD will implement an Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood Teaching and Learning to support highly effective professional development that raises the instructional level of classrooms to the level required for accelerating the development of Children with High Needs and thereby closing the school readiness gap. (See *Activity (C)(2)-2.3* for implementation steps.)

Goal (B)(4)-4:
Increase to at least 50% the percentage of low-income children ages 3 and 70% the percentage of children age 4 who are enrolled in an Early Learning and Development Program at Star Level 4 or 5

As noted in (A)(2), Illinois has enough publicly funded high-quality preschool slots to serve approximately 85% of Children with High Needs, but the State continues to see under-enrollment of the most at-risk children in these programs, and too many children are missing out on the early learning experiences they need to be fully ready for kindergarten. This is due to barriers to access to these high quality programs, such as lack of intentional recruitment of those children most at risk of school failure; lack of full-day services; and a continuing shortage of slots in especially high need communities.

Activity (B)(4)-4.1:
Intentionally recruit Children with High Needs through Community Collaborations and “Hard to Reach” pilot projects

Through this Plan, Illinois is deepening and expanding the work of community collaborations in Concentrated High Need Communities (as described in (A)(2)). These broad-based networks managed by a Lead Entity and supported by the Consortium for Community Systems Development (see (A)(3) and (C)(4)) are responsible for ensuring that all Children with High Needs are screened, referred, and receive appropriate services based on need and that professionals across all sectors have knowledge of the full range of community resources.

Community collaborations will develop local strategies and performance measures to increase participation of the highest risk children in the highest quality ELD programs (TQRIS Star Level 4 and 5) including:

- Coordinating of outreach, recruitment, and enrollment activities among high quality ELD Programs in the community
- Using of universal family screening/risk assessment tool and weighting of risk criteria to establish consistent admission standards and baseline data
- Developing cohorts of parent leaders for outreach to “hard to reach” families (*see Activity (C)(4)-2.2*)

In addition, the State will test promising approaches for reaching multi-need families and enrolling them in high quality programs. OECD issued its Request for Applications for pilot projects to enroll “hard-to-reach” families on September 26, 2011 with Applications due October 31. OECD expects to award approximately six grants to pilot promising strategies, and will evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies. Those strategies found effective will continue to be supported through existing funding streams such as the Early Childhood Block Grant.

Activity (B)(4)-4.2:
Expand the number of Preschool for All and Head Start slots integrated into full day, year round programs or linked to family child care

See *Activities (B)(2)-2.2* and *(B)(2)-2.3* above for implementation steps related to expanding full day, year round care.

As described above and in *Appendix (A)(1)-3*, the Community Connections preschool model increases access to high quality part day preschool for children cared for in both Family, Friend and Neighbor and licensed family child care. Illinois will invest grant funds in providing

technical assistance and supports to communities interested in developing this type of connection between home care providers and high-quality preschool programs.

Activity (B)(4)-4.2 Rationale: <i>Children with High Needs can often only access high quality programs if they meet the families need for full day, year round child care</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Procure contract for providing technical assistance on establishing Community Connections preschool model	Jan-Mar 2012	ISBE
(2) Encourage school districts to develop Community Connections model with their ECBG funds	Apr 2012 and ongoing	ISBE

Activity (B)(4)-4.3:
Target any expansion funding for Preschool for All to those communities with the largest number of unserved Children with High Needs

Given the strong bipartisan support for early childhood education among state leaders, it is likely that as the State’s fiscal situation stabilizes, the Early Childhood Block Grant will again expand to serve additional children. Illinois plans to focus new investments in those communities where there is a significant shortage of high-quality, publicly-funded ELD Programs. Communities with the greatest need include those Chicago neighborhoods and suburbs with high concentrations of Latino immigrants as well several suburbs south of Chicago where large numbers of former Chicago Housing Authority residents were relocated as high-rise housing in the city was torn down.

Activity (B)(4)-4.3 Rationale: <i>Many communities remain underserved</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Continue to evaluate geographical match between services and need to identify underserved communities	Jan 2012 and ongoing	ISBE
(2) Develop and administer RFPs with priority for underserved communities	as funding is appropriated	ISBE

Summary--Criterion (B)(4)

Illinois already has a very substantial number of high quality ELD Programs. Through this Plan, the State will make these programs more accessible to Children with High Needs by expanding upon its already implemented strategies to combine Preschool for All programs with full day care, by supporting comprehensive outreach to multi-need families through community

collaborations, and by targeting new funding to the communities with the highest unmet need for services. In addition, the State will support programs who are interested in improving their quality and the Star Level rating by expanding and developing its current strategies of providing cohort-based training and mentoring to program leadership and providing quality grants to programs.

Implementing these strategies is critical to achieving the State’s goal of ensuring that Children with High Needs receive multiple years of high quality early learning services before kindergarten, and therefore are well prepared to succeed in school.

SELECTION CRITERION (B)(4)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
<p>A system for improving the quality of the ELD Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--</p> <p>(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for ELD Programs to continuously improve</p>	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for (B)(4) and in <i>Activity (B)(4)-1.1, (B)(4)-1.2, (B)(4)-1.3, (B)(4)-2.1 and (B)(4)-3.2</i> Also <i>Appendices (B)(4)-1 and (B)(4)-2</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 3 • (C)(2) • (D)(2) 	None
<p>(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality ELD Programs that meet those needs</p>	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for (B)(4) and in <i>Activity (B)(4)-1.3, (B)(4)-3.1, (B)(4)-3.2, and (B)(3)-3.3</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
<p>(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--</p> <p>(1) The number of ELD Programs in the top tiers of TQRIS; and</p> <p>(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in ELD Programs that are in the top tiers of TQRIS.</p>	<p>Described in all Activities in (B)(4)</p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 2 • Strategic Priority # 3 	Performance Measure Tables (B)(4)(c)(1) and (B)(4)(c)(2)
INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES	Quality Counts will include all licensed child care programs, Preschool for All, center-based Head Start/Early Head Start, Title I and Part B programs	

ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS	Quality Counts includes all group ELD Programs, including those serving children with special needs and those serving culturally and linguistically diverse populations
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Performance Measure for (B)(4)(c)(1): Increasing the number of ELD Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.					
	Baseline (Today)	Target- end of calendar year 2012	Target- end of calendar year 2013	Target- end of calendar year 2014	Target- end of calendar year 2015
Total number of programs covered by the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	669	10,733	12,530	14,520	16,451
Center-Based Programs ^a					
Total Number of Center-Based Programs covered	435 ^b	4,477	4,861	5,438	5,956
Number of programs in Center-Based Tier 1	0	1,609	1,752	1,733	1,582
Number of programs in Tier 2	32	45	58	93	149
Number of programs in Tier 3	187	252	303	424	594
Number of programs in Tier 4	213	2,490	2,410	2,317	2,276
Number of programs in Tier 5	3	81	338	871	1,355
Licensed Family Child Care Home(FCC) Programs					
Total Number of FCC Programs covered	234	6,256	7,669	9,082	10,495

Number of programs in FCC Tier 1	0	5,947	7,265	8,499	9,679
Number of programs in FCC Tier 2	33	43	60	84	118
Number of programs in FCC Tier 3	15	23	34	51	76
Number of programs in FCC Tier 4	185	241	301	421	568
Number of programs in FCC Tier 5	1	3	9	27	54
<p>^aCenter-based programs includes child care centers; sites/schools with Preschool for All and/or Part B classrooms and/or Title I funded preschool classrooms; and Head Start and Early Head Start centers.</p> <p>^bCurrently, only full-day centers are eligible for participation, but beginning July 1, 2012, all Head Start/Early Head Start and Preschool for All programs will be included in the center number.</p> <p>Child care centers are required to enter the TQRIS upon license renewal</p>					

Performance Measures for (B)(4)(c)(2): Increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in ELD Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.											
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percent of Children with High Needs Participating in Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>									
		Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target -end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool <i>Specify:</i> Preschool for All ²⁵	75,000	N/A ²⁶	N/A	75,933	95	78,330	98	79,130	99	79,929	100
Early Head Start and Head Start ²⁷	42,015	N/A ²⁸	N/A	39,914	95	41,175	98	41,595	99	42,015	100
ELD Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ELD Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619 ²⁹	37,083	N/A	100	37,083	100	37,083	100	37,083	100	37,083	100

²⁵ For the purposes of this Performance Measure, Children with High Needs refers to the federal definition in this Funding Opportunity Announcement rather than the broader definition of “at-risk” used in *Tables (A)(1)-3* and *5*

²⁶ Preschool for All sites are not currently required to participate in the QRS

²⁷ Funded enrollment, Including Migrant Head Start located in the State.

²⁸ Head Start sites are not currently required to participate in the QRS

²⁹ Average for 4 years, 2007-2010; State does not anticipate an increase in the number to be served

ELD Programs funded under Title I of ESEA ³⁰	4,579	N/A	N/A	4,415	95	4,555	98	4,601	100	4,647	100
ELD Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program ³¹	118,416	15,702	13%	18,395	16%	19,445	17%	21,010	18%	23,078	20%

Note: The current data systems are unable to determine the number of children that are enrolled in a CCDF program and that are concurrently enrolled in Head Start and/or State Funded Preschool. However, we believe a substantial additional percentage of those children receiving CCAP are also enrolled in a top-tiers part-day preschool program and/or a high quality home visiting program.

³⁰ Total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the consolidated State Performance Report. Includes Migrant, Homeless and Pre-K data

³¹ Average monthly served

(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.
(15 points)

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's ELD Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Illinois' (B)(5) Response

Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

The redesigned Quality Counts TQRIS has become a central component of Illinois' comprehensive reform strategy for enhancing ELD Programs. For the system to achieve its core objective of providing incentives for quality enhancement and supporting system-wide program improvements, it is vital that the structure and tiers differentiate meaningful levels of program quality. Through this Plan, Illinois will conduct a multi-year series of analyses, studies, and evaluations to validate and assess the effectiveness of Quality Counts using both a validation study and child outcomes study.

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Illinois' Quality Counts system has been the subject of two recent reports commissioned by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on the structure, quality components, and validity of state TQRIS systems.^{xv} Illinois was selected for inclusion in the research because of its accessible administrative data, comprehensive structure, and perceived quality, as well as the State's commitment to supporting early childhood research and evaluation.³² Among the results

³² One study analyzes TQRIS systems from three state systems (Malone et al., 2011) the other from five state systems (Caronongan et al., 2011).

that have emerged from this cross-state research, the most significant is the finding of statistically-significant distinctions between TQRIS rating levels with providers at higher levels more likely to demonstrate quality components than those at lower or base levels.³³ While this promising finding provides evidence for the validity of the TQRIS structure, results from TQRIS evaluations in several other states have found little or no relationship between quality tiers, program quality and child outcomes.^{xvi} To ensure that Quality Counts is functioning as intended, there is clearly a pressing need to continue to evaluate the overall model with rigorous methodologies.

Goal (B)(5)-1:

A validation study of Quality Counts measures whether the system effectively differentiates levels of program quality

While there is no consensus among scholars or stakeholders on the best way to validate a TQRIS system, there is agreement that validation is complex and requires a thorough, iterative process.^{xvii} Illinois will implement a sequential, multi-year, multi-tiered validation plan to determine whether Quality Counts effectively differentiates levels of program quality through the following overarching research questions:

- Do the quality components in Quality Counts reflect the current research base and expert opinion on quality in early care and education programs?
- Are the Quality Counts components relevant to the diverse population of children across Illinois, including children with special needs, English language learners, and children at risk for poor school performance?
- Do scoring patterns on the rating tools indicate reliable variation given the population of programs participating in Quality Counts?
- Do the quality components in Quality Counts represent distinct areas that do not overlap with other components in Quality Counts?
- Do programs with higher star ratings display higher levels of quality than programs with lower star ratings?
- How are the quality tiers related to external measures of quality?

³³ Because only a subset of programs in Illinois are rated on process quality measures, Illinois' data were excluded from some of the analyses.

Activity (B)(5)-1.1:
Undertake a comprehensive validation study planning process and issue the evaluator request for proposals

In order to maximize the quality and utility of the statewide Quality Counts validation study, as well as to encourage the support of important stakeholders in the process, Illinois will undertake a vigorous and collaborative planning process. In January 2012, ISBE and IDHS will convene an External Advisory Committee of early childhood scholars, stakeholders, administrators, teachers and providers to review the body of research on TQRIS quality standards and evaluations, as well as program-level administrative and assessment data and implementation plans. The Committee will be charged with advising the State on the development of a comprehensive framework for validating the standards, tiers and overall structure of Quality Counts, and ensuring that the system is sensitive to the unique learning styles and developmental trajectories of Illinois' diverse population. The Committee will also advise ISBE and IDHS on the development of a request for proposals that will be released in February 2012 to select an evaluation contractor to conduct the Quality Counts effectiveness evaluation (including both the validation study and the child outcomes study components).

Activity (B)(5)-1.1 Rationale: *Deliberate and methodical planning will lay the foundation for a successful study by making possible the development of appropriate research designs and methods that will produce useful information and be feasible to implement*

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Convene External Advisory Committee to advise State on research priorities, framework and implementation plan.	Jan-Feb 2012	ISBE, IDHS
(2) Develop and Administer RFP, Select Evaluation Contractor to conduct Phase I of Validation Study.	Feb-Apr 2012	ISBE, IDHS

Activity (B)(5)-1.2:
Execute the validation study

The validation study component of the Quality Counts effectiveness evaluation will include three areas of focus: (1) a study of the construct and face validity of Quality Counts; (2) a study of the relationship between classroom quality, teacher-child interactions, and Quality Counts tiers; and (3) a comprehensive analysis of the “automatic ratings” of Head Start, Preschool for All (PFA), and accredited programs. As described in *Activity (A)(3)-1.3*, on a parallel track with the procurement of the evaluation contractor, Illinois will also procure the

lead entity for administering the Consortium for Early Learning Research (CELR). As the validation study is carried out, CELR will partner with ISBE and IDHS to provide consultation and oversight for its implementation utilizing the expertise of the membership on CELR's steering committee. CELR will also assume management of the External Advisory Committee to ensure a broad range of stakeholders continue to provide input into the implementation process.

1. Study of the construct and face validity of Quality Counts

While Illinois has gone to great lengths to construct its TQRIS based on components of quality that have been identified by research as being important for supporting children's healthy development, the research base provides minimal evidence of the specific standards or indicators that should be included in TQRIS systems, how they should be combined in tiers, the relative weighting or prioritization of criteria, or the thresholds to differentiate quality levels.^{xviii} In its redesign of the Quality Counts system, Illinois is implementing several ambitious and unique strategies that are innovative but untested, such as establishing a five-star tier at an unprecedented level of comprehensive quality to provide an incentive for higher quality programs to seek further improvement. The findings from this study of the structure and components of the TQRIS will serve as a critical "quality check" that will inform the continued roll-out and expansion of the system and may trigger mid-course corrections.

Although the complete research framework and design will be determined during the planning process with the input of the External Advisory Committee and evaluation contractor, the study will include, at a minimum, the following analyses:

- a. *Validation of Quality Counts Components.* As previously noted, in constructing the quality components and tiers for the redesigned TQRIS, Illinois has been methodical in selecting aspects of quality that are supported by research. An important approach to validating a TQRIS is assessing "face validity" – determining whether systems are comprised of components of quality that reflect the current research base and expert opinion.^{xix} To assess the validity of the various TQRIS components, the evaluator will conduct a comprehensive review of the research literature and consult with leading experts to assess and document the degree to which each specific quality component has been rigorously studied or evaluated and has substantial evidence of validity. The analysis will also examine the scientific evidence linking each component to programmatic quality and/or positive child outcomes. A special emphasis will be placed

on analyzing the evidentiary basis supporting the new Level 5 criteria, which will be finalized and adopted in December 2011 (see *Activity (B)(1)-1.2*).

b. *Validation of the Quality Counts Tiers.* The effectiveness and impact of Illinois' Quality Counts system depends on the re-designed structure resulting in categories and levels that are distinct. To assess the internal structure of the model, the evaluation will undertake the following analytic strategies:

- An analysis of the correlations between Quality Counts components to determine if ratings criteria are measuring distinct constructs or whether there is redundancy or overlap with other indicators.
- An analysis of the average scores and variance of Quality Counts components to determine if they are distinguishing adequately among the star rating tiers.
- An analysis that constructs different models of the Quality Counts rating scale to document and provide insight into how different combinations and/or weighting of Quality Counts indicators result in different patterns of programs receiving rating levels.

2. Study of the relationship between classroom quality, teacher-child interactions and Quality Counts tiers

The overarching goal of the study of the relationship between classroom quality and the TQRIS is to test the predictive validity of the Quality Counts structure. To determine whether the tiers in Quality Counts accurately reflect different levels of quality, the study will include a comprehensive analysis of the distribution and variance of independent classroom observation ratings. The study will be designed to assess whether programs at higher star levels display higher mean scores on different dimensions of classroom and instructional quality. The study will also analyze the validity and reliability of each of the assessments used to measure program quality in Quality Counts to help ISBE and IDHS determine whether the scores on any of the measures should be re-weighted or re-prioritized in determining star levels and star ratings.

To perform this analysis, data will be collected on a statewide representative sample of center-based classrooms serving infants and toddlers (children ages 0-3) and preschoolers (children ages 3-5). At the outset of the evaluator's work, CELR, ISBE, and IDHS will consult with the evaluator on sampling issues such as stratification by funding stream and geography and

the desired level of precision for sampling sizes. The evaluator will be required to conduct a power analysis to determine the appropriate sample size for the study.

A variety of measures and data collection methods (e.g., classroom observations, teacher surveys, administrator surveys) are required to capture the multiple dimensions of program quality and other features. Program quality measures to be considered for this analysis will be selected on the basis of their reliability, validity, feasibility, and cost. A possible set of classroom quality measures includes the CLASS (in infant/toddler and preschool classrooms), the ITERS (in infant/toddler classrooms), the ECERS-R (in preschool programs), and the Arnett Caregiver Interaction Scale (in infant/toddler and preschool classrooms). These direct observational data would be supplemented by surveying administrators of those programs and teachers in the classrooms observed to learn more about their education, training, and demographic characteristics, as well as structural and management features of the programs.

3. Comprehensive analysis of automatic ratings for Head Start, PFA, and accredited programs

Based on a thorough review of data and evidence from evaluations of early childhood programs in Illinois, the State's redesign of Quality Counts enrolls Head Start, PFA, and accredited programs with an automatic Star Level 4 rating which can be subsequently lowered or raised based on monitoring. Given the significance of this decision, an analysis will be conducted to determine the relationship between Head Start, PFA, and accreditation status and other indicators of quality, including those specified within the Quality Counts tiers and the measures used to assess them (ECERS, CLASS, PAS, etc.). The analysis will examine whether accredited programs are more likely to be associated with higher quality indicators than non-accredited programs, and will delineate specific types of accreditation that are associated with higher or lower levels of quality. The study will also analyze the variation in quality levels of Head Start and PFA programs to determine the degree of alignment with the Star Level 4 quality standards. The study of Head Start and PFA programs is intended to provide useful information regarding whether children in greatest need of enhanced early educational experiences are enrolled in high quality programs.

The Quality Counts validation study will be completed by December 2013. CELR will broadly publicize the findings with administrators, stakeholders, and policymakers, and work with the evaluation contractor to summarize how the findings should impact adjustments and improvements to the TQRIS system. ISBE, IDHS, and the Quality Counts Consortium (QCC)

are specifically tasked with using the findings and recommendations to revise the Quality Counts star level criteria by July 2014 (See *Activity (B)(1)-1.4*).

Activity (B)(5)-1.2 Rationale: <i>Illinois must determine whether tiers and ratings in Quality Counts accurately reflect differential levels of quality.</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Undertake the validation study, including the study of the construct and face validity; relationship between classroom quality, teacher-child interactions, and tiers; and analysis of quality demonstrated by programs with each type of accreditation, PFA & HS	Apr 2012 – Dec 2013	Evaluation Contractor, with oversight by CELR, ISBE, and IDHS
(2) Broadly report on the outcomes of the study	Dec 2013	CELR, in consultation with ISBE, and IDHS
(3) Use the information to analyze and implement adjustments to Star Level Criteria	Dec 2013 - Jul 2014	ISBE, IDHS, QCC

Goal (B)(5)-2:

A child outcomes study of Quality Counts measures whether the system positively impacts developmental outcomes and trajectories for young children

The second phase of the effectiveness study (beginning in Fall 2014) will focus on one of the more significant and persuasive approaches to validating the effectiveness of a TQRIS — measuring the relationship between child development outcomes and TQRIS levels. The ultimate goal of Quality Counts – and the State’s overall plan for reform – is to improve the developmental outcomes and trajectories for young children. Despite an increasing number of evaluations examining the effectiveness and impact of TQRIS systems, there is very little empirical evidence linking the systems to improvements in child outcomes.^{xx} The few studies that have documented a positive relationship between TQRIS ratings and child outcomes have, for the most part, found weak associations and modest effect sizes.^{xxi}

Illinois plans to implement a rigorous child outcomes study that will examine the association between Quality Counts star ratings and young children’s progress in several critical domains of development. Given that two of the primary objectives of Quality Counts are to improve the school readiness and developmental outcomes of children and to support high-risk families, the following research questions will be addressed in the Quality Counts child outcomes study:

- What is the relationship of Quality Counts star ratings to children’s outcomes?

- Do children who attended higher quality programs, as measured by Quality Counts, show greater gains on differential dimensions of school readiness (e.g., language, socio-emotional, cognitive, health) than their peers who attend lower quality programs?
- Are there differences in the relationship between quality ratings and the learning and developmental outcomes for children ages 0-3 and 3-5?
- Are there subgroups of children (e.g., high-risk children, children with special needs, English language learners) for whom the relationship between program quality and child outcomes is stronger?
- Is there a relationship between Quality Counts star ratings, individual Quality Counts components, and children's levels of school readiness at Kindergarten entry?

The study will provide Illinois' early childhood stakeholders, teachers, and policymakers vital feedback on the effectiveness of the State's TQRIS model and this Plan's overall reform strategies.

Activity (B)(5)-2.1:
Undertake a comprehensive child outcomes study planning process

In August 2013, CELR will reconvene the External Advisory Committee to provide input on the design of a study of child outcomes to be conducted by the evaluation contractor during the 2014-15 school year. The primary objective of this planning phase is to review the findings from the validation study, along with information related to the implementation of Quality counts, in order to develop a comprehensive framework and plan for the outcomes study.

Because of Illinois' ambitious plans to expand Quality Counts participation to all licensed early childhood programs and PFA programs by 2015, the feasibility of identifying a suitable comparison group for an experimental or quasi-experimental design is low. Therefore, the suitability of other design options must be fully analyzed during the planning process. Based on an extensive review of the existing research base on TQRIS evaluations and Illinois own history of successfully evaluating early childhood programs and systems, it is expected that CELR and the External Advisory Committee will recommend a pre-post evaluation design, with data collection in the fall and spring of the 2014-15 school year. A one-group pre-post design could consist of the measurement of child outcomes with a randomly selected sample of 2-year old children in center-based birth-to-three programs and 4-year-old children in center-based

preschool programs. If standard normative measures are used, changes can be described in terms of growth that is expected or better than expected based on the child’s initial status on particular measures as well as compared with demographically similar populations. While such designs are less effective in unequivocally attributing outcomes to the program or intervention received by children, this design seems most suitable in the absence of a comparison group.

Another critical issue that must be addressed during the planning process is the sample size of participants needed relative to the type and magnitude of the effects that the study will be able to detect. As a preliminary recommendation, ISBE and IDHS envision that the sampling plan will involve a stratified random sampling of programs within Quality Counts tier levels and of children within tiers. Other sampling issues that must be resolved include whether programs will be stratified by funding stream and geography; whether children will be stratified by ethnicity or race, gender, social-economic status, home language, or other characteristics; and the desired level of precision for estimating sample sizes. The evaluation contractor will be required to perform a power analysis to determine the appropriate sample size for the study.

Finally, the planning process will address the measures to be used by the evaluation contractor to assess child outcomes. The selected measures must capture the Essential Domains of School Readiness (as defined in the application). Other criteria that will be used to select measures include: importance and evidence base; validity and reliability; standards referenced; comparability; cultural and language sensitivity; feasibility; and simplicity. A possible set of standardized measures could include: subtests from the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-III, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, the Preschool Language Scale, or similar batteries.

Based on a thorough analysis of the above issues, CELR and the External Advisory Committee will advise ISBE and IDHS on the objectives, methods and design of the study and will provide feedback on the development of a final scope of work for the outcomes study by the evaluation contractor.

Activity (B)(5)-2.1 Rationale: <i>Deliberate and methodical planning will lay the foundation for a successful study by making possible the development of appropriate research designs and methods that will produce useful information and be feasible to implement</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Convene External Advisory Committee to advise State on the objectives, methods, and design of the study	Aug 2013 - Nov 2013	CELR, in consultation with ISBE, IDHS

(2) Finalize evaluation contractor scope of work for child outcomes study	Dec 2013	ISBE and IDHS, in consultation with CELR and Committee
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Activity (B)(5)-2.2:
Execute the child outcomes study

Utilizing the study design developed through the planning process, and following approval of the final outcomes study plan by ISBE and IDHS, the evaluation contractor will carry out the study using multiple sources of data. To test for the magnitude of the effect of quality ratings on children’s developmental outcomes, the evaluator must use hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), adjusting for important covariates (e.g., pretest scores). The Quality Counts child outcomes study will be completed by September 2015. As was done with the validation study, CELR will broadly publicize the findings with administrators, stakeholders, and policymakers, and work with the evaluation contractor to summarize how the findings should impact adjustments and improvements to the TQRIS system. In consultation with CELR, ISBE will link information from the outcomes study to data within Illinois' statewide longitudinal education data system – which include indicators of health, mental health, and cognitive and social development – and its kindergarten readiness assessment process (KIDS) for a broader understanding of children’s learning, development, and school readiness.

Activity (B)(5)-2.2 Rationale: <i>Illinois must ensure that Star Level criteria accurately delineate quality features that are related to child outcomes and closing the school readiness gap</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Complete the child outcomes study, including analysis of changes in child outcomes associated with star levels.	Jan 2014 – Sep 2015	Evaluation Contractor
(2) Broadly report on the outcomes of the study	Sep 2015	CELR, in consultation with ISBE, and IDHS
(3) Use the information to analyze and implement adjustments to Star Level Criteria based on research regarding criteria most associated with child progress; approve revised criteria	Sep-Dec 2015	ISBE, IDHS, QCC

Activity (B)(5)-2.3:
Plan for additional effectiveness studies to fully evaluate the impact of Quality Counts

The Quality Counts effectiveness study, along with the other evaluations proposed in the Early Learning Challenge Plan, demonstrates the State's commitment to supporting and advancing high quality research. Illinois also recognizes that timing is critical in designing and implementing meaningful evaluations. While it is a priority to continuously analyze how the State's reforms are impacting children's progress and development, the TQRIS child outcomes study will be implemented during an early phase of the redesigned TQRIS system before all the plans and improvement strategies will have had time to take full effect. Consequently, Illinois plans to build on the initial TQRIS effectiveness research supported through the Early Learning Challenge Plan by working with CELR to develop an ambitious, long-term agenda to evaluate the impact of Quality Counts.

At the end of the grant period, CELR will oversee the planning process for three additional Quality Counts effectiveness studies, which will be carried out after the end of the grant period and funded by the State. (Over the past five years, Illinois has allocated approximately \$700,000/year for evaluations for early childhood programs, which Illinois anticipates to continue through the grant period and beyond. See (A)(4)). Specifically, CELR will plan for: (1) an evaluation of program improvements in quality levels over time, to identify those factors that are most important in moving programs from "adequate" to "good" and from "good" to "great"; (2) an on-going evaluation of trends in program quality and child outcomes over time, including linking Quality Counts data to assessment performance in kindergarten and the early elementary years; and (3) a study of the validity and effectiveness of Quality Counts for home-based providers, including an analysis of whether there are similar relationships between the Quality Counts tiers and outcomes for children in home-based and center-based programs (Home-based providers are not included in the initial effectiveness study because center-based programs were required to participate in the TQRIS on an earlier timeline than home-based programs.) These evaluation studies will be part of a cycle of ongoing improvement for Quality Counts, so that the State can ensure this centerpiece of its early learning reform agenda reliably measures differences in program quality and positively impacts child outcomes.

Activity (B)(5)-2.3 Rationale: <i>Ongoing evaluation must be embedded in the State's administration of Quality Counts</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Convene External Advisory Committee to advise State on the objectives, methods, and design of the additional studies	Sep 2015 - Oct 2015	CELR, in consultation with ISBE, IDHS
(2) Finalize the scope and design of the additional studies	Dec 2015	ISBE and IDHS, in consultation with CELR and Committee

Summary--Criterion (B)(5)

Illinois has long invested in high quality evaluations of its early learning programs. Through this Plan, the State will build upon its existing evaluation work to establish the Consortium for Early Learning Research and to validate the Quality Counts TQRIS. The information gleaned from these efforts will help the State further refine its TQRIS criteria as well as the supports it provides to ELD Programs seeking to improve quality. Most importantly, these research efforts will help the State identify the most effective investments it can make toward achieving its goal of eliminating the school readiness gap and ensuring all children are prepared for success.

SELECTION CRITERION (B)(5)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
(a) Validating whether TQRIS tiers accurately reflect differential levels of program quality	Described in Activities (B)(5)-1.1, (B)(5)-1.2, and (B)(5)-2.3. Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consortium for Early Learning Research: <i>Activity (A)(3)-1.3</i> 	None
(b) Assessing the extent to which ratings relate to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness	Described in Activities (B)(5)-2.1, (B)(5)-2.2, and (B)(5)-2.3 Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consortium for Early Learning Research: <i>Activity (A)(3)-1.3</i> • Administration of the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey: <i>(E)(1)</i> • Establishment of unified early learning data system: <i>(E)(2)</i> 	None

<p>INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES</p>	<p>Center-based programs serving children from birth to age five will be included in the effectiveness study, including child care programs, Head Start, and PFA. The scope and design for an effectiveness study of home-based providers will be carried out during the grant period. Described in <i>Activities (B)(5)-1.2 and (B)(5)-2.1</i></p>
<p>ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS</p>	<p>The CELR and the Quality Counts external advisory committee will share responsibility for ensuring that the study assesses the effectiveness of TQRIS for children with special needs, English language learners, and at high-risk for poor school performance. Described in <i>Activities (B)(5)-1.1; (B)(5)-1.2; and (B)(5)-2.1</i></p>

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality ELD Standards.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality ELD Standards that are used statewide by ELD Programs and that--

(a) Includes evidence that the ELD Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Includes evidence that the ELD Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;

(c) Includes evidence that the ELD Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and

(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the ELD Standards across ELD Programs.

Evidence for (C)(1)(a) and (b):

- To the extent the State has implemented ELD Standards that meet any of the elements in criteria (C)(1)(a) and (b), submit--
 - Proof of use by the types of ELD Programs in the State;
 - The State's ELD Standards for:
 - Infants and toddlers
 - Preschoolers
 - Documentation that the standards are developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate for all children, including children with disabilities and developmental delays and English Learners;
 - Documentation that the standards address all Essential Domains of School Readiness and that they are of high-quality;
 - Documentation of the alignment between the State's ELD Standards and the State's K-3 standards; and

Illinois' (C)(1) Response

Developing and using statewide, high-quality ELD Standards

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Illinois was one of the first states to create Early Learning Standards to inform curriculum and assessment in early childhood programs. ISBE partnered with several school districts in 2000 to develop the draft standards, which were created to parallel in content the Illinois

Learning Standards for K-12 education. Included were benchmarks for learning in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Physical Development and Health, Fine Arts, Foreign Language, and Social/Emotional Development. The benchmarks were not broken out by age level, but instead articulated what children should know and be able to do at the end of the preschool years as they moved into kindergarten.

ISBE undertook a two-year process of presenting these draft standards to teachers, administrators, parents, and early childhood experts across the State to gather feedback on both the content of the standards themselves and the supportive materials and training that would be needed to implement the standards in early childhood programs. The final standards were completed in 2002, and were formally adopted into rules by the State Board in 2006. Since that time, all ISBE-funded programs for children ages 3-5 have been required to implement curricula and assessments that are aligned with the Early Learning Standards (see *ECBG rules in Appendix (B)(1)-2*, for documentation of required use).

The Early Learning Standards were met with great enthusiasm by the early childhood profession in our State. Training has been provided to child care providers, Head Start programs, and community-based preschool programs, as well as to all Preschool for All programs in the State. An analysis of the standards showed them to be in alignment with the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework that was then in effect, and the standards have been used widely in Head Start programs.

ISBE built upon the standards to create supports for child assessment for early learning programs. Complete crosswalks between other assessment tools such as the High/Scope COR and the Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum were completed before the State recommended the use of these tools as assessments in state-funded early learning programs. A special version of the Work Sampling assessment system, Work Sampling Illinois, was created in alignment with the Early Learning Standards. ISBE also supported the development of I-TEACHe, a tool for teacher to collect documentation of children's achievement of benchmarks through handheld computers such as Palm Pilots and i-pod Touches.

The Illinois Early Learning Project at the University of Illinois is funded by ISBE to select and create high-quality resources that respond to the early learning information needs of parents and educators in the State, including all types of ELD Programs. The Project's web site provides many varied tools to support the implementation of the Early Learning Standards,

including videos of children demonstrating individual benchmarks and a database of curriculum resources searchable by specific standards and benchmarks. The Project also produces “Tip Sheets” to support curriculum and parent engagement in each area of the Standards, and most of these are available in English, Spanish and Polish, with a smaller set also available in Korean and Chinese (see sample “Tip Sheet” in *Appendix (C)(1)-2*)

The current Early Learning Standards are also reflected in the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies. Within the Gateways ECE Credential *Curriculum or Program Design Content Area*, there are benchmarks that specifically reference and include the ISBE Early Learning Standards.

Goal (C)(1)-1:

Revised Illinois ELD Standards cover all Essential Domains and are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for infants, toddlers and preschoolers

Activity (C)(1)-1.1:

Draft revised Standards, ensure alignment, and complete age-specific benchmarks

Birth to Three Standards: While Illinois’ original Early Learning Standards were of high quality and addressed all domains of development, the IELC recognized that their usefulness is limited because they do not provide any breakdown of developmental benchmarks by age. The original standards provided especially little guidance for programs serving infants, toddlers and two year olds. For this reason, in 2010 the IELC charged its Infant-Toddler Committee with overseeing a process to develop new Illinois ELD Standards for Birth to Age Three. With funding from the McCormick Foundation, the Committee embarked upon a highly inclusive process to develop these standards with input from a wide range of stakeholders, including the full range of ELD Program providers. The goal has been to create standards that are useful across a wide range of settings, from child care to home visiting programs to Early Intervention, and that would be accessible to both professionals and parents. A Task Force was convened to guide the development of the standards, and the high-level standards were recently completed and approved by the IELC and are included in a notice of proposed rule-making by the State Board (see *Appendix (B)(1)-2*). The Task Force engaged leading national expert Catherine Scott Little to guide the process of standard creation, to review and direct the content

of the standards and to offer input on the implementation of the standards across multiple sectors of early childhood professionals and programs (see Ms. Little's letter of support and assessment of the quality of the standards in *Appendix (C)(1)-4*).

In keeping with Illinois' leadership role in supporting birth to three ELD Programs, the ELD Standards for Birth to Age Three are exceptionally high quality and comprehensive. A unique feature of the Standards is the inclusion of the Self-Regulation domain, which draws attention to this fundamental component of infants' and toddlers' early development and its role in creating a foundation for critical executive function skills that emerge in later childhood.

Standards for Ages Three to Five: At the same time that the new birth to three standards were being created, the IELC recognized that the original standards also needed to be updated for preschool aged children. These updates were needed to: reflect new knowledge about young children's learning and development over the past decade; align the standards with the newly adopted Common Core standards in Math and Language Arts; provide a breakdown of expectations at ages three and four; better reflect issues of cultural and linguistic diversity; better reflect the importance of social-emotional development in young children's learning; and align the standards with the new birth to three standards. For these reasons, a thorough review of the standards was completed by Erikson Institute, and revisions to the standards were proposed. These new standards were approved by the IELC in October, and are included in a notice of proposed rule-making by the State Board (see reference to new rules in *Appendix (B)(1)-2*). As detailed in the ELC Agreement, all Participating State Agencies have agreed to use the new birth to three and three to five standards, collectively now known as the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards, in all of their ELD Programs. Use of curriculum and assessments that are aligned with the ELD Standards is required in both the Illinois Birth to Five Program Standards (see *Appendix (B)(1)-1*) and in the newly revised Star Level criteria of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (see *Appendix (B)(1)-5*).

Alignment analysis: As part of the review of the old standards and development of the new standards, Erikson Institute completed an alignment cross-walk of the new standards with the K-12 Illinois Learning Standards, including the newly adopted Common Core standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics (see alignment analysis in *Appendix (C)(1)-3*). Alignment with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework was also

assessed (see alignment analysis in *Appendix (C)(1)-3*). The graphic in *Appendix (C)(1)-3* depicts the overall alignment of the standards across Birth to Grade 12.

Age-specific benchmarks: Age-specific benchmarks for infants, toddlers and preschoolers still need to be developed for the new Illinois ELD Standards. This work will continue from October, 2011 through January, 2012 as part of the infant-toddler standards development work funded by the McCormick Foundation, which will be expanded to include developing benchmarks for children ages three and four. These benchmarks will be extensively reviewed by a wide cross-section of early learning practitioners as well as by expert researchers in early childhood development and education to ensure that they are consistent with research on children’s development; appropriate for all children, including those with disabilities; and appropriate for children across all cultural and linguistic groups. The final set of benchmarks will be considered by the IELC for approval in March, 2012.

During this process of benchmark development, the standards development task force will conduct focus groups across the State and across different types of ELD Programs to gather feedback on the proposed benchmarks and to learn what types of resource materials should be developed to communicate the standards to professionals and parents and make them most useful for these multiple audiences.

Activity (C)(1)-1.1: Rationale: <i>New and updated resources are needed to support EC Educators’ and parents’ understanding of the newly revised and extended standards</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Draft revised Standards (note: this has already been completed)	Jul 1-Oct 1 2011	IELC Infant-Toddler Committee & Erikson Institute
(2) Ensure alignment of Standards with K-3 Standards and Common Core through alignment cross-walk study (note: this has already been completed)	Jul 1-Oct 1 2011	Erikson Institute
(3) Develop age-specific benchmarks for all standards for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers	Jan 1-Mar 31 2012	Early Learning Guidelines Task Force

Goal (C)(1)-2:

New birth to five ELD Standards are integrated into all ELD Programs

Activity (C)(1)-2.1:

Develop resource documents for EC Educators and parents

Resource Guides: In order to maximize the usefulness of the newly revised standards, resource guides for EC Educators will be developed. Based on input received in focus groups and through the standards task force, multiple resource guides may be developed, each tailored to specific types of EC Educators (e.g., home visitors, child care/preschool teachers, Early Intervention specialists, family child care providers, etc.). These resource guides will include:

- A general introduction, stressing the comprehensive nature of early childhood development and the interrelatedness of the various domains as well as the centrality of adult-child relationships to early learning and development
- Introductions to each domain of the standards, explaining how the domain relates to other domains of early learning and development
- Specific examples of how children might display progress toward and mastery of benchmarks
- Guidance on using the standards with children with special needs, including children with disabilities
- Guidance on how cultural and linguistic differences may affect how children progress in development towards benchmarks or how children display mastery of benchmarks

Guide for Parents: An important use of the ELD Standards will be to inform parents about child development and support parent engagement in activities to support their children's early learning. Specific resources will be developed for parents to make the Standards useful to them. These will include:

- Updated "Tip Sheets" produced by the Illinois Early Learning Project in multiple languages, including new topics covering children ages birth to three
- Simplified version of the Educator's resource guide, using parent-friendly language, produced in English and Spanish

Activity (C)(1)-2.1 Rationale: <i>EC Educators and parents need user-friendly tools that make the Standards useful in understanding and supporting the development of young children.</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop resource documents_for EC Educators	Apr 1-Dec 2012	ISBE
(2) Develop resource documents for parents	Apr 1-Dec 2012	ISBE

Activity (C)(1)-2.2:
Develop web-based supports for use of ELD Standards and update I-TEACHE

As noted above, the Illinois Early Learning Project has developed a rich database of resources that have been indexed to the original Illinois Early Learning Standards. These resources will be updated and re-indexed to the new Standards. New material will be developed to highlight development in the birth to three age range, as these are not currently included in the resources provided by the Project. Additionally, an interactive, web-based version of the Standards will be developed that will be easy for EC Educators and parents to navigate. In addition, the Illinois Resource Center will thoroughly update and align the I-TEACHE assessment support tool with the new ELD Standards. The tool will also be expanded to cover the full age range of birth to five.

Activity (C)(1)-1.1 Rationale: <i>Tools supporting standards implementation need to be updated</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop web-based supports for use of ELD Standards	Jul-Dec 2012	ISBE
(2) Update the I-TEACHE assessment support tool to reflect new ELD Standards	Jul-Dec 2012	ISBE

Activity (C)(1)-2.3:
Revise existing training modules on Illinois Early Learning Standards to address the new birth to five ELD Standards and implement new trainings

As noted above, the original Early Learning Standards have been incorporated into the Gateways to Opportunity Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for EC Educators. Training modules at all levels of expertise (e.g., Level One training for those new to the field, content for inclusion in college courses at the associates, bachelors, and masters degree level, professional development workshops for experienced educators, etc.) will be updated and/or newly

developed. This will include online training resources to support inclusion of the new Standards in online courses and “webinar” formats for training. As training modules are developed, training on the use of these modules will be provided to the full spectrum of early childhood professional development providers in the State, including CCR&R staff, Illinois Birth to Three Training Institute staff, members of the Illinois Trainers Network, STAR Net (Early Intervention) trainers, Training Specialists for Head Start grantees, and early childhood faculty in institutions of higher education. Training for EC Educators on the new birth to five ELD Standards will be provided through existing training mechanisms, including the CCR&Rs, the Illinois Trainers Network, the Illinois Birth to Three Training Institute, the Head Start Training and Technical Assistance system, and institutions of higher education, such that by July 1, 2014 the following will have received training on the standards:

- All home visitors in programs funded through IDHS or ISBE
- All teachers and program administrators in Preschool for All programs and in center-based Prevention Initiative programs
- All lead classroom teachers and program administrators in programs rated Star Level 4 and above in the Quality Counts TQRIS, including all Preschool for All and Head Start teachers
- At least 75% of licensed day care home providers+
- At least one staff member in every licensed day care center that serves children under age six

Activity (C)(1)-3.1 Rationale: <i>Providers need training to support integration of the standards into their curriculum and assessment</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Revise existing training modules on Illinois Early Learning Standards to address the new birth to five ELD Standards	Jul-Sep 2012	ISBE, IDHS, IDCFS
(2) Provide training to trainers, including early childhood faculty in institutions of higher education	Oct-Dec 2012	ISBE, IDHS

Summary--Criterion (C)(1)

High quality ELD Standards are at the heart of an effective early learning system that ensures that all children are prepared to succeed in kindergarten and beyond. Illinois has substantially implemented its revised standards by commencing all required rule changes. In

support of the State’s Strategic Reform Priority #1, integration of State supports, ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS have all agreed to require the use of the ELD Standards in all programs they fund. The revised ELD Standards form the basis for KIDS (see (E)(1)), and will be incorporated into the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework (see (D)(1)). Finally, a focus on standards-driven assessment is a key component of the State’s Plan to help programs move “from good to great” (see (C)(2)).

SELECTION CRITERION (C)(1)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
<p>(a) Includes evidence that the ELD Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State’s ELD Standards for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants and toddlers • Preschoolers • Documentation that the standards are developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate for all children, including children with disabilities and developmental delays and English Learners; • Documentation that the standards address all Essential Domains of School Readiness and that they are of high-quality; 	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for (C)(1), and <i>Activity (C)(1)-1.1</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELD Standards are in <i>Appendix (C)(1)-1</i> • Documentation regarding the Standards’ quality, appropriateness, and inclusion of all Essential Domains is in letter of support from Erikson Institute (Sam Meisels) in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-4</i>, and <i>Appendix (C)(1)-4</i>
<p>(b) Includes evidence that the ELD Standards are aligned with the State’s K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of the alignment between the 	<p>Described in <i>Activities (C)(1)-1.1</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 	<p>Documentation of the alignment between the ELD Standards and the State’s K-3 academic standards is included in <i>Appendix (C)(1)-3</i></p>

SELECTION CRITERION (C)(1)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
State's ELD Standards and the State's K-3 standards;		
<p>(c) Includes evidence that the ELD Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proof of use by the types of ELD Programs in the State; 	<p>Described in Activities <i>(C)(1)-1.1 and (C)(1)-3.1</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 	<p>Proof of use includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELC Agreement • Birth to Five Program Standards (<i>Appendix (B)(1)-1</i>) (covers all Illinois ELD Programs) • Quality Counts TQRIS Star Level Charts (<i>Appendix (B)(1)-5</i>) • ECBG Rules <i>Appendix (B)(1)-2</i> • IDCFS Regulatory Amendments <i>Appendix (B)(2)-1</i>
<p>(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the ELD Standards across ELD Programs.</p>	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for <i>(C)(1)</i>, <i>Activities (C)(1)-2.1, (C)(1)-2.2 and (C)(1)-3.1</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES	The Illinois ELD Standards will be used in all ELD Programs	
ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS	The ELD Standards are appropriate for all children, including children with special needs and culturally and linguistically diverse populations	

(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to support the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate Comprehensive Assessment Systems by--

(a) Working with ELD Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes;

(b) Working with ELD Programs to strengthen EC Educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems;

(c) Articulating an approach for aligning and integrating assessments and sharing assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple ELD Programs; and

(d) Training EC Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services.

Illinois' (C)(2) Response

Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Working with ELD Programs to select assessment instruments: Consistent with its status as an early adopter of a standards-based approach to early childhood education, Illinois has a long history of requiring appropriate child assessment in its state-funded programs.

Screening Measures: Illinois requires that programs use appropriate tools to conduct developmental screenings:

- Primary Care health care providers must use an approved, published tool for developmental screening in order to receive reimbursement for this service.
- All home visiting models require that children receive periodic developmental screening using a published, research-based, valid and reliable tool.
- ISBE has recently strengthened its requirements around screening by initiating a rule change to specifically require the use of a published, valid and reliable tool for developmental screening in PFA and PI programs (see Early Childhood Block Grant rules in *Appendix (B)(1)-2*).

- Developmental screening with a published tool is required at Star Levels 3 and above in the TQRIS, and is required in the Head Start Performance Standards.

Formative Assessments: Formative assessment aligned with the Illinois ELD Standards is required of all PFA and PI programs, all programs at Star Level 3 and above in the TQRIS, and all Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The State supports and encourages the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD, Work Sampling, and the High/Scope Child Observation Record through the provision of training and technical supports such as I-TEACHe (see (C)(1)).

Measures of Classroom Quality: As described in (B)(3), the Quality Counts TQRIS uses the Environmental Rating Scales to measure classroom quality. These scales are recommended to ELD Programs for self-assessment, and training on these scales is available through both the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) network and the Illinois Resource Center (see description of assessment training in *Appendix (C)(2)-1*).

Measures of Teacher-Child Interaction: While the Environmental Rating Scales do include measures of teacher-child interaction, at the higher Star Levels of the TQRIS, the CLASS will be used to assess this dimension of program quality. Training on the instrument will also be provided to programs.

Aligning and integrating assessments: The City of Chicago has been a leader in aligning assessments across all programs funded by the city, which collectively serve more than one-third of Children with High Needs in Illinois. As shown in the chart in *Appendix (C)(2)-2*, Head Start/Early Head Start programs funded by the city, as well as all programs funded through Chicago Public Schools (CPS), use the same tools for developmental screening and formative assessments of children. Both CPS and DFSS (Head Start) use the CLASS to assess program quality and to inform professional development. To improve instruction in programs outside of its directly funded early childhood system, the City is developing plans for 2012 to expand the unified system of assessments and professional development supports to all center-based and home-based child care providers and non-publically funded preschool programs across the city. Given the State's strong history of local control for education, ISBE will not be mandating a single screening and/or assessment tool for use statewide. However, it will strongly encourage programs to select from among a limited set of tools through provision of training and technology supports for these tools.

Avoiding duplication of assessments and coordinating services: As described in (E)(2), the Illinois Shared Learning Environment data infrastructure will include the results of screenings and assessments for individual children. To the extent permitted by law, these assessment results will be able to “follow” the child who moves from one Early Learning and Development Program to another, reducing the need for duplicate assessments. Similarly, children who are served by multiple programs will have a single profile that can be accessed by each program to inform service delivery to that child and family.

Goal (C)(2)-1:

The number of EC Educators that are highly skilled in using formative assessments to inform individualized instruction aligned with the Illinois ELD Standards is increased by 800

A large body of evidence demonstrates that high quality early childhood education for low-income, high-needs children can significantly improve educational and life outcomes, specifically a) reducing or eliminating the achievement gap at entrance to kindergarten, b) ensuring strong literacy and math learning levels by 3rd grade, and c) promoting positive life outcomes by reducing school dropout, delinquency and increasing income.^{xxii} Yet, national studies confirm that a substantial majority of early childhood programs rarely reach the program and instructional quality capable of producing these same outcomes for the high-needs children and families they serve. Studies of workforce quality and development indicate that the normative early childhood teacher, including teachers working in better-resourced public school district preschools, lacks the knowledge, skills, and organizational supports to deliver high-impact instruction with high-needs children--that is, instruction aligned to a state’s ELD Standards, informed by progress data and delivered through evidence-based instructional strategies.^{xxiii}

Specifically, research indicates that early childhood teachers lack the content knowledge to make use of the pedagogical aids embedded in state standards (i.e., benchmarks and performance standards) and in assessment protocols when designing instruction and tracking children’s progress, especially in the areas of cognition and math.^{xxiv} The use of assessments to track children’s progress towards standards and to inform instructional decisions is neither well understood nor the normative practice.^{xxv}

Research demonstrates that improving the knowledge and skills of teachers to use formative assessments and standards to shape intentional instruction that supports children’s progress towards standards requires more than the prevailing professional development approach in early childhood education that is short-term, fragmented and externally delivered.^{xxvi} What is required is a combination of high-quality training and/or coursework to build content knowledge, coaching to support implementation, and Professional Learning Communities or Lesson Study to build enduring skills for reflection, examination and improvement of practice.^{xxvii}

Supporting Early Childhood teachers in effectively using formative assessments to inform and improve instruction is at the very heart of Illinois’ “good to great” reform priority, and is essential for maximizing the power of the State’s considerable investment in early childhood programs to produce our desired outcome of narrowing the school readiness gap.

Activity (C)(2)-1.1:
Develop high-quality training and college coursework curricula on formative assessment and standards-oriented early childhood instruction

High-quality training and coursework is needed to provide the foundation for teachers to employ an intentional approach to instruction that is informed by what we want young children to know and be able to do (standards and goals), children’s current developmental and learning progress (screenings, assessments, parental input) and evidenced-based early learning interaction/instructional practices (high-impact curriculum and instruction practices).

ISBE will contract with an institution of higher education and/or a training organization to support the development of model syllabi for coursework and high-quality, multi-session training modules on the use of formative assessments to guide intentional early childhood instruction. The goal of the coursework and trainings will be to equip teachers to engage in a focused planning and implementation cycle that involves a) knowing what they want children to know and be able to do at their current age, the next age and by kindergarten entrance based on the Illinois ELD Standards and Common Core at kindergarten; b) evaluating children’s progress towards the standards using formative assessment data and information about children’s temperaments, interests and culture; c) combining their knowledge of individual children’s progress with their pedagogical and content knowledge to design environments, experiences and instruction that will powerfully promote school readiness; and d) making intentional decisions

about the social-emotional, organizational and instructional supports they will provide children through their interactions.

Activity (C)(2)-1.1 Rationale: <i>There is a lack of in-depth, high-quality training and coursework curricula focused on use of assessments</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Procure contract for curriculum development	Mar-Jul 2012	ISBE
(2) Curriculum developed (in alignment with Gateways WKCF and teacher certification requirements)	Jul-Dec 2012	ISBE/Contractor
(3) Curriculum shared with all interested IHEs and training organizations through faculty forums (see also (D)(2))	Jan 2013 and ongoing	ISBE/Contractor

Activity (C)(2)-1.2:
Establish high-quality, comprehensive professional development including establishing Professional Learning Communities in Preschool for All/Head Start/Early Head Start programs

To provide a holistic approach to instructional input that incorporates formative assessments and data into an evidence-based model, ISBE will procure a contract to create an Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood Teaching and Learning as part of the Consortium for Workforce Development. This Institute will provide comprehensive professional development to ELD Programs (including Preschool for All and Head Start programs) seeking to advance their Star Level quality from a 4 to a 5, and to a cadre of professional development coaches. The Institute will be able to directly provide coaches to approximately four PFA or HS grantees, but will provide training to teachers and support and training to coaches for additional programs that are able to support the cost of coaches from existing professional development funds, including all CPS and Chicago Head Start programs. It is anticipated that over the course of the four years, the Institute will work with approximately 800 Early Childhood teachers. After the ELC grant ends, the Institute will be funded by redirecting current professional development funds from ISBE and/or IDHS as discussed in (D)(2).

The Institutes' evidence-based approach to professional development will include facilitation of three learning contexts - *training labs, content-based coaching and professional learning communities* - provided in parallel time to three groups of early childhood professionals

- *teachers, leaders and professional development coaches* - to simultaneously develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions that will improve interactions and instruction, organizational systems and supports, and fidelity to the content and strategies of professional development. Specifically,

- Training Labs are interactive sessions that bring professionals together from across settings to develop knowledge and deepen understanding of professional competencies related to teaching, leading and coaching. Video-based observations occur during every Training Lab.
- Content-based Coaching systematically supports the transfer of knowledge gained from the Training Labs into practice. The coaching cycle - joint planning, observation, joint reflection - creates a unique learning context where discussions of pedagogy become meaningful because they are based in real practice. Coaches connect with teachers at their level of readiness for change and build the teachers' capacity to reflect and examine the ways they use assessments and data in their daily interactions with children.
- Professional Learning Communities build professional dispositions and practices of reflection, examination of practice and problem-solving to sustain learning, improve assessment practices, and promote continuous improvement. These groups not only deepen individuals' level of reflection but make reflecting, learning and improving together standard professional practice, within a school, HS program or child care center, and are therefore essential to the sustainability of changed practices over the long term.

This approach to providing training and support to early childhood teachers is already fully implemented in the Illinois Birth to Three Training Institute to support teachers in center-based Prevention Initiative programs.

Activity (C)(2)-1.2 Rationale: <i>Need to develop an infrastructure through which interested programs can access support for implementing highly effective professional development focused on using formative assessment to drive standards-oriented instruction</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Procure contract for Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood Teaching and Leading	Mar 2012	ISBE
(2) Recruit first cohort of participating PFA or HS grantees; assist in finding resources for coaches, staff release time, etc.	Apr-May 2012	ISBE/Contractor

(3) Recruit and train coaches	Jun-Aug 2012	ISBE/Contractor
(4) Provide professional development to first cohort	Sep 2012- Jun 2014	ISBE/Contractor
(5) Provide professional development to second cohort	Jan 2012- Dec 2015	ISBE/Contractor

Activity (C)(2)-1.3:
Develop a cadre of highly skilled coach-mentors to work with EC Educators on implementing effective, standards-oriented instruction

The Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood Teaching and Leading will partner with the Professional Development Advisory Council and the Workforce Development Consortium to design a Relationship-Based Professional Development (“Coaching”) credential. The Institute will then administer coursework and provide on-going support to coaches that provide comprehensive professional development to Early Childhood Development and Learning Programs and Educators seeking to advance their Star Quality from a 4 to a 5. The certificate coursework and on-going support for coaches (Training Labs, Content-Based Coaching and Professional Learning Communities) will advance their knowledge, skills and dispositions in the following areas: 1) knowledge of the 3 learning contexts teachers require and the corresponding relationship-based dispositions and skills to facilitate each learning context; 2) knowledge of the IELDS, literacy and math teaching-learning pathways, aligned child screening and assessment tools and ways to analyze progress data and partner with families to determine adjustments and individualization; 3) knowledge of evidence-based high-impact instructional strategies for young high needs children; and 4) understanding of how to individualize comprehensive professional development to the person- and context-specific conditions while maintaining fidelity to the strategies and specified content.

Activity (C)(2)-1.3 Rationale: <i>Need to develop cadre of coaches with capacity to provide high-quality, effective professional development beyond term of the ELC grant</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop coursework & training curriculum for “coaching” credential	Mar-Jun 2012	ISBE/Contractor

(2) Recruit and train first cohort of coaches	Apr-Aug 2012	ISBE/Contractor
(3) Recruit and train second cohort of coaches	Oct-Dec 2013	ISBE/Contractor

Goal (C)(2)-2:

The number of leaders of ELD Programs (principals, directors, education managers, curriculum coordinators, etc.) that are highly skilled in supporting standards-oriented early childhood instruction is increased by 200

Effective teaching is enabled by effective leading. Effective leaders are inclusive, building relationships and trust with teachers through collaborative problem-solving and decision-making.^{xxviii} They focus strategically on children’s achievement and help teachers to be effective by supporting the use of data to inform instruction. Effective early childhood leaders are also skilled in observing teachers and providing constructive feedback that builds teachers’ instructional skills.^{xxix} For these reasons, early childhood leaders, including principals, directors, education managers and curriculum coordinators, must be knowledgeable about all aspects of a Comprehensive Assessment System, including measures of classroom and instructional quality, and measures of children’s achievement. Developing the skills necessary to be an effective early childhood leader requires a very similar set of professional development supports as developing teachers’ skills requires.

Activity (C)(2)-2.1:

Strengthen the skills of early childhood program leaders to support the implementation of effective, standards-oriented instruction

The Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood Teaching and Leading will provide training, technical assistance (coaching), and an opportunity to learn collaboratively with peers to approximately 200 early childhood leaders over the four years of the grant.

For these Early Learning and Development Program leaders, Training Labs, Content-Based Coaching and Professional Learning Communities will cultivate an educational Leadership Perspective that increases their strategic focus on children’s outcomes and enables them to build systems to support effective teaching. Specifically, Leaders will learn how to

implement a coherent strategy for using data to support teachers with aligning of standards, assessments, curricula, and instruction.

1. Gather and Analyze Data: Leaders and staff will consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time and the strength of their ties with families.
2. Plan and Set Goals: Leaders and staff will consistently engage families and the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for children’s development and accelerating learning.
3. Align Capacity Building: The program will align its leadership development, comprehensive professional development and collaborations around meeting the school’s goals and children’s developmental, learning and emotional needs.
4. Monitor and Revise: The program will have structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for promoting child development and accelerating learning.

Activity (C)(2)-2.1 Rationale: <i>Early childhood leaders are key to sustaining focus on use of assessment to inform instruction</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Provide professional development to first cohort	Sep 2012- Jun 2014	ISBE/Contractor
(2) Provide professional development to second cohort	Jan 2012- Dec 2015	ISBE/Contractor

Summary--Criterion (C)(2)

Illinois’ goal of increasing the number and percentage of children who are fully ready to succeed in kindergarten depends upon those children with the highest needs receiving excellent instruction in the birth to five years. The Plan detailed in this Criterion builds upon Illinois’ current investment in comprehensive professional development for infant-toddler providers, the fully implemented system of coaching in CPS and Chicago Head Start Programs, and the State’s experience with Early Reading First to create the infrastructure needed for exceptionally high-quality professional development for preschool teachers. By focusing on the use of formative assessment to drive individualized, standards-oriented instruction, the Institute for Excellence in

Early Childhood Teaching and Leading will transform “good” early learning programs into highly effective interventions for those children most at-risk of school failure.

SELECTION CRITERION (C)(2)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
(a) Working with ELD Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes;	Described in Foundation for Success for (C)(2), and <i>Appendix (B)(1)-2</i> Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
(b) Working with ELD Programs to strengthen EC Educators’ understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems	Described in Foundation for Success for (C)(2), and <i>Activities (C)(2)-1.1 and (C)(2)-1.2</i> Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
(c) Articulating an approach for aligning and integrating assessments and sharing assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs who are served by multiple ELD Programs	Described in Foundation for Success for (C)(2) and <i>Appendix (C)(2)-2</i> Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • (E)(2) 	None
(d) Training EC Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services	Described in <i>Activities (C)(2)-1.1, (C)(2)-1.2, (C)(2)-1.3 and (C)(2)-2.1</i>	None
INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES	As described in Illinois’ Foundation for Success, Illinois requires developmental screening and formative assessment across a wide range of ELD Programs.	
ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS	Illinois’ approach to assessment--emphasizing observation-based, formative assessment that facilitates individualization of instruction, is appropriate for children of all ability levels and of all cultural and linguistic groups	

(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate information and support to families of Children with High Needs in order to promote school readiness for their children by--

(a) Establishing a progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for family engagement across the levels of its Program Standards, including activities that enhance the capacity of families to support their children's education and development;

(b) Increasing the number and percentage of EC Educators trained and supported on an on-going basis to implement the family engagement strategies included in the Program Standards; and

(c) Promoting family support and engagement statewide, including by leveraging other existing resources such as through home visiting programs, other family-serving agencies, and through outreach to family, friend, and neighbor caregivers.

Evidence for (C)(4)(a):

- To the extent the State has established a progression of family engagement standards across the levels of Program Standards that meet the elements in criterion (C)(4)(a), submit--
 - The progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate family engagement standards used in the Program Standards that includes strategies successfully used to engage families in supporting their children's development and learning. A State's family engagement standards must address, but need not be limited to: parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and adult and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development;
 - Documentation that this progression of standards includes activities that enhance the capacity of families to support their children's education and development.

Evidence for (C)(4)(b):

- To the extent the State has existing and projected numbers and percentages of EC Educators who receive training and support on the family engagement strategies included in the Program Standards, the State shall submit documentation of these data. If the State does not have these data, the State shall outline its plan for deriving them.

Evidence for (C)(4)(c):

- Documentation of the State's existing resources that are or will be used to promote family support and engagement statewide, including through home visiting programs and other family-serving agencies and the identification of new resources that will be used to promote family support and engagement statewide.

Illinois' (C)(4) Response
Promotion of Family Engagement and Support

Illinois is a leader in developing new approaches to engaging families and establishing the foundation for lasting partnerships around supporting their young children's education and development. As detailed in (A)(1) and in (C)(4)(c) below, the State has invested heavily in home visiting programs that directly engage families around the time of their child's birth, when they are perhaps most open to support and coaching. It has also developed Strengthening Families Illinois (SFI), an adaptation of the national Strengthening Families approach that is promoting and supporting family-centered practice across the Early Learning and Development System. SFI creates partnerships among staff and parents and ultimately leads to stronger families and better outcomes for children (*Appendix (C)(4)-1* has more information about SFI and its recent program evaluation).^{xxx}

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Progression of standards (C)(4)(a)

As described in *Table (A)(1)-9* and (B)(1), Illinois has included a strong emphasis on family engagement, including strategies to help families support their children's education and development, in the Birth to Five Program Standards and in the progressively rigorous criteria for the Star Levels in the Quality Counts TQRIS (see *Appendix (B)(1)-5*). The crosswalk in *Appendix (C)(4)-2* documents in detail the progression of standards across the Early Learning and Development System. Illinois' program standards do not differentiate parents by gender, but rather require programs to include all parents in family engagement strategies. In resource materials, policies, and program guidance, programs are strongly encouraged to involve both parents, and where appropriate, to involve other family members such as grandparents. The State supports programs to develop parent leadership and supportive social networks through SFI and other family-focused initiatives as described below.

Training and Support for EC Educators (C)(4)(b)

Training in strategies that support effective family engagement is included in the progression of credentials for EC Educators, described in (D)(1). In connection with the Gateways Registry, the State is now developing the infrastructure to track the number of educators who receive specific training as described in *Activity (D)(2)-1.2*.

Illinois' cross-sector training initiatives are designed to reach staff in all types of settings including schools, centers, family child care homes, and family-serving agencies. Training is delivered by the CCR&R system, STAR Net, the Illinois Resource Center, and the Birth to Three Institute. The State recognizes that traditional one-time workshops are of limited value in developing the skills EC Educators need to effectively engage families in their child's education.^{xxxix} Therefore, it has invested in comprehensive training approaches that build educators' ability to recognize parents' strengths and to build on these in a culturally responsive manner, with the goal of building parents' skills for supporting their children's education over time.

Promotion of Family Support and Engagement Statewide (C)(4)(c)

Family engagement through multiple pathways is a central component of Illinois' system to promote optimal child development. The State's investments include the following resources:

Home Visiting Programs: Illinois has done more to focus on children's earliest years than any other state. One priority has been the delivery of research-based home visiting programs, with more than 20,000 families engaged each year (see description in *(A)(1)* and *Appendix (A)(1)-4*). Home visitors develop strong relationships with parents to support their role as their children's first teacher and best advocate. The relationship with the home visitor can enhance the parent's own social-emotional development, increase their knowledge and understanding of the child's growth and development and their capacity to support it, and help parents develop the skills they need to advocate for their children with health care providers, schools, and where appropriate, early intervention/special education systems. Parent support groups further engage parents and help them build relationships with one another. Illinois' groundbreaking doula program, a model of birth supports for teen mothers, is embedded in several home visiting programs along with the Erikson Institute's Fussy Baby Network, a child abuse prevention model. Illinois recently received a competitive MIECHV grant to expand and rigorously evaluate both of these innovative models.

Family Advocacy Centers: Recognizing the need to provide high-risk families with access to a full range of community services, the IDCFS established the first Family Advocacy Center in 2004. These resource centers are operated by a variety of community-based organizations in 22 high need communities in every region of the State, with additional Centers planned. Based on the Strengthening Families Protective Factors approach,^{xxxix} these centers are

open to all families under stress, providing parents with the support they need to maintain safe and nurturing environments for their children and linkages to needed services within the Early Learning and Development System using the Statewide Provider Database (described in greater detail in *Activity (E)(2)-2.1*). In FY 2011, the Family Advocacy Centers served 4,000 families statewide, three quarters of which were not involved in the child welfare system.

Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies: Illinois' network of CCR&R agencies supports families directly through the provision of information about finding quality child care as well by training EC Educators on strategies to engage families as partners in their children's learning. Recognizing the central role of CCR&Rs in family engagement, SFI is working with those agencies individually and as a system to fully integrate the Protective Factors approach as well as to develop Learning Networks throughout the State to enhance practice and support child care providers. The CCR&R system is also a key link to Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers, a significant source of child care particularly in Concentrated High Need Communities and among families of Children with High Needs. FFN caregivers are also systemically engaged through SFI Learning Networks, and through models such as Community Connections as described in *Activity (B)(4)-4.2*.

Community Collaborations: Community collaborations coordinate parent education and involvement locally across systems. Illinois has made a substantial investment in the AOK Networks, which include health, mental health, and early learning providers in each community. Other local collaborations, supported by United Way agencies, community foundations, and other public and private sources, perform similar functions. These collaborations strengthen their communities' support and involvement of parents by assessing parents' needs, addressing service gaps, and strengthening referral systems. Further, they provide professional trainings and tools for parent engagement and leverage state-level resources to support parent leadership at the community level.

Goal (C)(4)-1
Progressively rigorous standards for family engagement and support are implemented in all ELD Programs

While ELD Programs in the State have long included a focus on parent education, and many EC Educators are skilled in designing appropriate activities that parents can do with their children to promote learning, the State recognizes that sharing information and activity plans

with families is not enough to establish effective parental support for children’s education. The highest-need parents do not readily engage with early learning programs or other community institutions for a multitude of reasons: negative experiences with these institutions, a sense of cultural mismatch, or for undocumented immigrant groups, a general fear of all government-related institutions. Above all, the State recognizes that parents do not engage with early learning programs or other institutions unless they feel the programs respected and valued them. Professionalizing the parent education and involvement workforce and embedding family-centered practice throughout the Early Learning and Development System is core to Illinois’ “whole family” approach to “whole child development”.

Activity (C)(4)-1.1:
Develop the Family Worker/Family Specialist Credential

Preparing children from birth for success in school requires understanding how to work with their parents and families to achieve this goal. Recognizing the need for greater coursework and training specifically structured around the State’s standards for family engagement and support, Illinois will expand the credentials offered by Gateways to Opportunity to include the Family Worker/ Specialist Credential. The process is described in *Activity (D)(1)-1.2*; more information about the Credential is in *Appendix (D)(1)-9*.

Activity (C)(4)-1.1 <i>Rationale: Increased support for practitioners working with families</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Please see Activity (D)(1)-1.3		

Activity (C)(4)-1.2:
Implement the revised Quality Counts TQRIS with progressively rigorous criteria for family engagement and support

Illinois’ Birth to Five Program Standards (*Appendix (B)(1)-1*) reflect the State’s common definition of and commitment to high quality, comprehensive ELD Programs, which includes criteria specific to family and community partnerships. The revised Quality Counts TQRIS includes a progression of quality indicators for family support and engagement. The process for implementing the new Quality Counts TQRIS is described in *(B)(1)*.

Activity (C)(4)-1.2 Rationale: *Culturally and linguistically appropriate family support based on best practice guidelines is a critical factor in success in working with families of young children*

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Please see (B)(1)		

Goal (C)(4)-2:
Community Collaborations and their partner organizations engage fragile or isolated families and increase their participation in high quality ELD Programs and support services

In alignment with the systems-building framework described in (A)(3), the Consortium for Community Systems Development (CCSD) will support Community Collaborations in Concentrated High Need Communities (CHNC). As described in (C)(4)(c), Illinois has a strong foundation from which to build or expand local community systems of universal support for families. Through this Plan, community collaborations will be charged with developing localized strategies and a collaborative action plan for family engagement and leadership that work towards the broader goal of multiple points of entry and engagement for families with young children.

Activity (C)(4)-2.1:
Develop local processes for outreach, family risk assessment screening, and referral across family serving programs in Concentrated High Need Communities through community collaborations

As described in (A)(2), the creation of local partnerships allows the full range of ELD Programs and other supportive services for families to maximize available resources, reduce duplication of services and expedite referrals. A key task of each community collaboration is coordinating intake and referral across programs. Target communities for the MIECHV (home visiting) expansion are piloting a centralized intake system that can offer a “universal touch” to ensure the most at-risk children are identified and all families are connected to the programs that best meet their needs. community collaborations will build upon this work through the implementation of the Data for Community Systems Project (Activity (E)(2)-2.1) in order to ensure families are matched with appropriate services and family-serving organizations move beyond the perspective of a single program model towards a “no wrong door” approach to a system of universal family supports.

Activity (C)(4)-1.1 Rationale: <i>Creation of a “no wrong door” approach to family risk assessment screening and referral ensures multiple points of entry into a system of family supports</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop local strategies and action plan for family engagement and support	2012	Community Collaboration
(2) Adopt/adapt universal family risk assessment screening tool and process within CHNCs	2012-2013	Community Collaboration
(3) Coordinate cross-system efforts to build on existing resources that facilitate local systems building, including: -Program level approaches that attempt to reach new families at or before birth and coordinate services (e.g., Family Case Management, PCCM, home visiting, Part C) -Currently funded grant opportunities (SAC, Strong Foundations) -Referral and resource data integration (E)(2)(3)	July 2012 and ongoing	CCSD

Activity (C)(4)-2.2
Provide training, technical assistance, and tools for family engagement based on Program Standards through the CCSD

Family engagement strategies may include direct engagement strategies, creation of a cadre of parent leaders, or leveraging existing parent leadership within the community. The CCSD will assist community collaborations in identifying training and TA needs and leverage resources to meet those needs. Support from the CCSD may include SFI Protective Factors training and assistance in using the World Café/Parent Café processes to encourage peer-to-peer learning, consensus building, and advancement towards strategic goals. The CCSD will also leverage PBS *Ready to Learn* tools and materials to engage parents in their children’s learning (see letter from Illinois Public Broadcasting Council in *Appendix (A)(3)-4*). The CCSD will work with community collaborations to develop metrics for tracking progress towards measurable outcomes for engaging parents at multiple levels.

Activity (C)(4)-2.2 Rationale: <i>Community collaborations and their partner organizations need access to resources and strategies for effective and authentic family engagement</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Evaluate community needs and resources and develop strategies and action plan for systemic family engagement based on that assessment	2012	Lead Entity in Community Collaboration

(2) Develop menu of training resources for community collaborations from cross-sector sources	Jan-July 2012	CCSD
(3) Provide training and TA resources as necessary	Jul 2012 and ongoing	CCSD

Activity (C)(4)-2.3:
Through CCSD, train community collaborations to support parent leaders who can reach out to fragile and isolated families to increase participation in high quality ELD Programs

Illinois is home to several promising practices in family leadership development that engage parents as full partners in building communities that support universal participation in the early learning and development system. For example, the COFI model (see letter in *Appendix (A)(3)-4*) explicitly reaches out to the “hardest to reach” parents in high need communities to build cohorts of parent leaders who then reach out to engage the next group of parent leaders. This model has been used for the specific purpose of increasing participation of the hardest to reach families in Head Start and Preschool for All. To date, COFI has trained over 3,000 parents and has 350 active parent leaders. The Illinois Head Start Association’s Parent Ambassador program is similarly providing extensive leadership training to parents with the expectation that they will train and mobilize parents back at their local programs and in their communities. The CCSD will look to these and other successful models and evaluate suitability for replication and adaptation by community collaborations to meet locally-defined goals for parent leadership. The CCSD will then provide the necessary training and TA to implement a model aligned with the locally-developed strategic plan.

Activity (C)(4)-2.3 Rationale: <i>Engaging parents as full partners is a successful strategy for increasing participation of “hard to reach” families in the early learning and development system</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Evaluate parent leadership training models currently being implemented in Illinois to determine suitability for replication and develop menu of options	Jan-Jul 2012	CCSD
(2) Provide awareness level training of parent leadership model to Community Collaborations	2012	CCSD to contract
(3) Recruit and train cohort of parents for leadership training	2013 2014	-Collab to recruit -CCSD to contract for training

(4) Engage parents leaders to reach out in teams to implement community outreach strategies identified/developed in (B)(4)-1	2013 and ongoing	Community Collaboration
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Activity (C)(4)-2.4:
Ensure that each community collaboration is linked to a Strengthening Families Illinois Learning Network

SFI has 13 Learning Networks statewide that are proving to be effective for building capacity for culturally and linguistically appropriate family engagement within ELD Programs. Participants in the Learning Networks undertake a program self-assessment, create an annual action plan, and set goals for strengthening their program’s effectiveness in engaging families. SFI also engages parents directly through Parent Cafes and trainings, with leadership training focused on parents as leaders for themselves and within their homes with their children; over 4,000 parents have been recruited. Moreover, Illinois’ strengths based approach views parents as potential leaders who can be developed and mobilized to engage hard-to-reach families in high quality services.

This activity is aligned with goals for assisting programs progressing through the TQRIS. In CHNCs that do not currently have a Learning Network, Community Collaborations will work with the CCR&R, Head Start, and other local SFI partners to establish the network. The CCSD will facilitate linkage to existing Learning Networks and leverage additional resources as necessary.

Activity (C)(4)-2.3 Rationale: <i>SFI Networks facilitate direct parent engagement and support ELD Programs’ as they build family-centered practices</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop partnership agreements between community collaborations and SFI Learning Networks (where applicable)	Jul-Dec 2012	Community Collaboration
(2) Work with CCR&R, Family Advocacy Center, Head Start, and/or other SFI partner to develop local SFI Learning Network	2013	Community Collaboration
(3) Establish participation and outcome goals for Learning Network partners	2013	SFI/Community Collaboration
(4) Provide support and training for Learning Network	2013 and ongoing	SFI/Community Collab, CCR&R

Summary--Criterion (C)(4)

Illinois has substantially implemented a highly effective approach to engaging families across the range of ELD Programs. Through the strategies described in this Criterion, the State will further strengthen the implementation of this approach and will ensure that the most vulnerable families in Concentrated High Need Communities are engaged in supporting their young children's education and development. This will result in an increased number of Children with High Needs receiving high quality early learning services.

**SELECTION CRITERION (C)(4)
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE**

ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
<p>(a) Progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for family engagement across the levels of its Program Standards</p>	<p>Generally described in (C)(4) “Illinois’ Foundation for Success” Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth to Five Program Standards, <i>Appendix (B)(1)-1</i> • Redesigned TQRIS including quality indicators addressing family engagement and support: <i>(B)(1), Appendix (B)(1)-5</i> • Program requirements of funding streams: <i>Appendix (C)(4)-2 and Table (A)(1)-9</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In appendices: Birth to Five Program Standards <i>(B)(1)-1</i>; Program requirements of funding streams <i>(C)(4)-2</i>; ; Redesigned TQRIS including quality indicators for family engagement <i>(B)(1)-5</i>. • TQRIS plan for improvement over time: See <i>(B)(1)</i>
<p>(b) Increasing the number of ECEs trained and supported in meeting the family engagement standards</p>	<p>Generally described in (C)(4) “Illinois’ Foundation for Success” and <i>Activity (C)(4)-1</i> and <i>(C)(4)-3</i> Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training supports for ECEs, which address family engagement standards, are described in <i>(B)(4)</i> • Development of Family Worker/Specialist and Home Visitor credentials <i>(D)(1)</i> 	<p>Illinois does not currently have existing and projected numbers and percentages of ECEs who receive training and support to meet family engagement standards. Inclusion of all ECEs in the Gateways to Opportunity Registry, linked to the Statewide Online Training Calendar, will allow the State to derive and track this data (see <i>(D)(2)</i>).</p>
<p>(d) Leveraging existing resources to promote family support and engagement statewide</p>	<p>Generally described in (C)(4) “Illinois’ Foundation for Success” and <i>Activities (C)(4)-1, 2 and 3</i> Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illinois’ framework for community collaborations in <i>(A)(2)</i> • The Consortium for Community Systems Development described in <i>Activity (A)(3)-1.3</i> • Credential development in <i>(D)(1)-1.3</i> 	<p>Existing State resources that are or will be used toward goals in <i>(C)(4)</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Foundations Partnership/MIECHV (OECD) • Strengthening Families Illinois (IDCFS) • Family Advocacy Centers (IDCFS) • Home visiting programs (ISBE, IDHS) • AOK Networks (IDHS, ISBE) • Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (IDHS)
<p>INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES: Community Collaborations’ strategies promoting family engagement and support will include cross-system partners, including school-based Preschool For All, community-based child care centers, Head Start programs, and the full range of supportive services. Recognizing the challenge of engaging family child care homes and Family, Friend and Neighbor care, Community Collaborations will pay particular attention to the barriers to and opportunities for active participation.</p>		
<p>ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS: Community Collaborations will be focused on engaging the “hardest to reach” families. As identified by the Special Populations/Hard to Reach Sub-Committee of the IELC, these include children in families who are homeless, have substance abuse issues, are mentally ill, involved with the child welfare system, are teen parents, immigrants, public housing/public assistance recipients or otherwise in a vulnerable situation.</p>		

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

Evidence for (D)(1):

- To the extent the State has developed a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework that meets the elements in criterion (D)(1), submit:
 - The Workforce Knowledge and Competencies;
 - Documentation that the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework addresses the elements outlined in the definition of Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework in Definitions (section III) and is designed to promote children’s learning and development and improve

Evidence for (D)(1):

- To the extent the State has developed a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework that meets the elements in criterion (D)(1), submit:
 - The Workforce Knowledge and Competencies;
 - Documentation that the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework addresses the elements outlined in the definition of Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework in Definitions (section III) and is designed to promote children’s learning and development and improve outcomes.

Illinois’ (D)(1) Response

Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.

Illinois’ Foundation for Success

Illinois’ longstanding commitment to developing a comprehensive and robust early childhood professional preparation and development system includes the creation of a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework (WKCF) and a progression of credentials, degrees and professional development opportunities aligned with and tied directly to this framework. This comprehensive system, under the direction of the IDHS and the ISBE, is designed to ensure an early childhood workforce that is prepared to educate, nurture and meet the needs of children birth to age five and their families, with the goal of ensuring that all children are prepared to succeed in school and later life.

Illinois established the Professional Development Advisory Council (PDAC) in 2002 to coordinate, support and promote a statewide professional development system. PDAC currently has 107 members, including members from IDHS, ISBE, IDCFS, and the IELC, that represent highly qualified practitioners, educators and advocates from around the State who work together

to improve the quality and stability of the early care and education, school-age, youth development, and family support workforce through increased professional development and improved opportunities for career advancement (see *Appendix (D)(1)-1, PDAC Membership List*). Higher education faculty representing Illinois two and four year institutions are also active members of PDAC, with members from more than 30 post-secondary institutions serving on PDAC's committees. Since its establishment in 2002, PDAC, under the guidance of IDHS and in cooperation with ISBE, has developed and adopted workforce competencies, a progression of credentials, and a statewide professional development registry for the early childhood workforce.

Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework: PDAC has articulated the expectations of what EC Educators should know and be able to do to effectively support young children's growth and development. The following seven Content Areas comprise this knowledge and competency framework: 1) Human Growth and Development; 2) Health, Safety, and Well-Being; 3) Observation and Assessment; 4) Curriculum or Program Design; 5) Interactions, Relationships and Environments; 6) Family and Community Relationships; and 7) Personal and Professional Development (see *Appendix (D)(1)-2, Gateways to Opportunity Content Areas*, for detailed description of each Content Area). Additionally, three threads are embedded throughout each Content Area: (1) children with special needs, (2) culture and diversity, and (3) individual and group guidance.

Benchmarks for each Content Area, tied directly to knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to ensure highly qualified practitioners, have been developed and linked to specific levels of credentials, which are reflected in the Career Lattice (see discussion below). These Content Areas and corresponding benchmarks are aligned with multiple professional standards from various associations, agencies, and organizations that influence all levels of training, education, and role responsibilities in Illinois. Guiding structures for the development of the Content Areas include:

- Illinois Early Childhood Education Content-Area Standards (see *Appendix (D)(1)-3*)
- Illinois Professional Teaching Standards
- Professional Standards for Teacher Preparation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- Illinois Birth to Three Program Standards
- Head Start Performance Standards and Child Outcomes Framework

- Illinois ELD Standards, Kindergarten Standards, K-12 Learning Standards and Common Core Learning Standards.

Common, statewide, progression of credentials and degrees: The Career Lattice organizes the leveled benchmarks in the Content Areas into a series of credentials that reflect the knowledge, skills and competencies EC Educators should have at various levels of professionalization (see *Appendix (D)(1)-4, the Career Lattice*). It includes six levels of training and education, ranging from noncredit community-based training through completion of a graduate degree, linking each level with corresponding available credentials. Rather than a *career ladder* where only vertical movement is permitted, a *career lattice* was chosen to demonstrate how individuals can move horizontally, vertically and diagonally across multiple systems as they progress into positions with increased responsibility and compensation.

The progression of credentials was developed to formalize and provide consistency across the varied levels of education, experience and skills of the early childhood education workforce and to complement and align with the Type 04 Early Childhood Teaching Certificate awarded by ISBE. These credentials are symbols of professional achievement that can be earned by completing an approved program at an entitled college or university or a portfolio of equivalent education and experience as illustrated on the Career Lattice, and are awarded and recognized by the IDHS Bureau of Child Care and Development. Currently, Illinois offers three credentials for the early childhood workforce: the ECE Credential, the Illinois Director Credential (IDC) and the Infant Toddler Credential (ITC) (see *Appendix (D)(1)-5, Descriptions of ECE, IDC and ITC Credentials*, and *Appendix (D)(1)-6, ECE and ITC Credential Benchmarks* for an illustration of how the Content Areas are linked to specific performance areas and corresponding benchmarks for various levels within a credential).

The Career Lattice together with its Content Areas and related benchmarks form the foundation for Illinois' Workforce Knowledge Competency Framework and meet each element of the Application's definition of such a framework (see *Appendix (D)(1)-7, Meeting the Elements of the Workforce Knowledge Competency Framework*).

Institutions of Higher Education and the WKCF: Illinois' strong network of higher education institutions works closely with ISBE, IDHS, PDAC and INCCRRA to ensure that their curricula and programs are aligned with Illinois' WKCF and provide students the opportunity to earn credentials or Type 04 certifications upon program completion.

Early childhood education coursework and degree programs are aligned with the State's WKCF in two ways: 1) college coursework is directly incorporated into the Career Lattice and Credential Frameworks and 2) institutions of higher education can become "entitled" institutions whose Associates, Bachelors and higher degrees provide recipients an opportunity to complete Gateways requirements by voluntarily aligning their coursework with specific credential benchmarks (built on state and national standards) and meeting all additional Gateways credential requirements through coursework and practicum or student teaching opportunities. Since the credentials were signed into law in January, 2010 (less than two years ago), approximately 47% of all higher education institutions have voluntarily aligned their coursework to the credentials, thereby becoming "entitled" institutions (see *Appendix (D)(1)-8, Map of Illinois Entitled Institutions*).

Community Colleges: EC Educators often begin their formal education at one of Illinois' 48 community colleges that provide courses and/or degrees in early childhood education, child development, and child care. The Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT) was approved in 2005 to allow students to take specialized coursework in child development and education and gain field experience with young children while completing their general education coursework. Students complete the first two years of requirements at the community college level, receive an AAT degree and are eligible to transfer into a teacher preparation program with junior standing at a four-year college and complete their degree in the same time period as other students who entered as freshmen.

Four-year colleges and universities: Currently 29 four-year colleges and universities in Illinois provide degrees that lead to Type 04 early childhood certification at either the bachelor's or master's level. In 2007, one significant barrier faced by many non-degreed early childhood teachers was lifted by amending the Illinois School Code to allow payment for student teaching if the student had been working in an early childhood program for one year previously.³⁴ Now, teachers who are seeking to complete their bachelor's degree or obtain early childhood certification do not have to forgo their salary in order to complete the student teaching requirements for certification.

³⁴ 105 ILCS 5/21-2.1(a).

Professional Development Providers and the WKCF: The Gateways to Opportunity Registry (the “Registry”) serves as a repository for professional development opportunities aligned to Illinois’ WKCF. The Registry has formal approval processes that strengthen the integrity of the professional development system in Illinois by ensuring both trainers and trainings meet certain quality criteria. Each training is reviewed to confirm that it is aligned with Illinois’ WKCF, including applicable credentials and core competencies. Once approved, the training is placed on the Statewide Online Training Calendar which lists professional development events (e.g. workshops, conferences, and training series) that practitioners may utilize in order to meet licensing requirements, obtain credentials, or work towards other professional goals.

Goal (D)(1) -1

Illinois’ WKCF promotes early learning outcomes by strengthening existing credentials and developing new ones

Activity (D)(1)-1.1:

Incorporate the revised ELD Standards and information about Quality Counts into Illinois WKCF

As discussed in (B)(1), ISBE has initiated public rulemaking to adopt the revised ELD Standards and IDHS has adopted the revised Standards as the framework for its early childhood program requirements. As a result, IDHS will oversee the incorporation of the revised Early Learning Standards into the WKCF by integrating these revised standards into the Gateways System through the Credential Frameworks and Content Areas.

In addition, with the expansion and strengthening of Illinois’ TQRIS system as described in (B)(1), it is imperative that EC Educators receive training and professional development on the role of the Quality Counts system in building high quality early education programs. As a result, PDAC will incorporate information on TQRIS in the credential frameworks, benchmarks and related curricula in order to strengthen the connectors between TQRIS and the components of the Gateways professional development system.

Activity D(1)-1.1 Rationale: <i>WKCF needs to be update to reflect important changes in ELD Standards and TQRIS</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Reviewing credentials and revise Content Areas to include Early Learning Standards.	Jan–Jun 2012	IDHS, INCCRRA, PDAC
(2) Revised credential and Content Area review processes.	Jun 2012 – Dec 2015	IDHS, INCCRRA, PDAC
(3) Revise credential frameworks, benchmarks and/or related curricula, to support increased knowledge of TQRIS.	Jan-Nov 2012	IDHS, INCCRRA, PDAC
(4) Implement revisions that will incorporate information on TQRIS and its importance in building high quality early childhood programs.	Nov 2012 – Jul 2013	IDHS, INCCRRA, CCR&R, PDAC.

Activity (D)(1)-1.2:
Expand the credentials currently offered by Gateways to Opportunity and adopted by the State of Illinois in order to improve program quality, and strengthen family engagement strategies across Illinois

Illinois will expand the credentials offered by Gateways to Opportunity to address the strategic reform priorities of this Plan including:

Increasing Program Quality:

- Family Child Care Credential: This credential will incorporate research that defines skills, knowledge and dispositions for family child care providers, as well as applicable key standards (e.g. the Illinois Early Learning Standards) to support these programs in moving from “adequate” to “good” quality
- Technical Assistance Credential (i.e., a credential for coaches and mentors): This credential will support the provision of consultation and direct support to ELD Programs and EC Educators by identifying and standardizing core knowledge (what providers must know and understand to be effective in this work), delineating minimum qualifications related to experience and skills, and assuring a prepared workforce to move more programs from good to great connecting at-risk children with supports and services

Connecting At-Risk Children with Services

- Family Worker/Family Specialist Credential: This credential will articulate the knowledge and competencies required to effectively support parents of young children, with an emphasis on those most at-risk, and will include a strengths-based approach, culturally and linguistically appropriate practice, and a focus on engaging parents in supporting their child’s education and development
- Home Visitor Credential: This credential, which may become a specialized track within the existing Infant-Toddler credential, will combine specific knowledge of infant-toddler development and parent-child relationships with the relevant skills needed by home visitors working in evidence-based home visiting programs, with a particular focus on training that reinforces a “no wrong door approach” to connecting high need families with comprehensive services

The development of these credentials is necessary to support family engagement strategies, and to strengthen the increase quality for family child care practitioners (see *Appendix (D)(1)-9, New Credential Descriptions*, for a more detailed description of each of these credentials). IDHS, INCCRRA and PDAC will work jointly with broad stakeholder participation to develop and implement the new credentials as outlined in the table below. The implementation steps below demonstrate the process for developing the credentials generally. However, the steps and related timelines will differ slightly from one credential to the next as certain credentials are already in the development process and therefore will be on a faster implementation track.

Activity D(1)-1.2 Rationale: <i>New credentials are needed to strengthen the quality of workforce preparation and professional development in these areas</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Convene statewide stakeholders to discuss development of the proposed credential; identify key entities in this process; and establish a Leadership Team to guide credential development through PDAC.	Jan - Sep 2012	IDHS, INCCRRA, PDAC
(2) Activities to Define Content Areas, Outlining curricula, and developing core knowledge benchmarks and competencies for the credential.	Sep 2012 - Mar 2014	IDHS, INCCRRA, PDAC
(3) Statewide outreach to higher education institutions and training entities regarding proposed credential	Jan 2013 - Jun 2014	IDHS, INCCRRA,

curricula and core knowledge and identification of organizations and institutions for pilot project.		PDAC
(4) Implement statewide credential pilot with institutions/organizations and the participants. Approval of draft Credential Framework by PDAC and IDHS.	Dec 2013 - Jun 2015	IDHS, INCCRRA, PDAC
(5) Award credentials to pilot participants; award entitled status to pilot organizations/institutions; create marketing campaign for statewide credential rollout.	Jun 2015 - Dec 2015	IDHS, INCCRRA, PDAC
(6) Integrate results of pilot into credential framework and content; approval of final credential framework and content by PDAC and IDHS; statewide rollout.	Sep - Dec 2015	IDHS, INCCRRA, PDAC

Goal (D)(1) -2

An increased number of EC Educators obtain credentials and degrees aligned with Illinois' WKCF

Activity (D)(1)-2.1:

Increase the number of early childhood administrators holding the Illinois Director Credential (IDC) and provide additional IDC training, courses and outreach to meet this expanded need

Based on a growing body of research that demonstrates a director's level of general education and specialized training in both early childhood education and program administration are strong predictors of program quality,^{xxxiii} Illinois is committed to increasing the number of early childhood administrators in Illinois with the IDC (see IDC requirements in *Appendix (D)(1)-5*). Based on the recommendations from the IELC Joint Oversight & Coordination/Workforce Development Work Group, IDCFS, IDHS and ISBE have adopted requirements, as described below, for early childhood directors (effective July 1, 2017):

Agency	Requirement
IDCFS	Either the Level I IDC or equivalent college credit or credential-approved training in administration, leadership, or management (for licensed child day care centers).
IDHS	The Level I IDC (QRIS Level 4) for licensed child care centers participating in TQRIS.
ISBE	ISBE: the Level II IDC (for community-based ECBG programs).

In order to meet this increased need, grant funding will be provided to ensure that sufficient training and courses are available for IDC candidates.

In addition to the State’s focus on leadership through IDC expansion, Illinois recently undertook an overhaul of the State’s approach to principal and certification that defines principal certification as “Preschool to grade 12”, thereby requiring candidates to receive coursework and training specifically in early learning and development³⁵. The 2010 law also focuses principal preparation programs on developing leaders of learning responsible for student achievement, rather than simply “building managers.” As the result of these changes, all principal preparation programs in the State must redesign their offerings by the beginning of School Year 2012-13, and principals emerging from these programs will be much better equipped to lead high quality early learning instruction needed to significantly improve outcomes for high-need children.

Activity (D)(1)-2.1 Rationale: <i>Additional support is needed to ensure program administrators are aware of new requirements and are able to meet them in the specified timeframe</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Review of current training and courses offered to obtain the IDC, including review of higher education institutions where students can obtain the IDC through the entitled credential route.	Sep 2012 - Dec 2012	IDHS, INCCRRA
(2) Outreach through INCCRRA and CCR&Rs to inform EC Educators about the new requirements and the benefits of obtaining the IDC.	Jul 2012 --	IDHS, INCCRRA, CCR&Rs
(3) Identification of opportunities to expand IDC courses and trainings, including online delivery models, to ensure availability of training and courses statewide.	Jan 2013 - Jul 2013	IDHS, INCCRRA
(4) Provision of grant funds to expand identified trainings and opportunities; continued monitoring of supply and demand of IDC training and courses to efficient use of resources.	Aug 2013 - Dec 2013	IDHS, INCCRRA

Activity (D)(1)-2.2:
Increase the number of higher education institutions that align their coursework with Illinois’ WKCF

With the goal of having 95% of all institutions of higher learning aligning their coursework to the credentials, the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Illinois

³⁵ Public Act 96-0903

Community College Board (ICCB) will work together to encourage all institutions of higher education to become “entitled institutions”. Specifically, ICCB will require that all ECE courses offered at community colleges after July 1, 2014 address all Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (IPTS), ECE and other essential teacher education standards as determined by ICCB and key stakeholders. (See ICCB letter of support, *Appendix (A)(3)-4*). In addition, IBHE, at their bimonthly academic affairs staff meetings with the Chief Academic Officers Leadership Group, will advance the discussion of increasing “entitled institutions” at the local campuses and in evaluating new program proposals and reviews of existing programs, IBHE will confirm course alignment with Illinois’ WKCF and credential frameworks (see IBHE letter of support, *Appendix (A)(3)-4*).

Despite the large number of entitled institutions in the State, only a relatively small number of practitioners receive their credentials through the entitled credential route. In order to increase this number, grant funds will be used for increased technical assistance to faculty at entitled institutions to assist students in obtaining Gateways credentials through the entitled credential route. Such technical assistance may include, but is not limited to:

- Workshops at quarterly ACCESS meetings (two year college faculty) and annual ILACTE meeting (four year university faculty) focusing on increased understanding and utilization of credentials for the ECE workforce.
- Training college counselors about the value of students completing the credential requirements and the application process for receipt of credential.
- Development of materials and resources to assist faculty in promoting credential understanding and awareness, including college-specific templates identifying specific coursework leading to credentials.
- Providing local college faculty with innovative tools for incorporating information about credentials into lesson plans including webinars on the credentialing process or links to videos featuring workforce members as well as potential future employers talking about the importance of obtaining credentials.

Activity (D)(1)-2.2 Rationale: <i>Need to increase the number of EC Educators with credentials</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) ICCB to require that all ECE courses offered at community colleges address all IPTS, ECE and other essential teacher education standards.	July 1, 2014	ICCB
(2) IBHE, through meetings with the Chief Academic Officers Leadership Group, will encourage institutions to become “entitled” and in evaluating new program proposals and reviews of existing programs, IBHE will confirm course alignment with Illinois’ WKCF and credential frameworks.	July 2012 – June 2014	IBHE
3. Increased technical assistance to faculty at entitled institutions to assist students in obtaining Gateways credentials through the entitled credential route.	July 2012 and ongoing	INCCRRA, ICCB, IBHE

Activity (D)(1)-2.3:
Increase the number of EC Educators articulating from two-year to four-year colleges

Community colleges, as referenced above, also serve to prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions in order to complete a bachelor’s degree and the requirements for the Illinois Type 04 early childhood certifications. Transfers are supported through the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI), a statewide credit transfer agreement among more than 100 participating college or universities in Illinois. All public institutions of higher education, constituting 65% of students in Illinois and 50 private institutions of higher education are members of the Illinois Articulation Initiative. ICCB and IBHE will convene the IAI Education Major Panel, composed of faculty from community colleges and baccalaureate granting institutions, to approve new and revised ECE courses consistent with the developed models, ensuring that the courses meet the latest standards, including course outcomes (see ICCB and IBHE letters of support, *Appendix (A)(3)-4*). Endorsement of these ECE courses by the panel provides them with statewide recognition, ensuring the courses articulate across the system allowing students to transfer from two to four years institutions with ease.

ACTIVITY D(1)-2.3: *Rationale: Articulation remains a barrier to advancement for many EC Educators*

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) ICCB and IBHE to convene the IAI Education Major Panel to review ECE courses to confirm consistent with the developed models, ensuring that the courses meet the latest standards and course outcomes.	Jul 2012 - Dec 2012	ICCB, IBHE, IAI
(2) IAI Education Major Panel to approve the new and revised ECE courses to allow for statewide recognition and articulation across two and four year institutions.	Jan 2013 - Jun 2013	ICCB, IBHE, IAI

Summary--Criterion (D)(1)

Illinois already has a very strong professional development system organized around the Gateways WKCF. Through the activities described in this Criterion, this WKCF will be extended to cover a wider range of EC Educators. In addition, barriers to advancement through the Career Lattice such as articulation and lack of aligned coursework will be addressed. Ultimately, the activities here will result in many more EC Educators having the knowledge and competencies needed to provide high quality early learning experiences for young children, in service of the State’s overarching goal of ensuring that all children arrive at kindergarten ready to succeed.

SELECTION CRITERION (D)(1)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
<p>(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children’s learning and development and improve child outcomes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Workforce Knowledge and Competencies; ○ Documentation that the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework addresses the elements outlined in the definition of Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework in Definitions (section III) and is designed to promote children’s learning and development and improve outcomes. 	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for (D)(1), and <i>Appendix (D)(1)-2</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	<p>WKCF is in <i>Appendices (D)(1)-2</i> and <i>(D)(1)-6</i></p> <p>Documentation that WKCF addresses all elements and promotes children’s learning and development outcomes is in <i>Appendix (D)(1)-7</i></p>
<p>(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;</p>	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for (D)(1), <i>Activities (D)(1)-1.3, (D)(1)-2.2</i> and <i>(D)(1)-2.3, and Appendices (D)(1)-4, (D)(1)-5, (D)(1)-6</i> and <i>(D)(1)-9</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	<p>None</p>
<p>(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.</p>	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for (D)(1), <i>Activities (D)(1)-2.</i> and <i>(D)(1)-2.3</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	<p>None</p>
<p>INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES</p>	<p>The Gateways Career Lattice and Credentials are appropriate for EC Educators across a wide range of ELD Programs.</p>	
<p>ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS</p>	<p>Competencies for working with children of all ability levels and of all cultural and linguistic groups are included as “threads” across all Content Areas of the framework</p>	

(D)(2) Supporting EC Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of EC Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (*e.g.*, scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of EC Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of EC Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Illinois' (D)(2) Response

Supporting Early Childhood Educators in Improving their knowledge, skills and abilities.

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Access to Effective Professional Development Opportunities: Illinois has made significant strides in the development of a State system that promotes EC Educator professional improvement and career advancement by providing access to a high quality system of formal and informal professional development that is aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge Competency Framework (WKCF). This system supports the full spectrum of EC Educators, from the entry-level teaching assistant or family, friend and neighbor caregiver to the highly experienced leader of a model early childhood education program.

Illinois has a diverse early childhood workforce, with over 10,000 licensed family child care providers, 35,000 teachers and assessments working in child care centers, 5,100 teachers and assistants working in Head Start/Early Head Start programs, 1,200 home visitors, 4,500 Early Intervention specialists, and 2,500 certified teachers working in Preschool for All and other early education programs. As described in (D)(1), the WKCF provides a coherent framework for addressing the pre-service and in-service professional development needs of the full spectrum of EC Educators.

There are many organizations that provide EC professional development in Illinois, and each has its own particular focus. Examples include:

Provider	Funded by	Primary Audience
INCCRRA/CCR&Rs	IDHS	Child care providers
Illinois Resource Center	ISBE	Preschool for All Teachers and Administrators; ELL teachers.
STAR Net	ISBE	Special Education providers
Illinois Birth to Three Institute (Ounce of Prevention Fund)	IDHS & ISBE	Home visitor and birth to three center-based providers
Illinois Trainers Network	IDHS	All EC Educators (training consultants with wide range of specialization)

There are also a large number of institutions of higher education that prepare EC Educators at the Associate’s, Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral levels (see *Table (A)(1)-11*). Many of these institutions also provide professional development that is especially geared toward more skilled and experienced educators.

Illinois recognizes that traditional professional development approaches—one time workshops, short conference presentations, and other disconnected experiences—are of limited value in developing the skills EC Educators need to establish a high quality early learning and environment and to provide the instructional supports children (particularly Children with High Needs) require. The WKCF was designed to provide coherence and continuity to both the formal coursework and less formal in-service professional development that EC Educators receive.

Each of the providers of professional development listed above are increasingly designing their offerings as series, or “cohort” approaches, that allow EC Educators to engage in a cycle of learning new content, attempting application in the classroom/home, reflecting on

successes and challenges, and further learning. This cycle is essential for ensuring that EC Educators are able to integrate new knowledge into their practice. Many of these training series are designed to fulfill specific criteria in the WKCF, and therefore support EC Educators in attaining the first few levels of credentials in the career lattice.

Goal (D)(2)-1:

Professional development investments are coordinated across funding streams.

The State recognizes the need for more intensive and impactful forms of professional development (such as the coach-mentoring and Professional Learning Communities described in (C)(2)), especially in Preschool for All and Head Start/Early Head Start programs that are specifically charged with supporting learning for Children with High Needs and closing the school readiness gap. The State plans to free up resources to support this type of investment by streamlining the existing training system to reduce duplication and to ensure that training resources are more efficiently shared across Early Childhood funding streams, including Child Care, the Early Childhood Block Grant, and Head Start/Early Head Start.

Activity (D)(2)-1.1:

Establish the Consortium for Workforce Development

As described in (A)(3), the Consortium for Workforce Development will bring together professional development providers (including institutions of higher education) to develop an annual master plan for state-funded EC professional development across the spectrum of EC Educators in Illinois. Providers will be required to align their professional development with the Gateways WKCF, and multi-session training approaches will be emphasized. The Consortium will identify gaps and redundancies in training provision, and will identify both new trainings and new approaches to training (e.g., webinars or other distance learning) that need to be developed. The Consortium will have funding available to support the development of these new trainings.

Activity (D)(2)-1.1 Rationale: <i>To create a unified and more efficient approach to supporting professional development across funding streams</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Procure contract for Consortium for Workforce Development (CWD)	Mar-Jun, 2012	ISBE
(2) CWD develops first annual consolidated plan	Jul-Sep 2012 -	ISBE/CWD
(3) CWD develops training curricula to address gaps in available training, provides coordination	Sep 2012 – Dec 2015	ISBE/CWD

Activity (D)(2)-1.2:
Expand the number of trainings included in and the functionality of the Gateways to Opportunity Statewide Online Training Calendar

The Gateways to Opportunity Statewide Online Training Calendar (the “Calendar”) currently serves as a repository for information on numerous early childhood training opportunities throughout the State. In the ELC Agreement, the Participating State Agencies have agreed to require that all state-funded early childhood professional development training be included in the Registry and be available on the statewide Calendar. Similarly, the City of Chicago has agreed to include all City-based early childhood professional development across funding streams (including Head Start) within the Calendar (see Mayor Emanuel letter of support, *Appendix (A)(3)-4*).

INCCRRA (administrator of Gateways to Opportunity) has developed the Registry Authorized Entity process by which high-quality professional development providers can document that they have trainer and training selection processes that meet criteria established for the Registry, and are then able to add their trainings as “registry approved” without having to submit each training individually for review. Star Net and the Illinois Resource Center (IRC) have already been granted this designation, and several local CCR&Rs and other organizations have initiated this review process. Head Start grantees will be invited to become Registered Authorized Entities so that they may share some of the trainings they provide with the broader EC education field in Illinois.

The Calendar itself will be upgraded to allow EC Educators to search for trainings that are specifically relevant to their needs. For example, a certified teacher will be able to search for

professional development needed for continued certification, while a home child care provider looking for CPR and first aid training taught in Spanish will be able to search for her specific need.

Activity (D)(2)-1.2 Rationale: <i>To provide a single source of information about available training opportunities that address the needs of the full range of EC Educators and facilitate greater efficiency</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Participating State Agencies to require all state-funded early childhood professional development training be included in the Registry and made available on the statewide Calendar.	July 1, 2012	ISBE, IDHS, INCCRRA
(2) City of Chicago to include all City-based early childhood professional development training in the Registry and made available on the statewide Calendar.	July 1, 2012	City of Chicago, IDHS, INCCRRA
(3) INCCRRA to streamline its training and Calendar approval process to increase the number of “Authorized Entities.”	Jan-July, 2012 --	IDHS, INCCRRA
(4) Expanded functionality of the statewide Calendar to allow for additional search filters and a more user-friendly Calendar.	Jan-July, 2012	IDHS, INCCRRA

Goal (D)(2)-2:

An increased number of EC Educators progressing to higher levels in the Gateways Credential Framework and/or that are obtaining ESL/Bilingual Endorsements

Promoting Professional improvement and career enhancement: Illinois offers many types of supports to EC Educators wishing to achieve higher levels of credentials. These include the Gateways to Opportunity Scholarships and CCR&R-administered Professional Development Funds (see (B)(4)) and the Professional Development Advisor program (see below). The Great START Wage Supplement Program, also described in (B)(4), has been an effective strategy for both incenting EC Educators to obtain higher credentials and to increase retention among staff in child care settings.^{xxxiv} Illinois has also designed an innovative approach to providing tiered reimbursement to license-exempt Family, Friend and Neighbor caregivers who complete up to three levels of training based on the WKCF (see *Appendix (B)(4)-2, Great START Training Tiers*). All of these supports and incentives will continue to be offered and many will be expanded as described below.

Activity (D)(2)-2.1:
Increase support for EC Educator’s career advancement through individualized career counseling and assistance

Illinois recognizes that EC Educators may benefit from direct guidance in addition to web-based resources in order to navigate the State’s Career Lattice. A statewide advisor program has been developed in order to help EC Educators across the full spectrum of program types identify and reach their career goals and process information about professional development opportunities and resources. The program gives EC Educators access to experienced, well-trained Professional Development Advisors (PDAs) who provide regular contact and intimate knowledge of the obstacles and issues that face current and future EC Educators in early care and education. EC Educators may request this free advisement service through Gateways to Opportunity and PDAs are available throughout Illinois. Child care centers can also use PDA services to create individualized professional development plans for their entire center staff.

A study of the Professional Development Advisor Program in 2010 found that advisees gained knowledge of early care and education over the course of the program and most advisees met or made progress towards their professional goals.^{xxxv} The PDA Program is assisting many minority practitioners reach their career goals, with 44% African American and 13% Hispanic or Latino advisees, and is thereby helping to address the shortage of skilled minority EC Educators in Illinois. Given the success of the PDA program in assisting EC Educators, IDHS will substantially increase the PDA program to accommodate additional advisees under both an individual and center-based model, with priority given to those individuals and centers that serve predominantly high-need children.

Activity (D)(2)-2.1 Rationale: <i>Need to increase access to and participation in effective professional development opportunities by supporting ECE career advancement through individualized career counseling and assistance</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Review PDA data to identify geographic locations where additional PDA services and/or specific skill sets (e.g. Spanish speaking) are needed	Jan- Feb 2012	IDHS, INCCRRA
(2) Recruit , select and train PDAs and obtain signed agreements/contracts	Feb – Jun 2012	IDHS, INCCRRA

(3) Increase access to and provision of statewide PDA services.	Jul 2012 – Dec 31, 2015	IDHS, INCCRRA
(4) Continually monitor PDA services and provide ongoing training to PDAs through annual conference and monthly/quarterly webinars and telnets.	Jul 2012 – Dec 31, 2015	IDHS, INCCRRA

Activity (D)(2)-2.2:
Expand funding through the Scholarship Program for EC Educators to complete the coursework necessary to obtain English as a Second Language (ESL) or bilingual approval or endorsement

Illinois is committed to supporting the early childhood education of English language learners (ELLs), as reflected in recent legislation and rule changes requiring that by 2014, preschool teachers in ISBE-funded preschool programs administered by school districts serving ELL children must have an approval or endorsement in either bilingual education or ESL. These changes are consistent with the Illinois legislature’s findings that English-language only instruction is often inadequate for the education of the large numbers of children in Illinois whose primary home language is not English. In order to meet this immediate need for a greatly increased number of preschool teachers who are appropriately trained and certified to teach ELLs, Illinois will use grant funds to provide scholarships for certified early childhood teachers to obtain the required approval or endorsement and for bilingual paraprofessionals to obtain early childhood certification. Through this scholarship program, Illinois expects to produce an additional 1,000 teachers with the Type 04 certificate and ESL or bilingual approval or endorsement.

Activity (D)(2)-2.2 Rationale: <i>Scholarships in this area will help Illinois meet its need for preschool teachers who are appropriately trained and certified to teach ELLs</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Review current eligibility requirements to determine whether adjustments are needed	Jan-Mar 2012	IDHS, ISBE, INCCRRA
(2) Incorporate ESL/bilingual scholarships into scholarship program	Apr-Aug 2012	IDHS, ISBE, INCCRRA
(3) Outreach to potential candidates, training entities and IHEs regarding scholarships	Apr 2012 and ongoing	IDHS, ISBE, INCCRRA
(4) Scholarships become available	Sep 2012 and ongoing	IDHS, ISBE, INCCRRA

Goal (D)(2)-3:

Training and professional development opportunities in critical areas of need, including early math instruction; using assessment and data to inform individualized instruction; and serving culturally, linguistically and ability diverse populations are more effective

Illinois has identified three areas of strategic focus for improving the quality and effectiveness of ECE training and professional development. These include:

- Early math instruction: Children’s math achievement at kindergarten entry is an especially strong predictor of later academic success. Unfortunately, EC Educators are often poorly equipped to support children’s development of mathematical skills. Indeed, a recent study of Preschool for All programs across Illinois showed that children on average did more poorly on an age-normed test of math skills at the end of the preschool year than at the beginning.^{xxxvi}
- Using assessment and data to inform individualized instruction: As described in (C)(2), effective use of assessment to inform instruction is critical to effectively preparing young, at-risk children for success in school.
- Working with culturally, linguistically and ability diverse child populations: Half of children under age six in Illinois are minorities, and a rapidly growing percentage speak a language other than English at home. Teachers need greater skill in working with these culturally and linguistically diverse populations. Despite substantial investment in supporting teachers understanding of supporting children with special needs, there remains a great need to provide up-to-date information about effective strategies.

In order to address these critical areas of need, Illinois must also ensure that its trainers and higher education faculty are prepared to integrate these areas into their classrooms and instructions.^{xxxvii} As a result, Illinois will upgrade the quality and knowledge-base of its existing statewide training infrastructure by strengthening college coursework and enhancing college faculties’ and trainers’ knowledge and skills in these areas of critical need through the plans set forth below.

Activity (D)(2)-3.1:
Build on partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) to develop and improve early childhood teacher curricula from birth to age five in critical areas of need

Higher education institutions throughout Illinois recognize the need to refine their early childhood curricula and programs of study to respond to these critical areas of need. However, faculty in early childhood departments, particularly in community colleges and smaller four-year colleges, have heavy course loads and limited opportunity to develop new or substantially revised syllabi for courses. Illinois will provide support to assist IHEs to provide release time to faculty to develop or significantly strengthen courses in the identified critical areas of need. Funding provided to specific institutions will be conditioned upon the institution being an “entitled institution” and part of the Illinois Articulation Agreement (see discussion of “entitled institutions” and the Illinois Articulation Initiative in (D)(1)).

Activity (D)(2)-3.1 Rationale: <i>Higher quality curricula in these critical areas of need are necessary to support effective training and instruction in these areas</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Preparation of solicitation request for IHEs and/or faculty who wish to develop or significantly strengthen coursework in critical need areas	Mar-Aug 2012	ISBE, IBHE, ICCB
(2) Issue solicitation request and review proposals for critical areas of need coursework development or enhancement	Sep 2012	ISBE, IBHE, ICCB
(3) Award contracts to IHE and/or faculty for development or enhancement of coursework in critical need areas	Dec 2012	ISBE, IBHE, ICCB

Activity (D)(2)-3.2:
Strengthen faculties’ and trainers’ knowledge and skills in these critical areas of need through forums and development opportunities

To prepare EC Educators to address these critical areas of need, college faculty and trainers need increased knowledge and skills in these specialized areas to guide their instruction and trainings. Illinois has had success in implementing a “faculty institute” model of providing up-to-date knowledge of best practices to faculty in institutions of higher education. These workshop and conference opportunities will be developed by the Consortium for Workforce Development (CWD) and will feature Illinois’ many experts in the identified areas of critical

need as well as bring in experts from around the country. The institutes will be targeted to early childhood, bilingual, and early childhood special education faculty members at 2-and-4-year institutions across the State, as well as to training staff at ISBE- and IDHS-funded training organizations.

Activity (D)(2)-3.2 Rationale: <i>Faculty and trainers need increased support and opportunities for development in order to prepare EC Educators to address these critical need areas</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Development of forum, workshop, and conference opportunities throughout Illinois that focus on the critical areas of need	Jan-Jul 2012	CWD, IBHE, ICCB
(2) Approval of schedule and content of forums, workshops and conference opportunities in critical areas of need.	Aug-Oct 2012	CWD, IBHE, ICCB
(3) Implement forums	Sep 2012 and ongoing	CWD, IBHE, ICCB

Activity (D)(2)-3.3:
Expand effective professional development opportunities to EC Educators in these areas of critical need

In addition to investing funds in increasing faculty and trainer knowledge in the critical areas of need, Illinois will also commit grant funds to strengthening existing professional development programs that are currently addressing these needs in the workforce. As noted above, the State is increasingly investing in multi-session, iterative approaches to professional development rather than one-time workshops. New approaches such as web-based distance learning and combinations models incorporating some web-based and some in person training are being developed to maximize efficiency and provide training to all areas of the State.

The Consortium for Workforce Development (CWD) will work with IHEs and high-quality training providers to develop new training curricula and models around the areas of critical need. CWD will also identify effective existing trainings and ensure that they are made more available to EC Educators. Models that will be analyzed for replication and scaling include:

- Math: Erikson Institute recently received an Investing in Innovation development (i3) grant for its proposed program designed to achieve high standards for PreK- grade 3 in mathematics by applying a whole teacher approach to professional development. The proposed project is designed to address three significant problems confronting

mathematics education in Illinois: 1) the mathematics achievement gap between low-income, minority students and their more advantaged peers; 2) the low level of competence in math teaching of early childhood and early elementary teachers; and 3) the limited and ineffective in-service opportunities for early childhood and elementary teachers to develop mathematics competencies. Through this program teachers will gain a greater understanding and competency in the Illinois learning standards for mathematics and implementing instruction addresses these standards while increasing their overall math skills. As a result, children's school readiness and future academic performance will increase. Currently, the program is designed to serve approximately 80 PreK teachers and 3,680 students from 8 Chicago public elementary schools over a 5 year period.

- Use of assessments: See (C)(2) for models to be implemented.
- Culturally & linguistically appropriate practice: With the goal of improving instruction and educational outcomes for young ELLs by increasing the supply of Pre-K through Grade 3 teachers with the knowledge and skills to provide developmentally appropriate language support services to young ELL, Erikson Institute has developed: Improving Bilingual/ESL Instruction for Young English Language Learners: A Three Tiered Approach. The project will provide professional development services to 310 early childhood teachers and paraprofessionals in Illinois over a 5 year period. These services will be targeted to: in-service teachers seeking the bilingual/ESL endorsement; pre-service teacher candidates; and in-service teacher paraprofessional teams. In order to encourage teacher to invest in this additional training, this program provides 1) tuition support, 2) convenient access to programs, including online delivery and 3) strong supports, such as a cohort model, to support learning and practice.

Activity (D)(2)-3.3 Rationale: <i>Increasing quality professional development opportunities in the critical areas of need will improve ED Educators ability to address these needs</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Prepare and Issue solicitation request and review proposals for the development or expansion of training curricula and models for professional development in these critical areas of need	Sep 2012- Mar 2013	CWD
(2) Award contracts to IHE and/or training providers for development or expansion of said professional development curricula and training models.	Dec 2012	CWD

Goal (D)(2)-4:

Data systems to track Early Childhood Educator development, advancement and retention are enhanced and strengthened

Public Reporting of Data on EC Educators: Currently, Illinois has limited capability to track EC Educators' development, advancement and retention. ISBE has a system to track teachers who hold certificates and endorsements/approvals, but in the broader field the primary mechanism for gathering and publicly reporting data about the early childhood workforce has been the bi-annual, statutorily required Illinois Salary and Staffing Survey of Licensed Child Care Facilities (the "Survey"; 20 ILCS 505/5.15). This survey documents the average wage and salaries, and the benefits paid to child care practitioners throughout Illinois; the qualifications of new practitioners hired at licensed child care facilities during the previous two years; the number of qualified practitioners who apply for vacant positions; and the difficulties centers face in engaging and retaining practitioners. However, the large majority of both quantitative and qualitative data used in this survey is based solely on survey responses and despite extensive outreach by the Survey administrators, the overall 2009 Survey response rate was only 13.28%. The State requires a more systematic and integrated approach to tracking its early childhood workforce.

Activity (D)(2)-4.1:

Maximize ECE membership in the Gateways to Opportunity Registry

To address the need for better data about and tracking of the early childhood workforce, Illinois has created the Gateways to Opportunity Registry ("Registry"). This database maintains a permanent record of each member's education, credentials and all Registry trainings attended on a Professional Development Record (PDR), which IDCFS also accepts as documentation of completion of pre-service and in-service training hour requirements for licensing (see *Appendix (D)(2)-2, Sample Professional Development Record*). This information can be accessed by members online through a secure section of the Gateways website. Any Early Childhood Educator can join the Registry at no cost by completing a simple Participant Application. Members receive a Member ID which is used to track their participation in Registry-approved trainings.

As described in *Activity (E)(2)1.2*, Illinois will dramatically increase the Registry’s current membership from approximately 10,000 to 60,000 by requiring essentially all practitioners working in ELD Programs, including community-based and school-based Preschool for All programs and Head Start programs (but excluding other license-exempt providers) to be members of the Registry. Currently, IDCFS uses the PDR (explained above) as a tracking system for validating practitioner completion of annual training requirements for licensed providers, which is only successful where practitioners participate in the Registry.

Requiring Registry membership will create consistency in data collection and will support the policy-making process by providing consistent information to government agencies, elected officials and advocates.

ACTIVITY (D)(2)-4.1 Rationale: Streamline data collection and facilitate EC Educators’ access to professional development opportunities		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) IDCFS: By administrative rule as a condition of licensing: - All directors and child care staff members to establish a profile in the Registry - All newly hired directors and child care staff must establish a Registry profile within 30 days of hire	By July 1, 2012 After July 1, 2012	IDCFS
(2) IDHS: No action required as IDCFS action will result in Registry profiles being established for all licensed IDHS-funded programs	No action required	IDHS
(3) ISBE: - Type 04 certificate holders: a Registry profile for these educators will be automatically created through a data integration project - Non-certified teacher aides: an amendment to ISBE administrative rules has been initiated to require that non-certified teacher aides working with children in State funded preschool will be required to establish a Registry profile	By July 1, 2012 After July 1, 2012	ISBE

**Activity (D)(2)-4.2:
Enhance the Illinois Salary and Staffing Survey**

The Illinois Salary and Staffing Survey of Licensed Child Care Facilities (the “Survey”) can be enhanced and strengthened by increasing the amount of data in the survey that is based on aggregated data from the State agencies rather than survey responses. In order to increase the amount and quality of the data being used by the Survey, IDHS and ISBE, in partnership with INCCRRA, will provide increased aggregated data from the Gateways Registry. With the expansion of the Gateways Registry under this Plan, INCCRRA will be able to provide verified administrative data from approximately 60,000 ECEs for the Survey. This data would include education level, wages, turnover, and longevity, all available by type of care and role. By maximizing the use of administrative data, the Survey requests can focus on obtaining qualitative data that informs statewide policy and practice.

Activity (D)(2)-4.2 Rationale: <i>Increasing amount of data in the Survey that is based on aggregated data will improve the quality and accuracy of the Survey and the publicly reported information.</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Identify the specific data set to be provided by INCCRRA for the Survey.	Jan 1, 2013 - Jun 2013	IDHS, INCCRRA
(2) Provide the identified data set to IDHS for the Survey.	Jun 2013 - Dec 2013	IDHS, INCCRRA

Summary--Criterion (D)(2)

A highly competent EC workforce is critical to accomplishing the State’s goal of ensuring that children, especially Children with High Needs, develop the school readiness skills they need before kindergarten. The goals and activities described in this criterion directly address the State’ strategic reform priorities. The integration of training resources is a key component of the priority to create a unified early childhood system, and will result in the more efficient use of existing resources. The requirements for Gateways Registry membership and enhancements to the Staffing Survey will result in a more comprehensive understanding of the strengths and needs of Illinois’ EC workforce.

The support for scholarships and PDAs will ensure that programs wishing to move from “adequate to good” will have an adequate pool of appropriately prepared candidates from which

to hire their staff to meet TQRIS requirements at the higher star levels. The support for coursework and training enhancements in areas of identified need will ensure that programs moving from “good to great” are able to draw upon high quality professional development supports that are based on the latest research about best practice.

SELECTION CRITERION (D)(2)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for (D)(2), and <i>Activities (D)(2)-1.1, (D)(2)-1.2, (D)(2)-3.1, (D)(2)-3.2, (D)(2)-3.3. and (D)(2)-4.1</i> and <i>Appendix (D)(2)-1 and (D)(2)-2</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
(b) Implementing policies and incentives that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;	<p>Described in Foundation for Success for (D)(2), <i>Activities (D)(2)-2.1, (D)(2)-2.2, and Appendix (B)(4)-2</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 3 	None
(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention	<p>Described in <i>Activity (D)(2)-4.1 and Activity (D)(2)-4.2 and Appendix (D)(2)-1</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # 1 • Strategic Priority # 3 	None

SELECTION CRITERION (D)(2)		
ELEMENTS, EVIDENCE, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE		
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN	REQUIRED EVIDENCE
<p>(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of EC Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and 2. Increasing the number and percentage of EC Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework 	<p>Described in <i>Activities (D)(2)-2.1, (D)(2)-2.2</i></p> <p>AND in <i>Activities (D)(1)-2.2 and (D)(1)-2.3</i></p> <p>Links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Priority # • Strategic Priority # 3 	<p>Performance Measure Tables (D)(2)(d)(1) and (D)(2)(d)(2)</p>
INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES	<p>Illinois' Plan includes professional development for EC Educators from a wide range of ELD Programs, and integrates the provision of training across ISBE and IDHS</p>	
ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS	<p>Illinois' Plan includes developing a greater number of EC Educators who are very well prepared to serve culturally and linguistically diverse populations. The Plan builds upon Illinois' longstanding commitment to inclusive education for children with special needs.</p>	

Performance Measures for (D)(2)(d)(1): Increasing the number of EC Educators receiving credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework					
	Baseline (Today)	Target - end of calendar year 2012	Target - end of calendar year 2013	Target - end of calendar year 2014	Target – end of calendar year 2015
Total number of “aligned” institutions and providers	36 IHEs; 1 PDP	36 IHEs; 3 PDP	48 IHEs; 5 PDP	60 IHEs; 5 PDP	74 IHEs; 5 PDP
Total number of EC Educators credentialed by an “aligned” institution or provider	85	250	500	900	1,200
<i>IHE: Institution of Higher Learning PD: Professional Development Provider The baseline data are actual and is collected by the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (INCCRRA), an Early Learning Intermediary Organization, which tracks this information.</i>					

Performance Measures for (D)(2)(d)(2): Increasing number and percentage of EC Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.										
Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of EC Educators who have moved up the progression of credentials, aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, in the prior year</i>									
	Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target- end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Credential Type 1 <i>Illinois Director Credential (IDC) Level 1</i>	213		74	35%	95	33%	108	28%	160	29%
<i>IDC Level 2</i>	151		23	15%	27	15%	35	17%	49	19%
<i>IDC Level 3</i>	114		10	9%	12	10%	15	11%	16	11%
Credential Type 2 <i>ECE Credential Level 1</i>	1050		600	57%	1000	61%	1500	57%	2,100	51%

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<i>ECE Level 2</i>	52		55	106%	65	60%	117	52%	165	42%
<i>ECE Level 3</i>	18		81	450%	161	162%	263	97%	375	71%
<i>ECE Level 4</i>	74		256	345%	346	105%	396	59%	622	58%
<i>ECE Level 5</i>	79		27	34%	34	32%	49	35%	51	18%
<i>ECE Level 6</i>	In development		Pilot		28	2800%	6	21%	8	23%
Credential Type 3 <i>Infant Toddler Credential (ITC) Level 2</i>	69		20	29%	24	30%	28	27%	34	26%
<i>ITC Level 3</i>	2		4	200%	5	83%	8	73%	13	68%
<i>ITC Level 4</i>	38		13	34%	15	30%	19	29%	25	29%
<i>ITC Level 5</i>	42		20	48%	21	34%	25	30%	30	28%
<i>ITC Level 6</i>	In development		Pilot		Pilot		28	2800%	16	57%
Credential to be developed: <i>Family Systems/Family Worker Credential* Level 1</i>	In development		NA		Pilot		30	3000%	60	200%
Credential to be developed: <i>Family Child Care Credential** Level 1</i>	In development		NA		Pilot		15	1500%	30	200%

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<i>Family Child Care Credential Level 2</i>	In development		NA		Pilot		12	1200 %	24	200 %
<i>Family Child Care Credential Level 3</i>	In development		NA		Pilot		8	800 %	16	200 %
<i>Type 04 Early Childhood Teacher Certificate with Bilingual or ELS endorsement or approval.</i>	342		17	5%	36	10%	73	20%	88	20%

*Note: Within the credentials, level 1 or the lowest number level is the lowest level of competency.
 *Family Systems/Family Worker Credential Levels 2-5: will still be in pilot phase in 2015.
 **Technical Assistance/RBPD Credential Levels 1-3: will still be in pilot phase in 2015.
 Except where noted as "in development," the baseline data are actual. INCCRRA, as referenced above in Performance Measure (D)(2)(d)(1) tracks the information for credentials and ISBE tracks the information for Type 04 Early Childhood Certifications. Percentages are calculated based on the percentage increase in the total number of individuals with said credential/certification from one year to the next. Initial baseline percentages are not included.*

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

(E)(1) Understanding the status of children’s learning and development at kindergarten entry.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--

(a) Is aligned with the State’s ELD Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;

(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and

(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (*e.g.*, with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

Illinois’ (E)(1) Response

Understanding the Status of Children’s Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry

Illinois’ Foundation for Success

Each year nearly 150,000 Illinois five-year-olds begin kindergarten, each coming with varied birth-to-five experiences and a wide array of developmental strengths and challenges. Recognizing the value of a common statewide kindergarten assessment process to align and improve early childhood and elementary instruction, in 2009 the Robert R. McCormick Foundation, Erikson Institute, Ounce of Prevention Fund, and Advance Illinois partnered with State Superintendent Christopher Koch to establish a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) Stakeholders Committee. This Committee was charged with developing a common vision and a set of priorities and recommendations for a unified kindergarten assessment process, and included a broad coalition of representatives from early childhood programs and public school administration, early childhood and K-12 teachers, assessment experts (including Dr. Samuel Meisels, President of the Erikson Institute, who is widely regarded as one of the nation’s top experts in the field of kindergarten readiness assessments), bilingual and special needs experts,

parents, policy, business, and advocacy organizations, State education agencies, legislators, and members of the philanthropic community (see *Appendix (E)(1)-1* for a list of committee members).

Through a series of meetings and activities between March 2010 and April 2011, the Committee identified and discussed critical issues in kindergarten assessment, learned from the experiences of other states, surveyed kindergarten assessment practices currently in use across the State, engaged in discussions led by national early childhood assessment experts, researched findings and recommendations from the National Education Goals Panel and the National Research Council (including the National Research Council's 2008 report on early childhood assessment^{xxxviii}), and developed guiding principles, priorities and recommendations for statewide implementation (see *Appendix (E)(1)-2* for a more detailed description of the Committee's meetings, presentations, and processes). As the result of this extensive, structured process, the KRA Stakeholder Committee issued its final recommendations in an April 2011 report, "A New Beginning: The Illinois Kindergarten Individual Development Survey" (see *Appendix (E)(1)-3*).

Recognizing the complexities of child development, the Committee unanimously rejected a one-time "readiness" snapshot of children as they enter kindergarten and instead recommended a more developmentally appropriate process of using teacher observational assessments repeated over time in natural, comfortable settings (such as the child's classroom) to yield the most valid, authentic information about young children. Such a process will yield data that can be used at multiple levels and for varying purposes, including providing aggregate statewide data to inform policy decisions, guiding classroom instruction on an individual child basis, aligning early childhood and K-12 systems, and strengthening professional development opportunities. The Committee's work forms a strong, research-based foundation for Illinois to reach its goal of using KIDS in every public kindergarten classroom in the 2014-15 school year.

Goal (E)(1)-1:

By no later than the 2014-15 school year, the learning and development status of every child in an Illinois public kindergarten classroom will be assessed using a valid, reliable, and appropriate instrument and process, known as the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS)

Activity (E)(1)-1.1:

Establish the State administrative structures, regulatory requirements, and funding commitments needed for successful implementation

To aggressively move forward with implementation, the State of Illinois has taken the following steps to establish the necessary administrative structures, regulatory requirements, and funding commitments for KIDS:

1. Advisory Committee to Oversee Implementation: The State Superintendent has convened an advisory committee to oversee KIDS implementation (the KIDS Implementation Committee) which held its initial meeting on October 17, 2011. This Committee is comprised of members from across the early childhood to elementary continuum with expertise in child development, assessments, educational data systems, program evaluation, cultural and linguistic diversity, special education, and professional development, as well as representatives from the two major teacher unions and the statewide principals association (see *Appendix (E)(1)-4* for a list of Implementation Committee members). The KIDS Implementation Committee is charged with guiding ISBE as it considers potential instruments; providing background, research and advice on communications planning, professional development training, and financial resource needs; and offering expertise on how to best capture data from KIDS to support and improve children's learning.

2. Regulatory Structure for State-wide Implementation: On October 13, 2011, ISBE commenced the process required by the Illinois Administrative Procedures Act to establish the regulatory framework for state-wide implementation of KIDS. Using its authority under the School Code to regulate public kindergartens,^{xxxix} ISBE has formally proposed amendments to its rules for "Public Schools Evaluation, Recognition, and Supervision" by submitting them to the Illinois Secretary of State for publication in the Illinois Registry (see Part 1 amendments in *Appendix (B)(1)-2*). These regulatory amendments, scheduled to take effect in April 2012, require that public school districts participate in the phased statewide implementation of KIDS

described in *Activity (E)(1)-1.3*, subject to the State’s funding of its administration and related professional development. School districts that do not participate can be subject to the withholding of General State Aid and early childhood funding. Given the extensive support for ISBE’s plans for statewide implementation of KIDS from both stakeholders and school districts, however, ISBE does not anticipate the need for any enforcement action to carry out this Plan.

3. Sustainable Funding for Implementation: In its current fiscal year budget (SFY 2012), the State of Illinois has set aside \$1,523,500 of the State Early Childhood Block Grant for implementation of the KIDS recommendations. ISBE has budgeted for and fully expects this set-aside to continue throughout the RTTT ELC grant period, which will cover a substantial majority of the costs for implementation and allow grant funds to provide an infusion of resources for the initial ramp-up (see the KIDS budget, *Appendix (A)(4)-1*). In addition, the McCormick Foundation, which supported the KIDS work completed to date, has already committed to support KIDS implementation and is in the process of reaching out to other Illinois private foundations to join in sponsoring initial expenses.

Activity (E)(1)-1.1 Rationale: <i>State administrative structures and funding commitments must be in place for successful and sustainable implementation</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Convene KIDS Implementation Committee	Oct 2011	State Supt.
(2) Establish administrative rules for statewide implementation	Rules filed on Oct 13, 2011, scheduled to take effect April 2012	ISBE

Activity (E)(1)-1.2:
Select and adapt a high-quality, valid, and appropriate instrument for statewide implementation

Given the time and costs required to develop a valid and reliable instrument, the KRA Stakeholders Committee recommended adapting an existing instrument to meet the State’s priorities and requirements. Consistent with the Committee’s recommendations and the Early Learning Challenge’s criteria for a “Kindergarten Entry Assessment,” ISBE has developed and, on October 18, 2011, issued a Request for Sealed Proposals (RFSP) for an outside vendor for the administration of KIDS (see *Appendix (E)(1)-5*).

The RFSP incorporates the recommendations of the Kindergarten Readiness Advisory Committee and addresses all of the implementation expectations set forth in this Criterion.

Specifically, the RFSP requires that respondents submit for consideration a proposed instrument that, with any necessary adaptations approved by the State, will be:

- aligned with the State’s applicable learning standards and cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purposes for which it will be used, including for English language learners and children with disabilities; and
- aligned with the State’s participation in multi-state assessment consortia.

1. Alignment with Learning Standards and Essential Domains of School Readiness: The RFSP requires the vendor to demonstrate through a detailed crosswalk analysis that the selected instrument aligns with the Illinois Early Learning & Development Standards (as recently revised), the Illinois Standards for Social/Emotional Learning in the early elementary grade levels, and the Common Core State Standards applicable to kindergarten. As described in (C)(1), the Illinois ELD Standards have been recently revised to appropriately address learning and development from birth to kindergarten entry and to align with Illinois’ Learning Standards for students in K-12 education. The revised standards also address all of the “Essential Domains of School Readiness” as defined in the Early Learning Challenge Application. The KIDS report specifically recommends choosing an instrument that will include observation of young children across all of these domains (see *Appendix (E)(1)-3*), and this expectation is reflected in the Request for Sealed Proposals issued by the State (see *Appendix (E)(1)-6*).

2. Validity and Reliability for All Learners: The Illinois KIDS process will use an observational instrument that is valid for use with children with developmental delays or disabilities and with children from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds, including English language learners.³⁶ To ensure such results, ISBE and the KIDS Implementation Committee will work closely with the vendor to establish policies, procedures, and strong professional development programming to ensure that assessors are using the assessment instrument(s) reliably and the data collected are meaningful. Particular attention will be paid to how the instrument functions across diverse groups of children and assessors and how the instruments’ benchmarks are linguistically and culturally responsive. The KIDS Implementation Committee

³⁶ “English language learners” refers to children coming from homes where languages other than English are present, including those that are screened and identified as “Limited English Proficient”.

has nationally renowned experts in the fields of child assessment and development to assist with these efforts, including Dr. Meisels, and Dr. Margo Gottlieb with the Illinois Resource Center, a nationally renowned expert in the assessment of English language learners.

The Committee will help inform how the data are used by school and early childhood programs, families, and the broader community. As recommended by the National Research Council, precautions will be taken to ensure data are analyzed and reported in ways that are consistent with the assessment instrument's intended purposes and psychometric properties. At the onset, the vendor must provide a detailed plan for data analysis and reporting that will help prevent inappropriate uses of data, ensure results will be useful for informing and improving instruction, and allow for monitoring trends over time.

A particular concern in adapting any assessment tool is ensuring its reliability for Illinois' growing population of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. In Illinois, 25% of the population under age five is Latino and approximately 80% of the State's English language learners are Spanish speaking. ISBE, on behalf of the 23-state World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium, has been awarded a grant by the U.S. Department of Education to develop and implement Spanish language development (SLD) standards for students and to develop a practical, reliable and valid Spanish Academic Language Arts Standards and Assessment (SALSA) for students in Kindergarten and Grades 1-2. Planning for Illinois' kindergarten entry assessment process will be integrated with development of the SALSA grant ensuring that the observational methodology of the assessment will enable children coming from Spanish speaking backgrounds to demonstrate their language development in English and Spanish – providing a more holistic picture of language development.

3. Alignment With the State's Leadership in PARCC: In addition to its leadership role in the WIDA Consortium, Illinois is also one of eleven governing states for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) (one of two multi-state assessment consortia funded through the RTTT Assessment competition). Recognizing the importance of high-quality instruction in the early grades, PARCC has already allocated approximately \$10 million to design and develop optional K-2 formative assessment tools that monitor students' readiness and conform to guidelines established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Achieve, the project manager for PARCC, is convening a technical working group and commissioning a white paper to address how these assessments should align and

integrate with kindergarten readiness assessment efforts. Illinois has been selected by Achieve as one of two states to participate in an exploratory initiative that will include K-2 educator engagement meetings and a limited piloting of K-2 assessment items. The KIDS vendor and members of the KIDS Implementation Committee will participate in this initiative to ensure alignment of PARCC’s K-2 assessment development and KIDS. As a result of Illinois’ leadership role in both the WIDA and PARCC assessment consortia, Illinois is uniquely positioned to address the alignment of a high quality kindergarten readiness assessment as part of an assessment continuum for all learners.

Activity (E)(1)-1.2 Rationale: <i>KIDS must rely on a high-quality, valid, and appropriate instrument, administered by a highly capable vendor</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Request for Sealed Proposals issued	Oct. 18, 2011	ISBE
(2) Instrument and vendor selected	Jan - Feb 2012	ISBE, KIDS Implementation Committee
(3) Adaption of instrument	Feb - Aug 2012	ISBE, KIDS Implementation Committee

Activity (E)(1)-1.3:
Undertake a phased implementation plan to fully implement KIDS statewide by the 2014-15 school year

After selection of the KIDS vendor in early 2012, ISBE and the KIDS Implementation Committee will work with the vendor to initiate a phased KIDS implementation sequence that builds toward statewide implementation in the 2014-15 school year, as shown in the table below. The State’s phased implementation will include extensive teacher professional development, proactive family engagement, a validation study and a communications campaign, as described in the following activities.

Activity (E)(1)-1.3 Rationale: <i>A phased in approach will build capacity for statewide implementation</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Pilot implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFSP contemplates a pilot in approximately 200 schools, with a representative sample of students based on demographics, low-income status, cultural/linguistic differences, and geography (including a subset of schools in 	2012-13 School Year	ISBE, KIDS Vendor, in consultation with KIDS Implementation Committee

Chicago, suburban school districts, and rural school districts)		
(2) Second phase: All of Chicago and 20% of the kindergarten cohort in the remainder of the State <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As reflected in their letter of support in <i>Appendix (A)(3)-4</i>, Chicago Public Schools has committed to fully implement in 2013-14 	2013-14 School Year	ISBE, KIDS Vendor, in consultation with KIDS Implementation Committee
(3) KIDS will be administered to all children in the State enrolled in a public kindergarten classroom	2014-15 School Year (and beyond)	ISBE, KIDS Vendor, in consultation with KIDS Implementation Committee

Goal (E)(1)-2:

KIDS administration improves the observational capabilities of teachers, provides information that can be used to improve and align instruction, and actively includes families in the process

The success of KIDS is contingent upon extensive and appropriate professional development so that teachers appropriately administer the instrument, use the information to adjust instruction, and engage families in the process. As described in the following activities, Illinois has planned an extensive KIDS professional development program that addresses each of these areas.

Activity (E)(1)-2.1:

Provide professional development on child observation and the valid administration of KIDS

With its reliance on teacher observation and judgment, Illinois understands that KIDS cannot be effectively implemented without extensive supports for the educators responsible for its administration. The KIDS RFSP expects that each kindergarten teacher will receive at least two days of in-person training on observation protocols and the administration process, with follow-up on-line training modules to reduce “drift” in subsequent years. The RFSP contemplates that all professional development supports will be provided by the contractor during the initial 5-year term of the contract, but ISBE will have the right to license and self-administer professional development during any renewal term.

In addition to training for kindergarten teachers, each administering school district must establish at least one “KIDS Coach” for every 25 teachers to monitor variability of KIDS administration within and across schools in the district (smaller districts may elect to share a

KIDS Coach.) The KIDS Coaches will provide a necessary check on the consistency of implementation while providing a professional growth opportunity for early elementary educators. All coaches will be expected to be appropriately certified to teach kindergarten, have extensive experience in early childhood curriculum, and participate in periodic training and feedback sessions. As described in the below activity, the KIDS Coach will also serve as a support to teachers on the use of KIDS information to improve and align instruction. Funding is included in the KIDS budget for districts to support KIDS Coaches and other professional development activities during the grant period.

Table of Implementation Steps, Timeline, and Responsible Parties is located at the end of Goal 2.

Activity (E)(1)-2.2:
Provide Professional Development on the Use of KIDS Information to Improve and Align Instruction

Professional development will not solely focus on the validity and reliability of KIDS administration. Equally important, if not more so, professional development will be provided for teachers on the use of KIDS information to improve and align instruction in kindergarten and the early elementary grades. The KRA Stakeholders Committee extensively reviewed the Maryland Model for School Readiness, which integrates a rich professional development regimen with its assessment process.^{x1} Consistent with the Maryland model, KIDS will provide classroom teachers with information across all of the Essential Domains of School Readiness that can be used to respond effectively to a child's individual needs over the course of the kindergarten year. By including multiple observational assessments, KIDS will allow a teacher to reflect on a child's growth in relation to standards and adjust and target instruction accordingly. The KIDS Coaches' responsibilities will include periodic meetings with kindergarten teachers to analyze KIDS results and help identify effective instructional and intervention strategies based on the information.

The Illinois Shared Learning Environment (ISLE), further described in *Activity (E)(2)-2.2*, will serve as a key State support for improving kindergarten instruction based on KIDS information. Data from the KIDS administration will become a part of a student's record maintained within the ISLE, and then fed from the student record to a "Kindergarten Learning Map" to identify a student's progression against the learning goals for math and English language arts included within the Common Core State Standards for kindergarten. Based on this

progression, teachers will be able to immediately obtain additional resources and supports to address an individual student's or group of students' personalized learning needs in these subject areas, such as online tutorials, lesson plans, formative assessment resources, and digital content. As a condition of the vendor's contract for KIDS implementation, the vendor must integrate its web-based system for entering results and viewing reports with the ISLE. This integration will provide teachers with "single sign-on" access, through a common portal, to KIDS administration tools and reports and other resources available through the ISLE.

KIDS will also provide valuable information that can be used by professional learning communities to align instructional activities across the early elementary grades. Illinois' approach to Common Core State Standards implementation is focused on developing a cadre of teacher leaders who can lead cross-grade-level discussions and engage in site-based curriculum alignment. One of the professional development modules required to be developed by the KIDS vendor will be a module focused on use of KIDS data in cross-grade-level discussions and observations by early elementary instructors across all the "Essential Domains of School Readiness." This module will be developed in coordination with ISBE's Common Core State Standards implementation team, and training using this module will be expected of the KIDS Coaches and all early elementary education staff as part of the State's Common Core roll-out.

Table of Implementation Steps, Timeline, and Responsible Parties is located at the end of Goal 2.

<p><u>Activity (E)(1)-2.3:</u> Actively include families in the KIDS process</p>
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As is clear in the recommendations issued by the KIDS Advisory Committee, families must be engaged early and often in the KIDS implementation process as the most important and central resource to learn about a child's development and needs at the start of elementary school. KIDS administration will include professional development to principals and kindergarten teachers on the administration of a parent survey that will ask for developmental and background information about each child. In addition, teachers will be trained and supported through KIDS to regularly exchange information on each child's learning and development status with families. As the year progresses and teachers have the opportunity to observe children's skills in each domain, KIDS assessment information will be summarized into easy-to-read formats for teachers to share with families (in high-frequency languages other than English, as needed), along with suggestions for activities families can do at home to support specific areas of strength or need. In

these ways, elementary schools can mimic the types of communication strategies parents have come to expect with their early childhood providers and strengthen partnerships between families and schools.

Activity (E)(1)-2.1 - 2.3 Rationale: <i>An extensive professional development system will prepare teachers to appropriately administer the instrument, use KIDS information, and engage families</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Develop and finalize plan for statewide KIDS PD system	Feb - Aug 2012	KIDS Vendor, with oversight by ISBE and KIDS Implementation Committee
(2) Commence PD for pilot sites on child observation, use of KIDS information to improve and align instruction, and inclusion of families	Aug 2012	
(3) Commence PD for “second phase” sites on child observation, use of KIDS information to improve and align instruction, and inclusion of families	Aug 2013	
(4) Commence PD for remainder of State on child observation, use of KIDS information to improve and align instruction, and inclusion of families	Aug 2014	

Goal (E)(1)-3:

Data collected from KIDS will be used to inform statewide education policies and programs, engage the public on kindergarten readiness outcomes, and improve preschool instruction

Activity (E)(1)-3.1:

Report KIDS to the Illinois Longitudinal Data System to support policy analysis, public reporting, and a validation study

Collection and Reporting of Data. The KIDS vendor will be responsible for establishing a web-based system for the collection and reporting of outcome data from its administration. All student data will be collected through the web-based system and incorporated into a data file that includes each student’s Unique Student ID, which is used in the ISBE Student Information System (see (E)(2)). Through the State’s early learning data access and governance policies (as described in (E)(2)), KIDS outcome data can be used, along with other data maintained by the State, for both internal and external research and evaluation projects including the validation study of KIDS implementation.

KIDS Validation Study. Data obtained from the ISBE SIS and from local sources will be used to support a validation study of KIDS and its connection to student outcomes. Once the

Consortium for Early Learning Research (CELR) is established (see *Activity (A)(3)-1.3*), CELR will oversee this study and coordinate it with the other evaluations undertaken as part of this Plan. Validation of KIDS will be done through direct assessment of a stratified random sample of kindergarten children using a battery of valid, reliable measures of language, early literacy, early math, and social emotional skills, similar to the battery used in the national Early Childhood Longitudinal Studies. The evaluation will also include focus groups and surveys of teachers, principals, and parents.

Data for the study will be collected during the pilot implementation in the 2012-13 school year and the second phase implementation in the 2013-14 school year. Results of the study will be provided during the 2014-15 school year, and will address:

- i. The reliability and validity of the instrument and its administration across diverse groups of children, including English learners and children with disabilities;
- ii. The reliability and validity of the instrument and its administration across diverse groups of assessors;
- iii. The variability of results within and across schools and districts;
- iv. Whether training was delivered as intended, and adequately prepared teachers for the observational protocols;
- v. How the data are used within schools and with families, early childhood programs, and the broader community;
- vi. Recommendations for adjustments and improvements to the instrument, training for educators, and/or data reporting; and
- vii. Recommendations for changes to State preschool and early elementary policy to more effectively use KIDS to close the school readiness gap and improve preschool through early elementary instructional alignment.

The results of the validation study will be broadly shared with State policymakers and early childhood stakeholders, and the contract with the KIDS vendor will specifically require cooperation with the study and a response to its recommendations. Adjustments based on the study will then be incorporated into the renewal of the contract with the KIDS vendor and/or any subsequent procurement.

Activity (E)(1)-3.1 Rationale: <i>Data on KIDS and a validation study on its implementation will support its ongoing improvement</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Data from KIDS is reported to the Illinois Longitudinal Data System	Sep 2012 - end of grant	KIDS Vendor, ISBE
(2) RFP issued for KIDS validation study contractor, contractor selected	Feb - Apr 2012	ISBE, KIDS Implementation Committee
(3) Validation study undertaken	May - end of grant period	Contractor, ISBE, KIDS Implementation Committee
(4) Broadly report on outcomes of the study, use to improve the instrument and process	Jan - Jun 2015	Contractor, ISBE, KIDS Implementation Committee

Activity (E)(1)-3.2:
Build awareness of KIDS and the importance of kindergarten readiness through a communications campaign and readiness reports

The KIDS Implementation Committee will oversee the development and roll-out of a statewide KIDS communications campaign and public reporting strategy to build awareness of both the kindergarten assessment process and the importance of readiness outcomes. The communications campaign will engage local businesses, civic leaders, kindergarten teachers, principals, and preschool educators on the goals and objectives of KIDS, its intended purposes, the distinction between an observational assessment process and statewide assessments in grades 3 and above, and opportunities for use of KIDS information. The KIDS Implementation Committee will advise on the development of a variety of communication materials, including a KIDS section of the ISBE website, newsletters, talking points, and social media strategies. The communications campaign will be integrated with the development and launch of two types of “Readiness Reports” that target the use of KIDS information to improve learning outcomes.

First, kindergarten readiness indicators will be incorporated into the State’s redesign of its publicly available district- and school-level report cards, which is further described in (A)(3)). Commencing with the report cards issued in the fall of 2015, the redesigned report cards will include a metric called “Students who are ready for Kindergarten” that reports on school and district performance in relation to KIDS outcomes, including trend data and comparative information to schools/districts with similar characteristics. Working closely with the KIDS vendor, a joint working group of the KIDS Implementation Committee and P-20 Council will

finalize the metric and recommendations for how this metric can be used for constructive local engagement around preschool and elementary instructional alignment.

Second, information from KIDS will be provided in a “Kindergarten to Preschool Feedback Report” developed by the KIDS vendor in consultation with ISBE and the KIDS Implementation Committee. This report will be provided to preschool program directors through a secure portal managed by ISBE, and will contain aggregated KIDS outcome data (with small cell sizes masked for confidentiality) from children who previously attended the program with comparison to district- and statewide averages. Through the Kindergarten to Preschool Feedback Report, preschool program directors will obtain critical information to support alignment and program improvement activities.

Activity (E)(1)-3.2 Rationale: <i>Families, ELD Programs, and members of the public must understand the importance of kindergarten readiness</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) RFSP issued for communications contractor	Mar - May 2012	ISBE, KIDS Implementation Committee
(2) Implementation of communications campaign	Jun 2012 - end of grant period	KIDS communication contractor, ISBE, KIDS Implementation Committee
(3) Kindergarten to Preschool Feedback Reporting commences	Oct 2015	KIDS Vendor, ISBE
(4) Kindergarten readiness indicators reported	Oct 2015	KIDS Vendor; P-20 Council, KIDS Implementation Committee

Summary--Criterion (E)(1)

Illinois has partially implemented this exceptionally high quality Plan for a statewide Kindergarten Entry Measure by commencing all necessary rulemaking and issuing the RFSP for the KIDS vendor. KIDS will provide the data that the State needs to track its progress toward its ultimate goal of ensuring that all children enter school “fully ready,” and that the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers is eliminated. KIDS will also provide local communities with the data they need to hold themselves accountable for ensuring all children are receiving early learning supports and are ready to succeed upon kindergarten entry.

SELECTION CRITERION (E)(1)	
ELEMENTS, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE	
(No Required Evidence for this Criterion)	
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN
(a) KEA is aligned with the State’s ELD Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness	Described in <i>Activity (E)(1)-1.2</i> , Paragraph 1. Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adoption of Illinois Early Learning & Development Standards ((C)(1))
(b) KEA is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and purpose for which it will be used, including for ELL and children with disabilities	Described in <i>Activity (E)(1)-1.2</i> , Paragraph 2; will be evaluated as part of the KIDS validation study in <i>Activity (E)(1)-3.1</i> .
(c) Is administered no later than the start of SY 14-15 to children entering a public school kindergarten	Described in <i>Activity (E)(1)-1.3</i> ; see also <i>Appendix (B)(1)-2</i> (ISBE’s KIDS regulations that have commenced the State regulatory adoption process)
(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws	Described in <i>Activity (E)(1)-3.1</i> Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Activity (E)(2)-1.1</i> (legal and governance framework for the State longitudinal data system that addresses privacy protection laws and data security)
(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant	Described in <i>Activity (E)(1)-1.1</i> , Paragraph 3; KIDS budget in <i>Appendix (A)(4)-1</i> . 69% of the KIDS budget is state-funded.
INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES	KIDS is administered in kindergarten, but the communications campaign and public reporting strategies will focus all ELD Programs in a community on improving kindergarten readiness. The Preschool to Kindergarten Feedback Report will provide information to preschool programs to improve and align instruction. Described in <i>Activities (E)(1)-3.2</i> .
ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS	See (b) above.

(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

- (a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- (b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- (c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;
- (d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for ELD Programs and EC Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and
- (e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Illinois' (E)(2) Response

Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies

In recent years, the State of Illinois has been working diligently toward the goal of having a unified early childhood data system that links information across programs to improve policy and practice. While that work to date has created strong system components, much more remains to be done to provide the deep level of system-wide data integration needed to support the State's overall reform agenda. This Plan will weave together the components of Illinois' early learning data system infrastructure into a unified system, align that system with Head Start & Early Head Start data collection processes, and enable early childhood practitioners and families to better use data to improve child outcomes.

Illinois' Foundation for Success

Illinois currently has in place a Statewide Longitudinal Data System that, in coordination with systems administered by the ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS, includes all of the Essential Data Elements as defined in the Early Learning Challenge Application (*see Table (A)(1)-13*). Notably,

the statewide longitudinal education data system includes a full array of Birth to 5 elements, which establishes the framework for many of the data integration and enhancement activities included in this Plan.

The legal foundation for Illinois' statewide longitudinal education data system is the P-20 Longitudinal Data System Act (105 ILCS 13/5 *et seq.*). Enacted in 2009, this Act establishes a comprehensive framework and governance structure for the State's longitudinal education data system - a framework that earned Illinois the Data Quality Campaign's 2009 Leadership Award. The Act contemplates that early childhood data will be an integral component of the State's longitudinal education data system, specifically stating that the efforts of the IELC to establish a unified early childhood data system will be coordinated with the longitudinal education data system, and requiring the State education agencies to link education data with health and human services data. 105 ILCS 13/5(4); 13/15(b). The IELC has formed a Data Work Group to provide input on the design of a unified early childhood data system and the State's longitudinal education data system development, which includes representation from State agencies, local providers, and other public and private early learning stakeholders. The Data Work Group has identified "Key Policy Questions" to inform the technical design work (see *Appendix (E)(2)-1*), and recently worked with the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development to issue a Request for Proposals for technical services needed to advance various elements of this Plan.

Goal (E)(2)-1:

The collection, maintenance, and use of Early Childhood Data is coordinated and integrated across systems, including data maintained by State agencies and Head Start/Early Head Start grantees

Through this Plan, Illinois will build on its strong foundation to better integrate the Essential Data Elements into a limited number of "primary" systems, facilitate uniform data collection and interoperability standards for all early childhood data, and incorporate Head Start and Early Head Start data into the state longitudinal education data system.

Activity (E)(2)-1.1:

Establish the legal and governance framework for the sharing of data among Participating State Agencies

The P-20 Longitudinal Data System Act contemplates a federated model of coordinated systems linked by data sharing agreements. Within the ELC Agreement, ISBE, IDHS, IDCFS,

the IELC, and OECD have established the necessary legal framework for the data system enhancements described in this (E)(2) and contemplated by the P-20 Longitudinal System Act. Specifically, in addition to agreeing to carry out all of the activities under this Criterion, these parties have also established an early learning data governance structure for interagency data sharing and reviewing external data access requests (see ELC Agreement, V.E, *Appendix (A)(3)-1*). The structure includes the establishment of an Early Learning Data Review Committee with representation from each of the parties that will review and provide recommendations on proposals to access data for evaluation or research activities, including those initiated by one of the parties or by external researchers. The external researcher access provisions will help enable the work of the Consortium for Early Learning Research, as it manages a statewide early learning research agenda (see *Activity (A)(3)-1.3*). Under the ELC Agreement, all data sharing arrangements are strictly governed by specific data access, use, and security restrictions and applicable privacy protection laws.

In addition to the data governance and oversight provisions in the ELC Agreement, ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS have each enacted data governance policies that address the Data System Oversight Requirements, as defined in the application (see *Appendix (E)(2)-2*). These policies will be aligned and strengthened through the data quality and security component of the Illinois Common Identifier Project, discussed in *Activity (E)(2)-1.2* below. ISBE has also adopted and posted on its website “Data Access and Use Policy and Procedures” (i.e., a transparency policy, as defined in the application) applicable to its early learning data (see *Appendix (E)(2)-3*). Under the ELC Agreement, IDHS and IDCFS each agree to adopt a similar transparency policy by no later than July 1, 2012, and to post the adopted policy on their respective websites (ELC Agreement, V.E.6, *Appendix (A)(3)-1*).

Activity (E)(2)-1.1 Rationale: <i>A defined data governance structure is needed to manage alignment and unification</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Establish and convene the Early Learning Data Review Committee	Jan-Feb 2012	ISBE
(2) Adopt data access and use policy and procedures	Jan - June 2012	IDCFS, IDHS

Activity (E)(2)-1.2:
Designate and Enhance Primary Systems for Data on Children & Families, Workforce, and Programs

The categories of data included within the application’s definition of “Essential Data Elements” logically fall into three categories, as shown below:

ESSENTIAL DATA ELEMENTS CATEGORIES		
Children & Families	Workforce	Program
(a) A unique statewide child identifier	(b) A unique statewide Early Childhood Educator identifier	(c) A unique program site identifier
(d) Child and family demographic information	(e) Early Childhood Educator demographic information	(f) Program-level data, ... including all applicable data reported as part of TQRIS
(g) Child-level program participation and attendance data		

For each of these categories, the Participating State Agencies have identified a “Primary System” that will serve as the central data source for State research and analysis, external data sharing arrangements, and the provision of data for end-user applications and reports. By integrating data into primary systems, early learning and development data from across State systems will be aggregated and maintained using a consistent data structure and format and made more easily accessible for implementation of the activities in this Plan.

Children & Families Primary System: ISBE Student Information System, Integrated with the Illinois Common Identifier Project

The ISBE Student Information System (“ISBE SIS”) is a state-level student information system through which extensive data is collected on participants in ISBE programs. As the “backbone” of the agency’s data warehouse, this system collects and maintains extensive student, early learning program, school, and district-level data. The ISBE SIS assigns each child a Unique Student ID - a randomly created identification number assigned the moment a child commences participation in any ISBE-funded program (including its Birth-3 and Preschool-funded programs). The Unique Student ID follows a child into kindergarten, and on through their progression into Illinois public and private postsecondary institutions. (See *Appendix (E)(2)-4* for examples of early childhood data elements collected in SIS, and a description of its collection processes.)

Illinois Common Identifier Project. Through the Illinois Common Identifier Project, data on children and families maintained within the ISBE SIS will be integrated with a much broader array

of data on children and families for analytical, program administration, research, and user application purposes. Illinois education, workforce development and human services agencies, including the Participating State Agencies, are undertaking the Illinois Common Identifier Project in order to establish a common identifier system to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of matching individual records among partner agencies participating in a distributed longitudinal data system model (see *Appendix (E)(2)-4* for a listing of agencies participating in this project). This system will enable the Participating State Agencies to utilize the expansive repository of early childhood data within the ISBE SIS to link, as appropriate and based on data sharing protocols and agreements, with other relevant data on children and families to better understand the relationships among a wide range of policy-relevant factors, such as health care, immunizations, family workforce participation, and child development outcomes.

The Illinois Common Identifier Project involves the following components (with the first component substantially completed):

a. *Identifier Inventory.* The State agencies participating in this project have developed a common approach for matching individual records that utilizes a common set of core personal identifiers (e.g., Last Name, First Name, Middle Initial, Birthdate, Gender) and a common set of rules for conducting matches and rating confidence in these matches. The State agency partners have also identified additional identifiers elements (e.g., Race/Ethnicity, Address/Location, Agency Program ID, Name History) to improve the matching confidence.

b. *Shared Reference Table and Agency Integration Plans.* At the heart of this project is the creation of a shared reference table containing the distributed agency identifiers compiled from all agency partners, and a plan and process for each agency to integrate their systems with the reference table. Through this reference table, early learning and development data from multiple agencies can be aggregated and provisioned to support internal State analysis, external research agreements authorized by State and federal privacy protection laws, and support user applications such as the Data for Community Systems and Illinois Shared Learning Environment projects discussed in *Activities (E)(2)-2.1 and 2.2*.

c. *Data Quality and Security Framework.* As part of this project, State agency partners will benchmark their data systems and matching methodologies against leading

public-private data quality and security standards. A criteria checklist will be developed to guarantee each system can ensure consistent quality, reliability, and security to record matching. Usage of the reference table solution will also provide safeguards that ensure no confidential information can be accessed unless permitted by the agencies overseeing their portion of the distributed longitudinal data system, and the access is permitted under state and federal privacy protection laws including FERPA and HIPAA.

The Common Identifier Project commenced in July 2011, with all three components identified above estimated to be completed in December 2013. Although the State is seeking Workforce Data Quality Initiative (WDQI) funding from the U. S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration for this project, if WDQI funding is not received, the State has identified other funding resources to enable its completion without reliance on RTTT ELC funds. ISBE will manage the integration of early learning and development data into the Common Identifier Project shared reference table and the creation of the early learning Data Quality and Security Framework for the use and provisioning of early learning data.

Early Childhood Workforce Data Primary System: Gateways to Opportunity Registry

Currently, over 10,000 EC Educators have profiles within the Gateways to Opportunity Registry, as further described in (D)(2). (See *Appendix (E)(2)-4* for examples of workforce data elements collected in the Registry and a description of its collection processes). Through the activities described below, the Registry will be expanded to include essentially all 60,000 EC Educators in the State, allowing it to serve as the State's primary early childhood workforce data repository for ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, analysis of workforce trends and qualifications, and the provision of supports to educators.

1. Alignment with Licensing Requirements: IDCFS has initiated a regulatory change applicable to all of its licensed ELD Programs requiring that, by no later than July 1, 2012, all directors and child care staff members must establish a profile within the Registry.^{xli} After July 1, 2012, newly hired directors and child care staff must establish a profile within the Registry within 30 days of hire. With all practitioners in licensed programs included, the Registry will provide IDCFS with a verified, single source of information to track whether practitioners have completed its annual training requirements.

2. Integration with ISBE Early Childhood Workforce Data: The ISBE teacher certification data collection system currently collects and maintains data on educators with certification to teach in classrooms in Illinois with children birth through age 8 (the “Type 04” certificate). Most of these teachers work in school buildings exempt from licensing, and therefore will not be included in the Registry under the IDCFS licensing rule change discussed above. Through RTTT ELC funding, ISBE, IDHS, and INCCRRA will fully automate the integration of data from ISBE’s certification system to establish a Registry profile for these educators, which will avoid duplicative data entries on behalf of these teachers and provide a means of verifying certification information maintained within the Registry. In addition, ISBE has initiated an amendment to its ECBG to require that non-certified teacher aides working with children in State funded preschool programs establish a profile within the Registry by no later than July 1, 2012 (*see Appendix (B)(1-2)*).

Early Childhood Program Primary Data System: INCCRRA’s Data Tracking Program

Through an agreement with IDHS, INCCRRA has established the Data Tracking Program (“DTP”), a provider database that includes data on every type of licensed and license-exempt child care centers and family child care homes. The DTP also includes the TQRIS profile for all programs enrolled in Quality Counts, which includes information about the program’s eligibility criteria, including required training completion, staff qualifications, program accreditation, and assessment scores (with plans underway to capture item-level scores from the ERS and PAS/BAS scales). With the expansion of Quality Counts to all State-licensed and funded preschool programs as described in this Plan, the DTP will serve as a critical source of information for TQRIS monitoring and the technology platform for providing TQRIS supports. (See *Appendix (E)(2)-4* for information on program types and numbers included in DTP, and examples of program data elements collected in DTP.)

Through the following activities, DTP will be fully integrated with the State’s licensing and preschool funding approval systems and processes:

1. Integration with IDCFS Licensing: Currently, DTP receives licensure data from IDCFS on a quarterly basis, which permits local CCR&Rs to contact the program to obtain information to establish its DTP profile. Commencing in 2013, IDCFS will provide licensure data to DTP on a daily basis, using the use the same file format and exchange

method as currently used. DTP will then automatically establish the program’s DTP profile and enroll the program within the web-based TQRIS system. The DTP profile will allow the program to understand its current TQRIS star level, and connect it to “Roadmaps to Quality” (discussed in (B)(4)) to develop a plan and access resources to advance to the next star level.

2. Integration with ISBE Preschool Data. In 2013, ISBE will provide site-level data on all state-funded preschool programs to INCCRRA via real-time web service integration, allowing the automatic establishment or updating of the program’s DTP profile and enrollment or update of enrollment within the web-based TQRIS system.
3. Establishment of a Program Site Identifier Reference Table and Classroom Identifier. ISBE, IDCFS and DTP all have unique program site identifiers within their respective systems. Through RTTT ELC funding, DTP will establish a reference table that will link the various identifiers across all three systems. In addition, INCCRRA is in the process of implementing a classroom identifier for all classrooms within a particular program listed in DTP, with the classroom identification system planned to be in place by January 1, 2013. Through this Plan, the classroom identifier will also be integrated into ISBE’s SIS collection processes, so that classroom-level data can be used to link teachers to the children they are serving for purposes such as the Illinois Shared Learning Environment (see *Activity (E)(2)-2.2.*).

Activity (E)(2)-1.2, Designate and Enhance Primary Systems Rationale: <i>Designation and enhancement of the primary systems will make the data more usable and accessible for purposes consistent with this Plan</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Complete implementation of the Illinois Common Identifier Project	Jul 2011 - Dec 2013	Project participants identified in <i>Appendix (E)(2)-4.</i>
(2) Require directors and child care staff members to establish a profile within the Gateways to Opportunity Registry	IDCFS requirement effective 7/1/12	IDCFS
(3) Integrate ISBE early childhood workforce data with the Registry	Oct 2011 - Dec 2012	ISBE, INCCRRA
(4) Integrate IDCFS licensing data with DTP	Oct 2011 - Dec 2012	IDCFS, INCCRRA
(5) Integrate ISBE Preschool and DTP Data	Jan 2012 - Jun 2013	ISBE, INCCRRA

(6) Establish a program site identifier reference table and classroom identifier	Jan 2012 - Jun 2013	ISBE, INCCRRA
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Activity (E)(2)-1.3:
Use common data standards, building from Illinois' leadership with the State Core Model and CEDS, for all State systems collecting early childhood data

Illinois is a national leader in the implementation of common education data standards. The Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) data mapping workbook and CEDS Adoption Implementation Task Force framework rely heavily on work first carried out in Illinois to establish the standards for ISBE's Data Warehouse. This Warehouse is based on the State Core Model, and includes a complete set of early childhood data elements aligned with CEDS. In the ELC Agreement, the Participating State Agencies have agreed to use the CEDS model as implemented in ISBE's Data Warehouse as the common early child data standards across all State agencies, with extensions and adaptations as necessary for individual agency needs. Using State Advisory Council on Early Education and Care grant funds, OECD has issued a Request for Proposals for a consultant who will: (i) analyze the education data model adopted by ISBE for its Data Warehouse; and (ii) recommend extensions or adaptations of this data model as necessary so that it can serve as common early childhood data standards across all early childhood systems. Funding is allocated in this Plan's budget to apply CEDS standards, where applicable, to data integrated through the Common Identifier Project and other data sharing arrangements under this Plan.

Activity (E)(2)-1.3 Rationale: <i>Common standards will facilitate data interoperability</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Consultant selected through SAC RFP developments recommendations for CEDS alignment	Jan 2012 - Jun 2013	SAC Data consultant
(2) Early learning data systems mapped and aligned to CEDS	Jul 2013 - Dec 2014	ISBE, INCCRRA, IDHS, IDCFS, Illinois Head Start Association

Activity (E)(2)-1.4:
Integrate Head Start and Early Head Start data into the Primary Systems through the establishment of the Illinois Head Start Data Cooperative

As reflected in the Illinois Head Start Association’s letter of support, the Illinois Head Start and Early Head Start Community has agreed to form the Illinois Head Start Data Cooperative (ILHSDC), through which the Illinois Head Start Association will develop and maintain a common data file containing child-level demographic and developmental data and program site (grantee) information on all Head Start and Early Head Start programs in the State. (Head Start and Early Head Start workforce data will be captured through the Registry.) Using State Advisory Council on Early Education and Care grant funds, OECD has issued a Request for Proposals for a consultant who will analyze and recommend strategies for developing this common data file in a manner aligned with the data formats and requirements included within the ISBE SIS (for data on children and families) and DTP (for program data), with the analysis and recommendations due in the third quarter of calendar year 2012. Funds are included in the RTTT ELC budget to carry out these recommendations during calendar year 2013 and the remainder of the grant period. By aggregating all Head Start and Early Head Start data into a common file using the same format as the Participating State Agencies, the process of establishing the necessary data sharing arrangements and performing matching involving Head Start/Early Head Start data will be greatly simplified.

Activity (E)(2)-1.4 Rationale: <i>Head Start and Early Head Start data must be fully integrated with other early learning data to have a complete picture of the Statewide system</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Integrate Head Start and Early Head Start data into the Primary Systems through the establishment of the Illinois Head Start Data Cooperative.	Jan 2012 - Jun 2013	Illinois Head Start Assoc., ISBE, IDCFS, IDHS, INCCRRA

Goal (E)(2)-2:
The Illinois early learning data system generates information that is timely, relevant, and accessible to support continuous improvement and decision making

Through RTTT ELC, Illinois is focused on expanding the accessibility and usefulness of information to support key elements of the State’s reform agenda, which include (i) linking families with High Need Children to high quality supports and services through a community

collaboration infrastructure; and (ii) supporting ELD Programs serving High Need Children in their advancement from “good” to “great.”

Activity (E)(2)-2.1:
**Integrate Referral, Tracking, and Program Information Systems to Ensure
All High Need Children Receive a Broad Array of Necessary Supports**

For a statewide community collaboration strategy to be successful, it must have an information technology platform that enables families to access real-time information on the availability of services within a community and allows collaborations to receive information on the disposition of services and monitor outcomes. The “**Data for Community Systems Project**” (**DCSP**) will provide that platform by aligning and enhancing three systems: (1) IDHS’ in-process **redesign of its Early Intervention data system**, which will make the system completely web-based and allow real-time integration of Early Intervention data with other State and local systems; (2) the **Statewide Provider Database (SPD)**, a web-based comprehensive resource administered by IDCFS on services to support at-risk families, in wide use by caseworkers and community partners; and (3) **GP3S (Guiding People, Providers and Parents through Systems)**, a database and tracking system originally developed by a community collaboration network on the Westside of Chicago that IDHS is in the process of expanding statewide.

The integration of these projects will provide support to each step in the State’s community collaboration framework, as follows:

- At a family’s point of entry with a provider, DCSP will provide a web-based template for providers to perform a comprehensive review of the family’s needs, using four domains of need developed in GP3S: mental/physical health resources, community support services, family support services, and early education and intervention services.
- Based on this assessment, the provider can link to data in the SPD to identify providers in that community with current availability for services to address a wide range of child development or family support needs.
- If appropriate, a Primary Care Provider (or other provider performing the screening) will refer a family to a Child and Family Connections (CFC) office for evaluation for Part C services. If the CFC does not find the child eligible for Part C services, DCSP can be

used to provide information on other available services to meet the child’s developmental needs.

- DCSP will permit State agencies and local community collaborations to track the disposition of referrals and monitor the outcome of services. Where necessary and appropriate, DCPS will include a parental consent “business process” to permit the sharing of data on children and families for monitoring and follow-up.

At the aggregate level, information from DCPS, together with other data maintained in the statewide longitudinal data system, will enable State policymakers and local providers to answer, for the first time, key policy questions such as: Are children being referred for appropriate medical and social services needs at the earliest possible point, or are they not receiving services and “re-emerging” later in their educational and developmental progression? How much time is passing between the referral and receipt of services? What types of services are being provided to whom, which agencies are providing them, and what services are demonstrating the most impact on child outcomes?

The DCSP rollout plan will be administered by the Consortium for Community Systems Development (see *Activity (A)(3)-1.3*) and will initially focus on Concentrated High Need Communities. The roll-out plan will include outreach and training to Primary Care Providers and CFCs, an inventory of local ELD Programs to ensure near universal inclusion in the SPD, and training for the programs through the community collaboration infrastructure. With lessons learned through the initial roll-out, the integrated system will then be offered on a statewide basis.

Activity (E)(2)-2.1 Rationale: <i>ELD Programs need real-time information about resources available to families of High-Need Children.</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Integrate redesigned Early Intervention data system, SPD, and GP3S	Jul 2012 - Dec 2013	IDHS, IDCFS, Illinois Project LAUNCH, Consortium for Community Systems Development (CCSD)
(2) Training and support for implementation and use in Concentrated High Need Communities	Jun 2013 - Dec 2015	IDHS, IDCFS, Illinois Project LAUNCH, CCSD

(3) Commence statewide roll-out	Jun 2014	IDHS, IDCFS, Illinois Project LAUNCH, CCSD
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Activity (E)(2)-2.2:
Extend the Illinois Shared Learning Environment to ELD Programs

Illinois is leveraging significant national and state-level investments to create a next generation technology platform that will fundamentally transform the ways in which EC Educators use data to establish a high-quality instructional program for young children. The Shared Learning Collaborative, an alliance formed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, is in the process of implementing the Shared Learning Initiative (SLI), an open-source system that will enable states to provide administrators, teachers, parents, and other education stakeholders with an array of affordable, high-quality content and tools in a framework that integrates with states’ existing data management systems. Illinois is one of five states chosen by the Shared Learning Collaborative to first implement the SLI. As an initial implementation state, the SLI will be piloted and operational in at least one Illinois school district by the end of calendar year 2012, with a scaling up to other Illinois school districts in 2013.

The SLI builds on extensive State-level work dating back to 2009, when Illinois first developed a vision and technical requirements for a cloud computing system architecture for instructional improvement as part of the State’s initial Race to the Top application. The State has committed significant resources to move this vision forward, including \$12 million in *Illinois Jobs Now* capital bill funding by Governor Quinn and \$4.2 million in ARRA technology funds by ISBE. Illinois has designated this statewide instructional improvement platform, including the SLI and the State’s enhancements and additions, as the “Illinois Shared Learning Environment” (ISLE).

With this Plan, Illinois intends to take a national leadership role by extending the ISLE cloud computing environment to early learning. The major components and processes of ISLE are shown in the architecture diagram included in Appendix (E)(2)-5:

- Data flows into ISLE from State systems such as the ISBE SIS, Gateways to Opportunity Registry, and DTP that have added additional fields as necessary to support key ISLE applications;

- Within the ISLE environment, (i) data from source systems is processed and validated; (ii) a role-based security system controls access to data and applications; and (iii) integrated data on a child links to a “learning map” that identifies a student’s progression against age-appropriate learning goals derived from the applicable ELD Standards or K-12 Learning Standards; and
- An extensive applications repository provides access to: (i) custom portals for administrators, teachers, and parents; (ii) child profile information in a unified view; (iii) dashboard information across children in a classroom or program; (iv) collaboration applications that help establish professional learning communities; and (v) other applications supporting instruction and program delivery, such as curriculum and formative assessment supports, professional development planning tools, TQRIS analysis and planning tools, and learning applications targeted to parents. The SLI’s Application Programming Interface (API) strictly governs applications’ access to the data store.

Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge funds will only be used to support extension of ISLE to early learning. As shown in Appendix (E)(2)-5, major components of the system architecture are being funded through the \$100 million philanthropic investment in the SLI and the State’s other investments in ISLE.

In the early learning context, ISLE is planned to deliver resources and supports for teachers, program directors, and parents, as detailed in the descriptions of key applications and conceptual portals for each group included in *Appendix (E)(2)-5*. The vignettes in *Appendix (E)(2)-5* demonstrate the power of ISLE to positively impact the work of EC Educators and program directors, and allow parents to better engage in early learning instruction. ISLE will be the primary information technology platform driving Illinois’ education reform agenda for decades to come. By extending this environment to early learning, this Plan enables revolutionary improvements in early learning instruction by providing teachers, directors, and parents with a personalized, affordable, and easily accessible array of supports and services.

Activity (E)(2)-2.2 Rationale: <i>State and philanthropic investments in a next-generation instructional improvement platform can transform how early learning data is used to improve child outcomes</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) (a) Extension and enhancement of ISLE source systems (b) Selection of pilot communities & user-based focus groups	Jan 2012 - Dec 2012	ISBE, SLI collaborative,

(c) Develop Early Learning Maps, Early Learning Portals, Dashboards, and Child Profile Applications (d) Prepare Gateways to Opportunity for ISLE integration		INCCRRA, ILHSA
(2) (a) Pilot commences in three locations with Preschool for All, Head Start programs, and existing community collaboration infrastructure (one in Chicago, one in suburban Chicago, and one downstate) (b) “Alpha” pilot release in Fall 2013 (testing of key user applications) (c) “Beta” pilot release by end of calendar year 2013 (applications available to program directors, teachers, and parents)	Jan 2013 - Dec 2013	ISBE, SLI collaborative, INCCRRA, ILHSA
(3) (a) Extend implementation, on a voluntary basis, to all Preschool for All and Head Start programs (b) Pilot implementation in day-care homes and non-Preschool for All/Head Start Centers	Jan 2014 - Dec 2014	ISBE, SLI collaborative, INCCRRA, ILHSA
(4) Extend implementation, on a voluntary basis, to centers not participating in Preschool for All or Head Start	Jan 2015 - Dec 2015	ISBE, SLI collaborative, INCCRRA, ILHSA

Summary--Criterion (E)(2)

Illinois is a national leader in developing and implementing an integrated data system for its K-12 educational system. The State has already extended the Statewide Longitudinal Database to include all children in ISBE-funded early childhood programs, including infants and toddlers. This Plan allows the State to build upon this fully implemented framework and capitalize on the power of a unified database to support coordination of services, outreach to families, program continuous improvement, and individualized student instruction. The Plan directly addresses all of Illinois’ Strategic Reform Priorities.

SELECTION CRITERION (E)(2) ELEMENTS, PROGRAMS, AND POPULATIONS TABLE (No Required Evidence for this Criterion)	
ELEMENT	INCLUSION IN PLAN
(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements	Described in <i>Table (A)(1)-12; Activity (E)(2)-1.2</i> describes how the systems containing these elements will be enhanced and better integrated.
(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements and easy entry of elements by agencies and programs	Description: Uniform data collection is described in <i>Activity (E)(2)-1.2</i> ; easy entry of elements for each “Primary System” is described in <i>Appendix (E)(2)-4</i> , as referenced in <i>Activity (E)(2)-1.2</i> .

(c) Facilitates the exchange of data	Described in <i>Activity (E)(2)-1.3</i>
(d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible and easy to use for continuous improvement and decision-making	Described in <i>Activity (E)(2)-2.1</i> (Data for Community Systems project) and <i>(E)(2)-2.2</i> (Illinois Shared Learning Environment) Links to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Activity (C)(1)-2.3</i> (web-based supports for use of ELD Standards) • <i>(C)(2)</i> - (comp assessment systems) • <i>(C)(4)</i>- (use of Data for Community Systems Project to facilitate parent engagement) • <i>Activity (E)(1)-2.2</i> (KIDS integration with ISLE)
(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data governance policy • Transparency policy Complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.	Described in <i>Activity (E)(2)-1.1</i> ; see also ELC Agreement, V.E, <i>Appendix (A)(3)-2</i> .
INCLUSION OF DIFFERENT EL&D PROGRAM TYPES	Described in <i>Activity (E)(2)-1.2</i> (the Primary systems include data from across all program types)
ADDRESSING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS	Described in <i>Activity (E)(2)-1.2</i> and <i>Appendix (E)(2)-4</i> (ISBE SIS inclusion of data on English learners and children with disabilities); <i>(E)(2)-2.1</i> (using Data for Community Systems Project to provide supports for high need children, including English learners and children with disabilities); <i>Appendix (E)(2)-5</i> , ISLE “vignette” for teachers, describing supports for children with disabilities.

VII. COMPETITION PRIORITIES

Note about the Absolute Priority: *The absolute priority describes items that a State must address in its application in order to receive a grant. Applicants do not write a separate response to this priority. Rather, they address this priority throughout their responses to the selection criteria. Applications must meet the absolute priority to be considered for funding. A State meets the absolute priority if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the absolute priority*

Priority 1: Absolute Priority – Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.

To meet this priority, the State’s application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of ELD Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State’s application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of ELD Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (Criteria (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Note about Competitive Preference Priorities: *Competitive preference priorities can earn the applicant extra or “competitive preference” points.*

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority – Including all ELD Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. (10 points)

Competitive Preference Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State’s licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will receive points for this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30, 2015--

(a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will score this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and

(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated ELD Programs participate.

Illinois' Response: Competitive Preference Priority 2

Including all ELD Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

Illinois' Foundation for Success

The IDCFS administrative rules for day care licensing specify those providers that do and do not require a license to regularly provide care for children for a fee in a provider setting.^{xliii} The licensing process for all provider types (whether home-based or non-home-based) involves an onsite inspection, and licensed providers receive an annual unannounced inspection visit. As described in (A)(1), the IDCFS licensing process has been nationally recognized for its strong health and safety requirements, among other areas.

Centers. For non-home-based providers (i.e., “centers”), a summary of licensing exemptions is included in *Appendix CPP-1*, which shows that the State’s day care center licensing regulations include nine program exemptions for reasons other than the number of children cared for. While these programs are therefore excluded from consideration for purposes of this Competitive Preference Priority, *Appendix CPP-1* demonstrates that almost all of these program types are regulated by the State through some other mechanism, such as through the School Code and/or through local fire and health codes. By definition, a non-home based “day care center” is a facility which regularly provides day care for more than 3 children. Based on IDCFS analysis and experience, the State does not believe there are any “day-care centers” that (a) do not otherwise fall into one of the nine exemptions for reasons other than the number of children cared for, *and* (b) who regularly care for only two or three unrelated children for a fee.

Home-based Providers. An analysis of IDHS records shows that less than 1% of children receiving CCAP are served by home-based providers that regularly care for two or three unrelated children for a fee. These “small” providers are exempt from current IDCFS licensing rules for family homes, which only apply to providers who care for four or more children who are not all from the same family.^{xliiii} Therefore, to establish a licensing and inspection system that covers all home-based programs that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting, IDCFS must extend its regulation of home-based providers to those caring for two or three unrelated children.

Through this Plan, IDCFS will implement a new regulatory structure for “small day care homes” — a family home that receives two or three unrelated children for a fee — that includes all such facilities caring for children ages birth to 5 within the State’s licensing and inspection system by no later than June 30, 2015. Since the State’s licensing process is integrated with TQRIS (see (B)(2)), and *Activity CPP-2.1* below), the Illinois TQRIS will also include all licensed or State-regulated ELD Programs by no later than June 30, 2015.

Goal 1:
All “small day care homes” that care for children ages birth to 5 are included within the State’s licensing and inspection system by no later than June 30, 2015

Activity CPP-1.1:
Consult with a stakeholder task force on the content of the administrative rules for small day care homes

In the months leading up to this application, IDCFS has determined it has the necessary legal authority to regulate “small day care homes”^{xliv} and has drafted and submitted to the Early Learning Council for discussion proposed regulations to implement a licensing system for these homes. While IDCFS has drafted proposed regulations for small day care homes, it has not had the opportunity to engage in the type of stakeholder outreach and discussion that it would normally undertake prior to such a substantial rulemaking. IDCFS will convene a task force in early 2012 consisting of representatives from providers, children’s advocates, health and safety experts, and other stakeholders to determine the appropriate scope of regulations for small day care homes and how the regulations should differ, if at all, from homes caring for more children.

Activity CPP-1.1 Rationale: <i>Stakeholder engagement leads to improved regulations with more buy-in for implementation</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Convene stakeholder task force.	Jan 2012	IDCFS
(2) Task force develops recommendations to inform the final version of regulations IDCFS files to commence administrative rulemaking.	Feb-May 2012	Task force, IDCFS

Activity CPP-1.2:
Complete the administrative rulemaking process and obtain funding for implementation of a 3-year phased in licensing process

IDCFS licenses all childcare facilities on a three-year cycle. Traditionally, when a new licensing requirement has been established, IDCFS has phased it in over a three year period so that it does not have to “over hire” staff for a large initial provider intake that will be monitored and subject to renewal on a three-year cycle. Similarly, the licensing system for small day care homes will be phased in over three years, commencing July 1, 2013. IDCFS proposes that the system apply to day care homes serving all ages of children, but will prioritize the phase-in of homes serving at least one child age birth to 5 within the first two years of the system’s implementation, so that all small day care homes serving young children are within the system by June 30, 2015.

Unlike many states, Illinois does not use federal quality dollars for its child care licensing system. Illinois does not want to establish a precedent through this grant of using federal dollars for child care licensing, and therefore the costs of staff, supervisors, clerical and all operational support costs (including fingerprinting and background checks) will be paid with State funds. The additional cost of licensing small day care homes will be included in the Coordinated Early Learning Budget Proposal (see *Activity (A)(3)-1.1*), and all signatories to the ELC Agreement have agreed to support this budget request.

The IDCFS scope of work in the ELC Agreement includes a commitment to commence and complete administrative rulemaking and hire the necessary staff so that it can commence implementation of the licensing system on June 30, 2013, subject to State funding for the system’s costs. The Governor, Participating State Agencies, and the Early Learning Council fully expect that with their strong commitment to the establishment of this system, adequate funding will be appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly for its successful implementation.

Activity CPP-1.2 Rationale: <i>A phased in licensing procedure avoids unnecessary upfront costs, and the State does not want to establish a precedent of federal funding for its licensing operations</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Initiation of administrative rulemaking process for small day care homes	Jun 2012	IDCFS
(2) Administrative rulemaking process completed	Dec 2012	IDCFS

(3) Staff are hired and system is established	Jan - Jun 2013	IDCFS
(4) Licensing of small day care homes begins	Jun 2013	IDCFS

Activity CPP-1.3:
Undertake outreach and education on the new requirements

For any licensing system to be successful, those subject to the requirements must be made aware of them and supported as they transition to the system. This Plan’s budget includes funding to conduct awareness and training seminars throughout Illinois to ensure providers, community collaboration networks, and other participants in the State’s early learning system of support understand the new requirements and that the homes are prepared to commence the licensing process in a timely manner. The contractor selected for this work will prepare a licensing “toolkit” for small day care homes, and conduct seminars in high-frequency languages other than English to reach all populations.

Activity CPP-1.3 Rationale: <i>Outreach and education lead to successful implementation.</i>		
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
(1) Request for proposal issued, awareness and training contractor selected	Jun - Dec 2012	IDCFS
(2) Awareness and training plan developed	Jan -Apr 2013	Contractor, IDCFS
(3) Awareness and training seminars conducted	Jun 2013 - Jun 2015	Contractor, IDCFS

Goal 2:
All licensed or State-regulated ELD Programs are included in the Illinois Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by no later than June 30, 2015

Activity CPP-2.1:
Integrate licensing and State regulation of ELD Programs with TQRIS

As described in (B)(2), the Quality Counts TQRIS will include all licensed child care centers and homes, all Preschool for All programs, other public-school-based preschool programs, and all Head Start and Early Head Start center-based programs. Preschool for All,

public-school-based preschool programs, and Head Start and Early Head Start programs will enter the Quality Counts system by July 1, 2012. Licensed child care centers and homes will be required to enter the Quality Counts system upon initial or renewal licensing after July 1, 2012. Given Illinois' three-year cycle for renewals of licensing, this means that all licensed providers will be included in the system by June 30, 2015. As described under Goal 1 above, small day care homes caring for children age birth to 5 will be licensed by June 30, 2015, and upon licensing will be included in Quality Counts.

For implementation steps, timelines, and responsibility parties for this Activity, see (B)(2) and the Activities under Goal 1, above.

Illinois' Response: Invitational Priorities

Priority 4:

Invitational Priority – Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades.

The Departments are particularly interested in applications that describe the State's High-Quality Plan to sustain and build upon improved early learning outcomes throughout the early elementary school years, including by--

(a) Enhancing the State's current standards for kindergarten through grade 3 to align them with the Early Learning and Development Standards across all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Ensuring that transition planning occurs for children moving from Early Learning and Development Programs to elementary schools;

(c) Promoting health and family engagement, including in the early grades;

(d) Increasing the percentage of children who are able to read and do mathematics at grade level by the end of the third grade; and

(e) Leveraging existing Federal, State, and local resources, including but not limited to funds received under Title I and Title II of ESEA, as amended, and IDEA.

Illinois Response:

The Illinois Plan addresses the Invitational Priority in the following ways:

- The KIDS assessment is specifically designed as a linkage between preschool programs and kindergarten programs.
- The professional development that will be provided to kindergarten teachers through the KIDS process is tightly aligned with the professional development on the use of

assessment to support instruction that is provided to EC Educators through this grant (see (C)(2)).

- The Strengthening Families Networks (see (C)(4)) work with elementary school staff as well as early learning programs to build skills for parent engagement.
- Likewise, the community collaborations' efforts to recruit and train parent leaders will include parents of children in elementary school as well as parents with younger children.

Priority 5: Invitational Priority – Encouraging Private-Sector Support

The Departments are particularly interested in applications that describe how the private sector will provide financial and other resources to support the State and its Participating State Agencies or Participating Programs in the implementation of the State Plan.

Illinois Response:

The Illinois early learning and development system has benefitted for decades from strong public-private partnerships and significant philanthropic support. The Illinois Early Learning Challenge Plan allows the State to build on this foundation to create an integrated and aligned system for future investments:

- Details of the over \$72 million in investments that Illinois foundations have made in early learning systems and services over the past five years are included in the foundations' letters of support, as are their commitments to continuing to fund this important work (see Volume II of the Appendix)
- A representative from the early childhood philanthropic community is included in the Early Learning Challenge Leadership Team Advisory Group (see (A)(3))
- Several representatives from the early childhood philanthropic community are included on the Early Learning Council and its committees (see *Appendix (A)(1)-1*)
- The McCormick Foundation has funded the development of the new Early Learning and Development Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers as well as the revised Early Learning and Development Standards-Preschool. The Foundation has committed to continuing to fund their refinement and the development of implementation aids for these standards (see (C)(1))
- Similarly, the McCormick foundation funded the development of the KIDS report, and has pledged to help support KIDS implementation (see (E)(1))
- Community collaborations across the State are funded by local philanthropy, including the United Way, community foundations, and private foundations (see (C)(4))
- The Illinois Shared Learning Environment is supported by The Shared Learning Collaborative, an alliance formed by the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Carnegie Corporation of New York (see (E)(2))
- It is anticipated that the Consortium for Early Learning Research (see (B)(5)) will attract significant philanthropic support

BUDGET PART I: SUMMARY

BUDGET PART I - TABLES

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category--The State must include the budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	161,912	333,538	343,600	353,814	1,192,864
2. Fringe Benefits	90,180	184,818	189,436	194,118	658,552
3. Travel	4,800	6,400	6,400	6,400	24,000
4. Equipment	216,000	247,000	175,000	175,000	813,000
5. Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
6. Contractual	8,067,061	14,923,974	12,881,725	10,714,629	46,587,389
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	0	0	0	0	0
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	8,539,953	15,695,730	15,146,161	11,443,961	50,825,805
10. Indirect Costs*	200,554	257,768	231,968	234,411	924,701
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	3,104,662	5,076,817	6,424,647	4,790,759	19,396,885
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	400,000
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	11,945,169	21,130,315	20,352,776	16,569,131	69,597,391
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	26,012,190	26,108,190	28,089,884	23,999,884	104,210,148
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	37,957,359	47,238,505	48,442,660	40,569,015	174,207,539

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> 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.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT–ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency--*The State must include the budget totals for each Participating State Agency for each year of the grant. These line items should be consistent with the totals of each of the Participating State Agency Budgets provided in Budget Tables II-1.*

Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))

Participating State Agency	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<i>ISBE</i>	12,000,237	16,624,974	16,436,246	10,286,226	55,347,683
<i>IDHS</i>	23,970,646	28,341,955	27,480,144	26,056,519	105,849,264
<i>DCFS</i>	1,986,476	2,271,576	4,526,270	4,226,270	13,010,592
Total Statewide Budget	37,957,359	47,238,505	48,442,660	40,569,015	174,207,539

Budget Table I-3: Budget Summary by Project--*The State must include the proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant. These line items are the totals, for each project, across all of the Participating State Agencies' project budgets, as provided in Budget Tables II-2.*

Budget Table I-3: Budget Summary by Project (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Projects	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
ELC Administration A3-1	947,046	1,732,924	1,040,004	1,057,343	4,777,317
Early Learning Consortia A3-2	1,161,400	2,311,400	1,737,650	1,163,900	6,374,350
Licensing Outreach and Communication B2	0	204,100	2,508,794	2,408,794	5,121,688
TQRIS Monitoring and Public Awareness B3	2,510,811	3,496,574	3,549,075	3,305,729	12,862,189
Good to Great B4	14,013,098	16,324,774	16,545,934	15,802,660	62,686,466
TQRIS Validation Study B5	700,000	1,504,100	1,004,100	1,504,100	4,712,300
ELD Standards Supports and Implementation C1	199,100	199,100	0	0	398,200
Concentrated High Need Communities C4	4,117,940	5,424,190	4,971,690	4,311,690	18,825,510
Credential Development D1	2,794,014	2,724,199	2,646,985	2,682,667	10,847,865
EC Educator Development D2	2,943,978	3,607,168	3,667,018	3,480,572	13,698,736
KIDS E1	1,508,500	1,888,500	3,493,000	2,588,000	9,478,000
Data E2	6,961,472	7,721,476	7,178,410	2,163,560	24,024,918
Technical Assistance	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	400,000
Total Statewide Budget	37,957,359	47,238,505	48,442,660	40,569,015	174,207,539

BUDGET PART I -NARRATIVE

Describe, in the text box below, the overall structure of the State's budget for implementing the State Plan, including

- *A list of each Participating State Agency, together with a description of its budgetary and project responsibilities;*
- *A list of projects and a description of how these projects taken together will result in full implementation of the State Plan;*
- *For each project:*
 - *The designation of the selection criterion or competitive preference priority the project addresses;*
 - *An explanation of how the project will be organized and managed in order to ensure the implementation of the High-Quality Plans described in the selection criteria or competitive preference priorities; and*
- *Any information pertinent to understanding the proposed budget for each project.*

The State's budget is structured to foster cross-agency collaboration and assist the Participating State Agencies in carrying out the State Plan to achieve the State's overall goals for improving child outcomes and closing the school readiness gap. The following three state agencies will be responsible for administering the grant funds: the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS). The Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental (IELC) Agreement, set forth in *Appendix (A)(3)-2*, binds ISBE, IDHS, IDCFS, the Early Learning Council, and the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) to the implementation of the State Plan. The ELC Agreement contains Scopes of Work detailing the specific project responsibilities for each party. (See *Appendix (A)(3)-2, Exhibits I - III*, for a list of the specific project responsibilities for ISBE, IDHS and IDCFS). Additionally, pursuant to the ELC Agreement, ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS, have each agreed to abide by their respective agency's budget included in this Section of the State Plan.

The parties to the ELC Agreement have agreed to establish an ELC Outcomes Measurement System, an annual Coordinated Early Learning Budget Proposal, and the Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center (B-8 Center) (see *(A)(3)*). These efforts will all support the budgetary responsibilities of the agencies described below and ensure coordination and efficiencies in project administration. In particular, the B-8 Center will involve a high-level of "business process" integration with respect to procurements, contracts, and contractual oversight. The Center's leadership will work with six B-8 Center Directors (from ISBE, IDHS and IDCFS)

on implementation of the State Plan, thereby ensuring alignment across the intersecting work of the state agencies and Early Learning Consortia (see *Activity (A)(3)-1.3*) on the projects referenced below. The primary budgetary responsibilities of ISBE, IDHS and IDCFS, are to:

1. Align grant funding with major agency funding streams (see funding streams referenced for each agency in *(A)(4)*); and
2. Within the coordinated structure of the B-8 Center, administer the procurement, hiring, and fiscal responsibilities (i.e., approving invoices, vouchering funds with the comptroller, etc.) for the projects specified for each agency later in this narrative.

The actual contract administration and management will be performed by B-8 Leadership or a Director, as designated in the table below, with appropriate coordination with the procurement, fiscal, and legal staff at the agency managing the funds for that contract. See *Activity (A)(3)-1.2* for the B-8 Center organizational chart.

The State's budget is organized into twelve projects (not including technical assistance) which align to specific application criteria and generally involve at least two of the three Participating State Agencies responsible for administering the grant funds. Each project includes specific Activities which are referenced within the applicable criteria of the State Plan.

The projects in this Plan build on existing structures and support systems and therefore will utilize existing management plans and practices. For additional description on how each project is organized and managed, see also the specific Activities noted in the table below.

These projects when taken together constitute a coherent reform agenda that is aligned to the State's three strategic reform priorities: (1) deepening the integration of state supports to create a unified framework for all early learning and development systems; (2) connecting the most at-risk children with the services and supports they need; and (3) increasing the quality of both learning environments and the instruction in early learning and development programs. These strategic priorities cut across the various projects included in the State's Plan and collectively build toward the State's vision for an integrated system including quality universal and targeted supports for all children from birth to kindergarten and beyond. The relationship of the projects to the State's strategic reform priorities can be understood through the "Summary of the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Plan" in *(A)(2)*, which demonstrates how goals under each selection criteria relate to the priorities.

Budget Project	Selection Criteria	Project Components	Primary Agency or Agencies Responsible for Hiring, Procurement, and Fiscal	B-8 Leadership/Director Responsible for Contract Administration and Management
ELC Administration	(A)(3)	B-8 Interagency Center Staffing	ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS	Jointly by Center leadership
	(A)(3)	B-8 Interagency systems integration	ISBE, IDHS, and IDCFS	Jointly by Center leadership
	(A)(3)	Contract management assistance	ISBE	Jointly by OECD Director and ISBE EC Division Administrator
	(A)(3)	ELC Outcomes Measurement System	ISBE	Data & Performance Management Director
	(A)(3)	Consortium for Workforce Development	ISBE	Workforce Development Director
Early Learning Quality Consortia	(A)(3)	Consortium for Early Learning Research	ISBE	Data & Performance Management Director
	(A)(3)	Quality Counts Consortium	IDHS	Quality Counts Director
	(A)(3)	Consortium for Community System Development	IDHS	Community Collaborations Director
Licensing outreach and communication	(B)(2)	Licensing Outreach	IDCFS	Childcare Licensing Director
TQRIS Monitoring and Public Awareness	(B)(3)	TQRIS Monitoring	ISBE and IDHS currently; one agency may procure single integrated contract as existing contracts expire	Quality Counts Director
	(B)(3)	TQRIS Communications Campaign	IDHS	Quality Counts Director
Good to Great	(B)(4)	Institute for Excellence (see also (Criteria (C)(2))	ISBE	Workforce Development Director
	(B)(4)	TQRIS Expansion	IDHS	Quality Counts Director
TQRIS Validation Study	(B)(5)	None	ISBE	Data & Performance Management Director
ELD Standards Supports and Implementation Concentrated High Need Communities	(C)(1)	None	ISBE	Workforce Development Director
	(C)(4)	Community Collaboration Development	IDHS	Community Collaborations Director

Budget Project	Selection Criteria	Project Components	Primary Agency or Agencies Responsible for Hiring, Procurement, and Fiscal	B-8 Leadership/Director Responsible for Contract Administration and Management	
	(C)(4)	Strengthening Families alignment	IDCFS	Community Collaborations Director	
Credential Development	(D)(1)	None	IDHS	Workforce Development Director	
EC Educator Development	(D)(2)	ESL/Bilingual Scholarships		Workforce Development Director	
	(D)(2)	PD Enhancements in Critical Need Areas	ISBE	Workforce Development Director	
KIDS	(D)(2)	Registry, PDA, and Calendar Enhancements	IDHS	Workforce Development Director	
	(E)(1)	KIDS Administration	ISBE	KIDS Director	
	(E)(1)	District PD Supports	ISBE	KIDS Director	
	(E)(1)	KIDS Communication Campaign	ISBE	KIDS Director	
	(E)(1)	KIDS Validation Study	ISBE	Joint management by KIDS Director and Data & Performance Management Director	
Data	(E)(2)	ISBE Data Integration	ISBE	Data & Performance Management Director	
	(E)(2)	DHS/INCCRRRA Data Integration and Data for Community Systems	IDHS	Data & Performance Management Director	
	(E)(2)	IDCFS Data Integration	IDCFS	Data & Performance Management Director	
	(E)(2)	Illinois Head Start Data Cooperative	ISBE	Data & Performance Management Director	
	(E)(2)	CEDS	ISBE	Data & Performance Management Director	
	(E)(2)	Data for Community Systems Project	IDHS	Data & Performance Management Director	
	(E)(2)	ISLE Early Learning Extensions	ISBE	Data & Performance Management Director	

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY

The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:

- *Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.*
- *Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.*

BUDGET PART II - TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Illinois State Board of Education</i>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	80,000	164,800	169,800	174,800	589,400
2. Fringe Benefits	40,000	82,400	84,900	87,400	294,700
3. Travel	3,200	3,200	3,200	3,200	12,800
4. Equipment	213,000	247,000	175,000	175,000	810,000
5. Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
6. Contractual	3,683,000	7,321,000	5,978,750	5,465,000	22,447,750
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	0	0	0	0	0
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	4,019,200	7,818,400	6,411,650	5,905,400	25,704,650
10. Indirect Costs*	112,537	143,074	116,096	117,326	489,033
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	110,000	525,000	2,060,000	505,000	3,200,000
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	200,000

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
Illinois State Board of Education

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	4,291,737	8,536,474	8,637,746	6,577,726	27,843,683
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	7,708,500	8,088,500	7,798,500	3,708,500	27,304,000
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	12,000,237	16,624,974	16,436,246	10,286,226	55,347,683

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 localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated 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 Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Illinois State Board of Education					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
ELC Administration (A)(3)-1	787,937	1,413,574	712,296	721,026	3,634,833
Early Learning Quality Consortia (A)(3)-2	553,200	1,103,200	829,450	555,700	3,041,550
Licensing Outreach and Communication (B)(2)	0	0	0	0	0
TQRIS Monitoring and Public Awareness (B)(3)	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	4,000,000
Good to Great (B)(4)	883,200	2,008,200	2,008,200	1,258,200	6,157,800
TQRIS Validation Study (B)(5)	700,000	1,504,100	1,004,100	1,504,100	4,712,300
ELD Standards Supports and Implementation (C)(1)	199,100	199,100	0	0	398,200
Concentrated High Need Communities (C)(4)	0	0	0	0	0
Credential Development (D)(1)	0	0	0	0	0
EC Educator Development (D)(2)	754,100	1,379,100	1,379,100	1,254,100	4,766,400
KIDS (E)(1)	1,508,500	1,888,500	3,493,000	2,588,000	9,478,000
Data (E)(2)	5,564,200	6,079,200	5,960,100	1,355,100	18,958,600
Technical Assistance	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	200,000
Total Budget	12,000,237	16,624,974	16,436,246	10,286,226	55,347,683

BUDGET PART II - NARRATIVE

Describe, in the text box below, the Participating State Agency's budget, including--

- *How the Participating State Agency plans to organize its operations in order to manage the RTT-ELC funds and accomplish the work set forth in the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work;*
- *For each project in which the Participating State Agency is involved, and consistent with the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work:*
 - *An explanation of the Participating State Agency's roles and responsibilities*
 - *An explanation of how the proposed project annual budget was derived*
- *A detailed explanation of each budget category line item, including the information below.*

Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)

ISBE's plan for organizing its operations and managing the grant funds under the State Plan is described in the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement (see *Appendix (A)(3)-2, Exhibits I*), Criteria (A)(3) and as outlined in Budget Part I Narrative. As outlined in the Participating State Agency Project Table above, ISBE will be allocating grant funds to the following projects:

- ELC Administration, referenced below as (A)(3)-1;
- Early Learning Quality Consortia, referenced below as (A)(3)-2;
- TQRIS Monitoring and Public Awareness, referenced below as (B)(3);
- Good to Great, referenced below as (B)(4);
- TQRIS Validation Study, referenced below as (B)(5);
- ELD Standards Supports and Implementation, referenced below as (C)(1);
- EC Educator Development, referenced below as (D)(2);
- KIDS, referenced below as (E)(1); and
- Data, referenced below as (E)(2).

For a description of ISBE's roles and responsibilities for these projects, see ELC Agreement, Appendix (A)(3)-2, Scope of Work. Each of the proposed budgets were developed by ISBE staff who will be involved with their administration based on costs incurred for similar types of agreements and projects and/or analysis of the scope involved.

Category Line Item Summaries

1) Personnel

(A)(3)-1: As part of the Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center, ISBE will hire a Director of Data and Performance Management and a Director of Workforce Development.
Director of Data and Performance Management.

Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4		
% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total
50%	80,000	\$40,000	100%	\$82,400	\$82,400	100%	\$84,900	\$84,900	100%	\$87,400	\$87,400

Director of Workforce Development

Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4		
% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total
50%	80,000	\$40,000	100%	\$82,400	\$82,400	100%	\$84,900	\$84,900	100%	\$87,400	\$87,400

Total Personnel: 589,400

2) Fringe Benefits

(A)(3)-1: The fringe benefits for the Director of Data and Performance Management and the Director of Workforce Development are:

Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4		
% FTE	Base Benefit	Total	% FTE	Base Benefit	Total	% FTE	Base Benefit	Total	% FTE	Base Benefit	Total
50%	\$40,000	\$20,000	100%	\$41,200	\$41,200	100%	\$42,450	\$42,450	100%	\$43,700	\$43,700

Total Fringe (2 persons): \$294,700

3) Travel

(A)(3)-1: Travel to and from meetings: \$12,800 (16 total trips) to support Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center activities.

Total Travel: \$12,800

4) Equipment

(A)(3)-1: Two desktops computers for the two Directors and servers to support system integration, totaling \$110,000.

(E)(2): Equipment related needs for data projects totaling \$700,000.

Total Equipment: \$810,000

5) **Supplies**: There are no budgeted funds for supplies.

6) Contractual

(A)(3)-1: The following contracts are to be awarded under this project:

- Contract with entity to assist in procurement process for contracts under the State Plan;
- Contract to help define a uniform data process and map disparate data elements from different agencies into a coherent system.
- Contract for an entity to create the Outcomes Measurement System.

Total (A)(3)-1: \$2,430,000

(A)(3)-2: A contract will be awarded for a lead entity to coordinate the activities of the Consortium for Workforce Development and Consortium for Early Learning Research.

Total (A)(3)-2: \$3,008,750

(B)(4): ISBE will contract with (1) an entity to provide comprehensive development to Early Learning and Development Programs seeking to advance their Star Level quality from 4 to 5 and (2) an entity to increase quality in home child care providers by providing technical assistance to communities to develop and implement a Community Connections model.

Total (B)(4): \$6,125,000

(B)(5): ISBE will contract with an entity to conduct a multi-year series of analyses, studies, and evaluations to validate and assess the effectiveness of its TQRIS.

Total (B)(5): \$1,900,000

(C)(1): ISBE will contract with an entity to update and re-index current Early Learning and Development Standards resources to the new Standards and develop new resources for the birth to three guidelines.

Total (C)(1): \$390,000

(D)(2): ISBE will contract with an entity to expand effective professional development opportunities to early childhood educators in the critical areas of need detailed in Criteria (D)(2).

Total (D)(2): \$1,250,000

(E)(1): ISBE will contract with an entity to develop and implement a Kindergarten Individual Development Survey.

Total (E)(1): \$1,424,000

(E)(2): ISBE will contract with a number of entities for data integration, CEDS alignment and the ISLE Extension to Early Learning Center.

Total (E)(2): \$5,920,000

Total Contractual: \$22,447,750

IDHS has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.

7) Training Stipends: There are no budgeted funds for training stipends.

8) Other: There are no budgeted funds for "other" costs.

9) Total Direct Costs

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
4,019,200	7,818,400	6,411,650	5,905,400	24,154,650

10) Indirect Costs

An indirect rate of 16.4% (the lowest amongst the Participating State Agencies) is applied to the first \$25,000 of all contracts set forth in Line 6 of the ISBE Budget Table II-1. In addition, this indirect rate is applied to other permissible costs set forth in Line 1-5 of the Budget Table II-1.

Total Indirect Costs

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
112,537	143,074	116,096	117,326	489,033

11) Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

(D)(2): Illinois will contract with the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA), an Early Learning Intermediary Organization, to provide a scholarship program aimed at increasing the number of early childhood teachers with a ESL or bilingual approval or endorsement.

Total (D)(2): \$1,500,000

(E)(1): ISBE will contract with local school districts for KIDS training for their teachers.

Total (E)(1): \$1,550,000

(E)(2): Illinois will contract with the Illinois Head Start Association to develop and maintain a common data file containing certain child level development data on all Head Start and Early Head Start Programs in Illinois.

Total (E)(2): \$150,000

Total to Early Learning Intermediary Organizations: 3,200,000

12) Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

\$200,000 is set aside for ISBE technical assistance.

13) Total Funds Requested

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
4,291,797	8,536,474	8,637,746	6,577,726	27,843,683

14) Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan

ISBE is allocating \$27,304,000 of its funds over the course of the grant period to the projects noted above. For a detailed description of these amounts and the corresponding projects, see Table (A)(4)-1.

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
7,708,500	8,088,500	7,798,500	3,708,500	27,304,000

15) Total Budget

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
12,000,237	16,624,974	16,436,246	10,286,226	55,347,683

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
Illinois Department of Human Services

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	81,912	168,738	173,800	179,014	603,464
2. Fringe Benefits	50,180	102,418	104,536	106,718	363,852
3. Travel	1,600	3,200	3,200	3,200	11,200
4. Equipment	3,000	0	0	0	3,000
5. Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
6. Contractual	4,034,061	6,971,974	6,321,975	4,968,629	22,296,639
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	0	0	0	0	0
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	4,170,753	7,246,330	6,603,511	5,257,561	23,278,155
10. Indirect Costs*	79,817	102,394	103,572	104,785	390,568
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	2,994,662	4,551,817	4,364,647	4,285,759	16,196,885
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	200,000
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	7,295,232	11,950,541	11,121,730	9,698,105	23,668,723
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	16,675,414	16,391,414	16,358,414	16,358,414	65,783,656
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	23,970,646	28,341,955	27,480,144	26,056,519	105,849,264

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

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
Illinois Department of Human Services

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p>end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
Illinois Department of Human Services

Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
ELC Administration (A)(3)-1	159,109	319,350	327,708	336,317	1,142,484
Early Learning Quality Consortia (A)(3)-2	608,200	1,208,200	908,200	608,200	3,332,800
Licensing Outreach and Communication (B)(2)	0	0	0	0	0
TQRIS Monitoring and Public Awareness (B)(3)	1,510,811	2,496,574	2,549,075	2,305,729	8,862,189
Good to Great (B)(4)	13,129,898	14,316,574	14,537,734	14,544,460	56,528,666
TQRIS Validation Study (B)(5)	0	0	0	0	0
ELD Standards Supports and Implementation (C)(1)	0	0	0	0	0

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Illinois Department of Human Services					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
Concentrated High Need Communities (C)(4)	2,385,564	3,391,814	2,989,314	2,529,314	11,296,006
Credential Development (D)(1)	2,794,014	2,724,199	2,646,895	2,682,667	10,847,865
EC Educator Development (D)(2)	2,189,878	2,228,068	2,287,918	2,226,472	8,932,336
KIDS (E)(1)	0	0	0	0	0
Data (E)(2)	1,143,172	1,607,176	1,183,210	773,360	4,706,918
Technical Assistance	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	200,000
Total Budget	23,970,646	28,341,955	27,480,144	26,056,519	105,849,264

Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)

IDHS' plan for organizing its operations and managing the grant funds under the State Plan is described in the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement, (see *Appendix (A)(3)-2, Exhibits II*), Criteria (A)(3) and as outlined in Budget Part I Narrative. As outlined in the Participating State Agency Project Table above, IDHS will be allocating grant funds to the following projects:

- ELC Administration, referenced below as (A)(3)-1;
- Early Learning Quality Consortia, referenced below as (A)(3)-2;
- TQRIS Monitoring and Public Awareness, referenced below as (B)(3);
- Good to Great, referenced below as (B)(4);
- Concentrated High Need Communities, referenced below as (C)(4);
- Credential Development, referenced below as (D)(1);
- EC Educator Development, referenced below as (D)(2); and
- Data, referenced below as (E)(2).

For a description of IDHS' roles and responsibilities for these projects, see ELC Agreement, Appendix (A)(3)-2, Scope of Work. Each of the proposed budgets were developed by IDHS staff who will be involved with their administration based on costs incurred for similar types of agreements and projects and/or analysis of the scope involved.

Category Line Item Summaries

1) Personnel

(A)(3)-1: As part of the Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center, IDHS will hire a Director of Community Collaboration and a Director of Quality Counts:

Director of Community Collaboration

Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4		
% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total
50%	\$81,912	\$40,956	100%	\$84,369	\$84,369	100%	\$86,900	\$86,900	100%	\$89,507	\$89,507

Director of Quality Counts

Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4		
% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total	% FTE	Base Salary	Total
50%	\$81,912	\$40,956	100%	\$84,369	\$84,369	100%	\$86,900	\$86,900	100%	\$89,507	\$89,507

Total Personnel: 603,464

2) Fringe Benefits

(A)(3)-1: The fringe benefits for the Director of Community Collaboration and Quality Counts are:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Director Community Collaborations	\$25,090	\$51,209	\$52,268	\$53,359	\$181,926
Director Quality Counts	\$25,090	\$51,209	\$52,268	\$53,359	\$181,926
TOTAL	\$50,180	\$102,418	\$104,536	\$106,718	\$363,852

Total Fringe (2 persons): \$363,852

3) Travel

(A)(3)-1: Travel to and from meetings: \$11,200 (16 total trips) to support Birth to 8 Interagency Implementation Center activities.

Total Travel: \$11,200

4) Equipment

(A)(3)-1: Two laptop computers for the two Directors (\$1,500 each).

Total Equipment: \$3,000

5) Supplies: There are no budgeted funds for supplies.

6) Contractual

(A)(3)-2: A contract will be awarded for a lead entity to coordinate the activities of the Quality Counts Consortium and the Consortium for Community Collaborations.

Total (A)(3)-2: \$3,300,000

(B)(3): IDHS will contract with (1) an entity to provide assessments related to the TQRIS system and to provide training on environmental rating scales for consultants and coaches; and (2) an entity to provide marketing and public awareness services regarding TQRIS.

Total (B)(3): \$8,829,389

(C)(4): IDHS will contract with a number of entities across the state to build community collaborations.

Total (C)(4): \$6,928,750

(E)(2): IDHS will contract with an entity for the Data for Community Systems Project.

Total (E)(2): \$3,238,500

Total Contractual: \$22,296,639

IDHS has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.

7) Training Stipends: There are no budgeted funds for training stipends.

8) Other: There are no budgeted funds for "other" costs.

9) Total Direct Costs

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
4,170,753	7,246,330	6,603,511	5,257,561	23,278,155

10) Indirect Costs

An indirect rate of 16.4% (the lowest amongst the Participating State Agencies) is applied to the first \$25,000 of all contracts set forth in Line 6 of the IDHS Budget Table II-1. In addition, this indirect rate is applied to other permissible costs set forth in Line 1-5 of the Budget Table II-1.

Total Indirect Costs

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
79,817	102,394	103,572	104,785	390,568

11) Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

(B)(4): Illinois will contract with the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA) and local CCR&Rs to provide the administrative functions, coaching and training activities required to move child care providers from "adequate to good" in TQRIS.

Total (B)(4): \$10,958,666

(D)(1): Illinois will contract with INCCRRA to provide functions related to credential development and increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators with credentials.

Total (D)(1): \$1,685,865

(D)(2): Illinois will contract with INCCRRA to expand the number of Early Childhood Educators in the Registry and expand the Professional Development Advisors Program.

Total (D)(2): \$2,100,336

(E)(2): Illinois will contract with INCCRRA for data integration services.

Total (E)(2): \$1,452,018

Total to Early Learning Intermediary Organizations: 16,196,885

12) Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

\$200,000 is set aside for IDHS technical assistance.

13) Total Funds Requested

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
7,295,232	11,950,541	11,121,730	9,698,105	39,865,608

14) Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan

IDHS is allocating \$65,783,656 of its funds over the course of the grant period to the projects noted above. For a detailed description of these amounts and the corresponding projects, see Table (A)(4)-1.

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
16,675,414	16,391,414	16,358,414	16,358,414	65,783,656

15) Total Budget

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
23,970,646	28,341,955	27,480,144	26,056,519	105,849,264

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	0	0	0	0	0
2. Fringe Benefits	0	0	0	0	0
3. Travel	0	0	0	0	0
4. Equipment	0	0	0	0	0
5. Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
6. Contractual	350,000	631,000	581,000	281,000	1,843,000
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	0	0	0	0	0
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	350,000	631,000	581,000	281,000	1,843,000
10. Indirect Costs*	8,200	12,300	12,300	12,300	45,100
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	0	0	0	0	0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	0	0	0	0	0
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	358,200	643,300	593,300	293,300	1,888,100
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	1,628,276	1,628,276	3,932,970	3,932,970	11,122,492
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	1,986,476	2,271,576	4,526,270	4,226,270	13,010,592

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.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> 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.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services

Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
ELC Administration (A)(3)-1	0	0	0	0	0
Early Learning Quality Consortia (A)(3)-2	0	0	0	0	0
Licensing Outreach and Communication (B)(2)	0	204,100	2,508,794	2,408,794	5,121,688
TQRIS Monitoring and Public Awareness (B)(3)	0	0	0	0	0
Good to Great (B)(4)	0	0	0	0	0
TQRIS Validation Study (B)(5)	0	0	0	0	0
ELD Standards Supports and Implementation (C)(1)	0	0	0	0	0
Concentrated High Need Communities (C)(4)	1,732,376	2,032,376	1,982,376	1,782,376	7,529,504

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Illinois Department of Children and Family Services</i>					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
Credential Development (D)(1)	0	0	0	0	0
EC Educator Development (D)(2)	0	0	0	0	0
KIDS (E)(1)	0	0	0	0	0
Data (E)(2)	254,100	35,100	35,100	35,100	359,400
Technical Assistance	0	0	0	0	0
Total Budget	1,986,476	2,271,576	4,526,270	4,226,270	13,010,592

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS)

IDCFS' plan for organizing its operations and managing the grant funds under the State Plan is described in the Illinois Early Learning Challenge Intergovernmental Agreement, (see *Appendix (A)(3)-2, Exhibits III*), Criteria (A)(3) and as outlined in Budget Part I Narrative. As outlined in the Participating State Agency Project Table above, IDCFS will be allocating grant funds to the following projects:

- Licensing Outreach and Communication, referenced below as (B)(2);
- Concentrated High Need Communities, referenced below as (C)(4); and
- Data, referenced below as (E)(2).

For a description of IDCFS' roles and responsibilities for these projects, see ELC Agreement, Appendix (A)(3)-2, Scope of Work. Each of the proposed budgets were developed by IDCFS staff who will be involved with their administration based on costs incurred for similar types of agreements and projects and/or analysis of the scope involved.

Category Line Item Summaries

- 1) **Personnel:** There are no budgeted funds for personnel.
- 2) **Fringe Benefits:** There are no budgeted funds for fringe benefits.
- 3) **Travel:** There are no budgeted funds for travel.
- 4) **Equipment:** There are no budgeted funds for equipment.
- 5) **Supplies:** There are no budgeted funds for supplies.

6) Contractual

(B)(2): IDCFS will contract with an entity for licensing outreach and communication regarding expanded TQRIS.

Total (B)(2): \$500,000

(C)(4): IDCFS will contract an entity to implement the Strengthening Families approach.

Total (C)(4): \$1,000,000

(E)(2): IDCFS will contract with an entity for data integration services.

Total (E)(2): \$343,000

Total Contractual: \$1,843,000

IDCFS has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.

7) **Training Stipends:** There are no budgeted funds for training stipends.

8) **Other:** There are no budgeted funds for "other" costs.

9) Total Direct Costs

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
350,000	631,000	581,000	281,000	1,843,000

10) Indirect Costs

An indirect rate of 16.4% (the lowest amongst the Participating State Agencies) is applied to the first \$25,000 of all contracts set forth in Line 6 of the IDCFS Budget Table II-1. In addition, this indirect rate is applied to other permissible costs set forth in Line 1-5 of the Budget Table II-1.

Total Indirect Costs

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
8,200	12,300	12,300	12,300	45,100

11) Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

There are no budgeted funds to be distributed under this line item.

12) Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

No technical assistance funds are being set aside under this budget.

13) Total Funds Requested

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
358,200	643,300	593,300	293,300	1,888,100

14) Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan

IDCFS is allocating \$11,122,492 of its funds over the course of the grant period to the projects noted above. For a detailed description of these amounts and the corresponding projects, see Table (A)(4)-1.

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
1,628,276	1,628,276	3,932,970	3,932,970	11,122,492

15) Total Budget

Grant Year 1	Grant Year 2	Grant Year 3	Grant Year 4	Total
1,986,476	2,271,576	4,526,270	4,226,270	13,010,592

BUDGET: INDIRECT COST INFORMATION

To request reimbursement for indirect costs, please answer the following questions:

<p>Does the State have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government?</p> <p>YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X NO <input type="checkbox"/> O</p> <p>If yes to question 1, please provide the following information:</p> <p>Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (mm/dd/yyyy): From: <u> 7 </u> / <u> 1 </u> / <u>2011</u> To: <u> 6 </u> / <u>30</u> / <u>2012</u></p> <p>Approving Federal agency: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ED <input type="checkbox"/> HHS <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(Please specify agency):</i> _____</p>

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^{xli} IDCFS amendments to 89 Illinois Administrative Code Parts 406, 407, and 408.

^{xlii} The applicable IDCFS licensing rules are located in 89 Illinois Administrative Code Part 406 (Licensing Standards for Day Care Homes), Part 407 (Licensing Standards for Day Centers) and Part 408 (Licensing Standards for Group Day Care Homes).

^{xliii} 89 Illinois Administrative Code 406.2.

^{xliv} Under the Child Care Act of 1969, IDCFS has broad statutory licensing authority for all types of "child care facilities", which are generally defined to include any program receiving or arranging for care or placement of one or more children unrelated to the operator of the facility. 225 ILCS 10/2.05; 10/3.