



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page



Application # MI-5018

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]
Support Monitor: [Redacted]
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CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

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

A. Successful State Systems

Table with 3 columns: Core Area, Available, Score. Row 1: (A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development, 20, 18. Includes detailed text about Michigan's early learning programs and investments.

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

Comments on (A)(1)

--Michigan adequately demonstrates past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs. --Despite difficult financial times, Michigan ranked 37th in the nation in per capita income in 2009, a drop from 19th less than a decade ago. It is clear that Michigan leaders maintained a strong commitment to strategic investments in early learning and development programs and the infrastructure needed to link them to create an effective early learning and development system. Strategic investments include Head Start and Early Head Start; State funded preschool program, special education services, Child Care and Development Fund, and other early learning and development program investments. --In 2010, the ECIC, Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) a public, non-profit corporation charged to restructure Michigan's investment in children prior to school entry through state and community reform and investment, used \$8.0 million in CCDF ARRA (American Reinvestment and Recovery Act) funds to prepare for implementation of the state's tiered quality rating and improvement system - Great Start to Quality. --The state preschool program, the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), increased participation by approximately 5 percent but there was no evidence as to how many of these were high needs children. Programs and services through IDEA Part C increased by 10.6 percent and Part B, remained relatively flat between 2007 and 2010. In 2011, Michigan served 6,476 young children and their parents through the Great Parents/Great Start program, an increase of 32.7 percent since 2005. In addition, the state served an average of 495 children annually through the Even Start program (a grant program designed to help break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy), and 3,622 with School Aid At-Risk Early Childhood Services funds. This indicates that the State has continued to invest in improving the educational opportunities of the nation's high needs children and their families. --The applicant provides evidence of early learning and development legislation, policies or practices that support services for children with high needs. The State is engaging communities and parents with the establishment of the ECIC and its state-wide network of Great Start Collaboratives (GSCs) and Great Start Parent Coalitions (GSPCs). The State was able to leverage approximately \$10.0 million in investments from local businesses and foundations. --Michigan's steady progress toward reform began in 2004 when a public/private partnership was formed, the Ready to Succeed Initiative, to help raise public awareness about the importance of the first five years

of life. --In 2005, Governor Granholm, a Democrat, launched Great Start, the development and implementation of which was to be led by the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC). --In 2011, Republican Governor Snyder prioritized early childhood systems reform with the administration's prenatal to age 20 (P-20) program. The ECIC, an effective state-level governance, now functions as a bridge between the public and the private sectors, building dynamic partnerships to ensure accountability and advance innovation on behalf of young children with high needs. Governor Snyder established the Office of Great Start within the Michigan Department of Education (MDE-OGS). MDE-OGS brings together, into one office, the state's early learning and development programs for children with high needs. --Beginning in 1985 the Michigan State School Aid Act provided high-quality early learning services for 4-year-olds at risk of school failure through the GSRP educational system. --The applicant demonstrates that there are key areas that form building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system. Michigan adopted early learning and development expectations for preschool age children, and in connecting those expectations to the program standards needed to ensure all children succeed. --Michigan has developed comprehensive assessment systems for publically-funded early learning programs, including the GSRP, Head Start and Early Head Start. The assessment tools are based on Michigan's early learning and development standards. In Great Start to Quality licensed providers choose to implement comprehensive assessments, including screening measures, formative assessments, measures of environmental quality, and measures of the quality of adult/child interaction in order to progress up the quality levels. This is a solid foundation expand on and build a Statewide system. --Michigan has included licensing rules related to health and safety measures, health promotion and developmental screenings in licensed settings. Great Start to Quality standards includes the expansion of developmental screenings in physicians' offices, and the piloting of pediatric medical home models by GSCs. --The applicant shows a strong commitment to family engagement, as evidenced in program policies and community practice. GSRP grantees must encourage parent participation, provide parent training and include parents in decision-making. --Other programs include "Early On" engaging families of children with disabilities. Great Start Parent Coalitions (GSPCs), statewide infrastructure for parent engagement and parent leaders to promote and build public support for early childhood. Since 2007, several state agencies have collaboratively funded the Parent Leadership in State Government Initiative, which provides leadership training for parents. --The State has several initiatives that are building blocks in place for the development of early childhood educators. These include Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, Great Start Regional Resource Centers (RRCs), T.E.A.C.H Early Childhood® T.E.A.C.H Michigan, Two and Four-Year Programs of Higher Education. --Michigan has a plan for implementation of a statewide common kindergarten entry assessment. And, has established effective data practices including an expanded the student unique identification code (UIC) into our early learning and development programs. --The applicant provided numerous well-written and easy to understand Tables as additional evidence of commitment to early childhood and children with high needs.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	18

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

--Michigan's sets achievable goals for improving quality by building on the state's substantial progress over the last five years by reforming funding, improving policy and programs for the State's high needs children, building a citizen's and parent's movement so that every child enters school safe, healthy and eager to succeed. --Governor Snyder through executive order created the Michigan Office of Great Start, within the Michigan Department of Education (MDE-OGS) to ensure that all children, especially those in highest need, have access to high-quality early learning and development programs and enter kindergarten prepared for success. --Michigan has aligned programs and services and prepared for sustainability after the RTT-ELC grant. The applicant included extensive letters of support for the grant. Michigan's Comprehensive Early Learning and Development Reform Agenda includes: improving outcomes for children with high needs statewide, improving program quality statewide and closing the readiness gap between children with high needs and their peers. Each of these areas includes 8 goals: providers, parents and The Michigan Departments of Education, Human Services and Community Health and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation will work together to measure progress. --The applicant has aligned each of the goals 3-8 to an area of Focused Investment that Michigan has selected based on their progress to date. This is outlined well and exhibits a thoughtful quality plan. In Focused Investment area (C) - Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children - Michigan has selected C(1), C(3) and C(4). The applicant has included rationale for D (1), Rationale for E (1) and Rationale for E (2). --Michigan's overall goals, provided earlier in this section, are ambitious and achievable. The goals build on the foundation of work already underway by the lead and participating agencies, for the Great Start system, and address the state's most pressing concerns by building a coordinated system of early learning and development. --The MDE, MDCH and ECIC will all lead funded projects; MDE and MDCH will lead projects in the Focused Investment Areas C, D and E, and ECIC will

lead the Great Start to Quality tiered quality rating and improvement system projects in Core Area B. Since the MDE-OGS coordinates and aligns the state's early learning and development investments for children with high needs; it is uniquely poised to lead the overarching coordinating of this grant. The applicant identifies foster children, children living on native land or homeless children but does not have a plan to address their specific needs. --The applicant provides evidence in the form of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to substantiate the commitment of key agencies, leaders and stakeholders. They came to a consensus that the projects under the RTT-ELC had the greatest potential to change the school readiness trajectory of the state's children with high needs.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	8

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

--The applicant has identified a challenging but realistic governance structure for this grant. The State has carefully deliberated for over three years and developed a plan that facilitates inter-agency collaboration and appears to be poised for a successful implementation of the state's comprehensive early childhood system. --The GSST has built effective working relationships and has the leadership necessary to secure and implement three major grants: a federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Project LAUNCH grant, to increase child wellness; the state's Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation (MIECHV) grant to expand evidence-based home visitation services; and a competitive MIECHV. --The applicant included two charts of the organizational structure. The lead agency for the grant is the Michigan Department of Education (MDE); within MDE, the Office of Great Start (OGS) will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the grant. The plan is well thought-out with Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from each agency. By having each participating agencies appoint a key contact person for the grant, each agency stays informed and committed to the project. These individuals will serve on the state's RTT-ELC MOU Implementation Group, The Governor's People Group Executives and the Great Start System Policy Team. These inter-agency policy leadership groups are convened for the purpose of assuring alignment and coordination of the state's investments. --There are sound methods and processes for making different types of decisions. If operational issues are unable to be resolved by the RTT-ELC MOU Implementation Team, the RTT-ELC Grant Coordinator will bring that situation to the Grant Director, who will bring it to the Great Start System Policy Team (GSSPT) for resolution. --It is confusing as to who will be ultimately responsible for policy disputes since the applicant lists several options including Michigan Department of Education, MDCH, ECIC, DHS, GSSPT etc. All of the above are listed in the charts and are said to have the responsibility of addressing and resolving inter-agency disputes and policy issues. --The applicant includes a variety of team members in the RTT-ELC MOU Implementation Group including public and the private sectors. Parents, early childhood educators/providers, and early learning and development intermediary organizations are included in the team. --The applicant provided copies of the letters of support and/or MOUs from early learning intermediary organizations and an extensive list of other stakeholders. --Each agency has completed a preliminary scope of work that details their involvement in every aspect of the state's plan. This demonstrates that there is a high level of inter-agency and stakeholder involvement.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	13

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 Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

--The applicant provides evidence that existing funds that currently support early learning and development will be used to support services and activities to help achieve the outcomes of the RTT-ELC grant. This includes funding from Medicare, CCDF, Title V Block Grant, State School Aid Fund, Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting, MICHild funds, General Fund/General Purpose, Great Start Early Learning Advisory Council, First Time Motherhood/New Parents Initiative, Great Start Early Learning Advisory Council, Kellogg Foundation, ARRA, Project LAUNCH, Head Start Collaboration Office, SLDS, CDC. These funds are used for services that meet the goals of the RTT-ELC grant and clearly indicate that the State will use these funds to help achieve outcomes in the State Plan. Some examples include: health, support of the QRS, scholarships for high needs children, children with special needs, screenings, expansion of the Standards, data system. --The Michigan TQRIS is currently funded partially through the state's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) quality set-aside funds and provides a solid foundation for expanding this system. --The State included the budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant. The budget by project shows a well thought-out budget with most of the funds used in years 2 and 3, decreasing to a little over \$18 million in year 4, which demonstrates the ability for the State to sustain the grant after year 4. Since MDE (the lead agency) has experienced staff in project and grants management, with documented policies and procedures for budget, spending plans, accounting, purchasing, and

reporting functionalities they will provide effective budget oversight of the RTT-ELC funds. --The MOU signatories indicate that they be able to position the state to sustain and build on the gains achieved with the RTT-ELC funds. There will be costs that will need to be sustained and the applicant is confident that there will be a high quality plan to address this issue. Given the economic realities of budget cuts made in State agencies and early childhood organizations it is reasonable that Michigan cannot make a stronger financial commitment. The applicant does not have a solid funding plan for sustainability. --The applicant included a detailed funding budget for participating Federal, State, private and local state agencies to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan. The applicant did not correlate the budget to the number and percentage of Children with High Needs, served by Early Learning and Development Programs, in the State that will be maintained or expanded. --The Applicant demonstrates how each agency will be accountable for specific responsibilities (Budgetary Responsibilities: The Michigan Department of Community Health and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation – The Participating Agencies chart). --Overall, this detailed plan provides a foundation for successful implementation using existing and new funding.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	7

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) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

--Michigan has developed and adopted a common, statewide, tiered quality rating and improvement system (TQRIS), known as Great Start to Quality, in order to improve the quality of all early learning settings for all children. --The applicant provides evidence that the TQRIS is based on a statewide set of tiers and levels of program standards. Program standards include early learning and development standards and align with the ECSQ-PK, ECSQ-IT and Head Start standards. The framework for the Standards is appropriately based on five developmental areas set out by the National Educational Goals Panel (a bipartisan and intergovernmental body of federal and state officials created to assess and report state and national progress toward achieving the National Education Goals). --The State also researched and found the Whaariki curriculum for early childhood care and education. The curriculum is from New Zealand but the Ad Hoc committee decided to use that framework or curriculum in the Michigan Early Learning Standards because of its holistic value. It appropriately weaves principles and strands together to form the Whaariki a particular pattern that makes its program different and distinctive, creating an integrated foundation a Whaariki for each child's development and learning. The applicant was creative and thoughtful in designing a framework that met the needs of the Michigan child. --The applicant provides evidence of Comprehensive Assessment System Indicators. It has a range of assessment tools; including, early childhood educator anecdotal notes/observations, annual developmental screening, child assessment tool, communication with parents, to inform instruction and make appropriate referrals for children with special needs. --The applicant does not provide a list of researched, approved assessment tools to promote assessment data that can be compared and cross referenced. --The applicant does not mention how English learners will be assessed and it is important that a child be assessed in the home language as well as English for valid outcomes. --Indicators address education levels related to position title (administrator, lead early childhood educators, and assistant early childhood educators) and include Graduate, Bachelor and Associate degrees, and Child Development Accreditation (CDA) credentials, as well as required annual clock hours of professional development. It is important to have intensive, sequenced, multi-session training is linked with quality. --The applicant provides evidence that they will provide and expand access to effective professional development opportunities such as T.E.A.C.H. that will create an incentive for providers to participate in professional development and training. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project gives scholarships to child care workers to complete course work in early childhood education and to increase their compensation, is a nationally respected program used to address the issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover within the early childhood workforce. The selection of this program demonstrates the commitment the State has to improve child

outcomes for children with high needs. The higher quality early childhood programs were associated with teachers/caregivers with bachelor's degrees. --Family engagement is based on parent education strengthening and community partnerships to meet diverse needs. Strategies include formal and information communication with families delivered in ways that meet diverse needs, participation in program governance, opportunities to participate within the program, facilitation of transitions and participation in community associations. --Health promotion practices are directly addressed through criteria of the Health Environment standard. The applicant provides documentation of a nutritional plan, approved by a dietician or nutritionist, daily physical activity and Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Testing (EPSDT). These health practices are appropriate processes for observing child's health and development and oral health care routines. Health promotion practices are also woven through other standards. --Effective data practices are contained within the Curriculum and Instruction standard. --The TQRIS is clear but takes some time to truly understand the points system, Using High Scope Educational Research Foundation, the applicant was able to beta test the standards before releasing them. This process verified that many of the indicators in the plan were measurable. --All program standards contain appropriate criterion and indicators that indicate that there is strong consistency. --Michigan links the TGRIS to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs and provides motivation for unlicensed family, friend and neighbor providers (FFN) to participate in the system since nearly 70% of the state's children who receive child care subsidy are in subsidized FFN care. It is mandatory that all licensed early care and development programs enter TQRIS at level One.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	12

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 Early Learning and Development 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) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

--The applicant began implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system in 2009 with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) quality set-aside investments. --In 2010-2011, using CCDF American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, ECIC began to put into place quality improvement and rating resources to enable the implementation of the full continuum of Great Start to Quality in 2011. This is a realistic goal considering the funds, expertise and staff allocated to the project. --A program quality assessment was completed by 935 early learning and development programs. --The applicant's goal for GSQ is for all publicly funded early learning and development programs to participate. The applicant has current participation from State-funded preschool programs, Early Head Start and Head Start Programs, Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and part C of IDEA, Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Early Learning and Development Programs. --Children with high needs who are eligible for GSRP, Early Head Start and Head Start attend these programs at no charge to their families. This is true for all states and not special to Michigan. --Other policy changes that will be carefully explored through this pilot include: allowing subsidies to follow eligible children until kindergarten entry for continuing services if family situations change, structuring co-payments to increase access to licensed and registered early learning and development programs, and increasing income thresholds for families prior to their exiting the scholarship assistance. The applicant will process the information gained from the pilot will inform the restructuring of the subsidy program throughout the period of this grant. --The applicant's targets for the numbers and percentages of early learning and development programs that will participate in GSQ are in table B-2 (c). The high quality plan indicates that the State is poised to meet the goals for the number of children with high needs. The State already has 100 percent of currently licensed programs participating.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	11

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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(3)

--There is an on-line self-assessment for programs to move from Level Two and Level Three; and, for programs moving from Level Three to Level Four and Five. --The applicant will use a contractor with high expertise in the administration and reporting to assure that raters assessing program quality in the Great Start to Quality continue to meet this level of inter-rater reliability. There is no evidence that there will be a site visit to verify that the rating a provider is awarded by the on-line system is valid. --The applicant will provide quality rating and licensing information to parents through Great Start CONNECT a resource provided by the child care licensing data base. Every licensed early learning and development program has a profile in Great Start CONNECT and beginning in the fall of 2012, Great Start CONNECT will begin to display the quality ratings for parents and the general public to view. --A detailed certificate that shows the program's star level will be provided for public display. Web-site banners for program web-sites, web-based parent guides highlighting star programs will indicate a programs level of quality. The applicant provided a high quality plan that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	16

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

--The applicant demonstrates an array of policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve tier quality. Impressive Great Start Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) serve as the regional-to-local hub for the delivery of coordinated incentives and supports. The applicant will appropriately use the RRCs to provide expertise, assessments, ratings, resources, specific guidance and instructions to inform and support the development of and the achievement of quality improvement plans. --Michigan offers some unique additional supports available to participants as they increase their quality and move to a higher star rating. Business development grants will be available to develop a business plan and provide on-site technical support for infrastructure changes, continued planning, and support. T.E.A.C.H.® Scholarship Bonuses, Quality Improvement Funds and Private Sector Scholarships for Children with High Needs are part of the support system. --Michigan's plan includes supports to help working families who have children with high needs access high-quality early learning and development programs. The applicant lays out the

plan and explains how proposed changes to the subsidy reimbursement system will impact families eligible for subsidy and allow those families to have greater access to high-quality early learning and development programs effectively. --IDEA Part C and 619 program were included in licensing and data but performance targets are not set. --The applicant has included additional program options to help working families, such as all-day/alternate-day, part-day, school-day, GSRP/Head Start blend; as well as guidance to provide other types of supports to working families, including providing wraparound early learning experiences, transportation, and meals for children during program hours. --The applicant provides evidence that the goal is to have 50 percent of early learning and development programs serving children with high needs at the highest Levels, Level Four and Five by the end of this grant. This is ambitious and achievable. --The applicant provides baseline data with 100 percent of programs participating in the TQRIS at entry level. Program growth in subsequent years reflects aggressive and targeted support to encourage rapid movement of those programs serving children with high needs. The applicant presents a high quality plan that is partially implemented.

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

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 Early Learning and Development 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

--The applicant includes a chart that explains their high-quality plan. The chart includes key activities, rationale, a timeline, key milestones, party(ies) responsible and other key personnel to effectively design and implement evaluations. --The applicant offers evidence that the plan provides the connections between program quality and children's outcome by testing the effects of quality ratings on children's outcomes. --The applicant will use a representative sub-sample of early learning and development programs and follow them over a two year period. This plan will sufficiently allow the applicant to understand how program, local, regional and state conditions influence program quality improvement and the extent to which quality affects child outcomes. --The systematic evaluation design proposed by the applicant will get a comparison of outcomes relative to children's enrollments in programs at Level One or Level Two quality versus programs at Level Three or higher. --In 2014, Michigan will be able to use the statewide kindergarten entry assessment data to study the relationships between program quality and learning status at kindergarten entry. --The proposed design will provide an opportunity for the applicant to learn more about specific local, regional and state conditions in order to promote effective implementation of Great Start to Quality and expand higher quality statewide. --The applicant also plans to conduct interviews with program directors to get their perspective about the value and need of using Great Start to Quality.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E)

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows.

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

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

(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

--Michigan has a forty year history of promoting programs where children have the opportunity to acquire the early learning and development skills necessary for them to thrive in primary grades and continue on to career and college. --The Early Learning Standards are used statewide by early learning and development programs. The applicant provides evidence that alignment of the ECSQ-PK to child care licensing rules, federal Head Start Performance Standards, the Head Start Child Outcome Framework and the GLCEs is assured. This level of alignment has promoted and enabled the use of ECSQ-PK with programs, a strength for this application. --The early learning standards contain learning expectations for three and four-year-old children bridging the gap between developmental domains and content expectations for five year old children effectively. --The State adopted early learning standards for Infants and toddlers, Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs (ECSQ-IT), and Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten (ECSQ-PK). Both program standards and expectations for children's development and learning are correctly addressed and cover the essential domains of school readiness. --The applicant explains how the ECSQ-PK early learning expectations were specifically formatted and reviewed by in-state experts to ensure that the standards were culturally and linguistically appropriate for all children, including those with disabilities and developmental delays, English language learners, and those other factors that may cause them to be at-risk of school failure. Strategies for these learners are woven throughout every item in the Standards. --Initial alignment and validation of the expectations for children with the ECSQ-PK was accomplished through the evaluation of the Great Start Readiness Program, the state's prekindergarten program, and by the HighScope Educational Research Foundation. --The applicant has contracted with a group of consultant writers to explain and demonstrate the vertical alignment for children. This will ensure that the Standards are aligned for children from infancy through primary grades and beyond. Also included in this project is the alignment with federal expectations for Head Start children which is critical to the acceptance and utility of these standards. --The State has been unsuccessful in securing appropriate funding to support the implementation of the ECSQ-IT and ECSQ-PK. The applicant has developed a High-Quality Plan to expand the reach and usage of the revised standards. The applicant includes a chart with Key Activities, Rationale, Timeline and/or Key Milestones, Party(ies) Responsible and Other Key Personnel necessary to provide professional development on ECQS. Professional development will include engagement with families that focuses on the early learning expectations and the connections between home and early learning and development programs to promote the achievement of those expectations. --A strength of this section is the unique plan, funded by W.K. Kellogg Foundation, to conduct community and family engagement using place-based networks where partnerships will be formed to share knowledge, and collaborate with families, early learning and development programs, and communities.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	20	15
The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--		
(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;		
(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;		
(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and		
(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--		
(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic		

and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

--The State's ECSQ-PK provides progressive standards that support the development and maintenance of intentional teaching practices to ensure that all children's health, behavioral and developmental needs are met. The standards promote social and emotional, intellectual, language, creative, physical and health skills. --The applicant highlighted programs that are promoting healthy eating habits, improved nutrition, expanded physical activity. The focus of many of the partners in the RTT-ELC application is health and has been established as a priority for the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) by the Governor. --The applicant cited many programs that will promote health aspects including Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan (HKHM) coalition, Obesity Prevention Summit, and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC). The applicant has convened statewide stakeholders to develop benchmarks for promoting, preventing and intervening on behalf of the social and emotional health needs of children and families. --Michigan is actively engaged in appropriate health and developmental screening, referral, follow-up and family education within child serving agencies across the state. In accordance with existing program policy, developmental screenings are provided in many early learning and development programs, state-funded prekindergarten, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, home visiting programs, and in a variety of health care settings. Health and developmental screening, referral, follow-up and family education across the state will provide easy access for families. It is not clear how the applicant will include additional aspects of health. --MDCH has adopted the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Bright Futures Recommendations for Pediatric Care for both Medicaid and MICHild (SCHIP), and is promoting developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening as outlined in Bright Futures. These screenings not only screen the status of children's development, but also enhance parent understanding of health and development. The plan lacks a description of the Screeners education or expertise. --MDCH created a series of tools to support referral for services and piloted the tools in several programs including Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visitation Program. --The State was able to revise Medicaid billing policy for developmental screening. Physicians can bill separately for up to three developmental screenings in a given day (including developmental, behavior, and autism screens). The MDCH Data Warehouse will be able to produce Medicaid/Fee for Service. Data about developmental screenings and well-child care as well as encounter data for children enrolled in MICHild, Michigan's SCHIP program.

	Available	Score
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.	20	17

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 Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(4)

--The applicant has a high-quality plan to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate information and support to families. The State provided evidence that they are establishing a progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for family engagement by using Childhood Standards of Quality (ECSQ). --The Partnership with Families section of the ECSQ-Prekindergarten, identifies six standards designed to ensure high-quality, responsive programs are attuned to the quality of family engagement as they move from traditional activities toward fully engaging families in all aspects of supporting their children's early learning and development. --The high-quality plan lays out a thoughtful professional development plan that the state would undertake to increase the number and percentage of early childhood educators that are trained and supported to implement the standards using many effective approaches. It is not clear how the State will increase the number of higher education institutions to serve early education professionals. --One of the strengths of the plan is the use of formal and informal communications to encourage parents to participate in conferences, program and home visits, resource sharing and family education. The plan is to focus on interactions with families from different backgrounds to ensure cultural sensitivity. This will ultimately improve family engagement strategies. --Another strength is the

Community Collaboration and Financial Support program that provides opportunities for identifying resources for on-site participation of families, community supports for families, as well as the focus needed to support children and their families in the transitions into and out of the early learning settings. --To promote respectful attention to the cultural, linguistic and complex needs of families, particularly those with high needs, family relationship and engagement are woven throughout all the program areas. --A unique program to help families support their children is the cost effective forty-two video vignettes designed to reach unlicensed subsidized family friend and neighbor providers and parents of high need children. The vignettes are used in different ways such as: on web-sites, trainings or workshops. The DVD can be viewed by a family in their home, shown in waiting rooms of health care providers etc. --A weakness of this application is that there was no comprehensive data collected on the percentages of all early childhood educators who receive training and support on the family engagement strategies included in the ECSQ to date. Beginning November 1, 2011, early childhood educators who utilize Great Start CONNECT to register and record their professional development will be able to code those accomplishments in the professional development registry portion of Great Start CONNECT. This means that there is no baseline data that can be used to provide a comparison of the percentage of increase after the implementation of RTT-ELC. --The applicant can promote family support and engagement statewide by leveraging existing funds such as: Michigan's Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program. These funds are targeted for state and local infrastructure that supports evidence-based programming in Michigan's ten highest need communities. This provides a good opportunity to have services in the communities that have a high percentage of children with high needs and focus on the alignment and coordination of home visitation services with early learning and development programs. --The ECIC uses a combination of public and private funds to invest over \$1.6 million each year in the Great Start Parent Coalitions (GSPCs). --The applicant's plan is to have all these initiatives motivate parent to voice their concerns and ideas into the policy and decision-making environment where state and local leaders can work in concert with them to address the needs of the state's diverse population.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	40	36

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

- (a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;
- (b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
- (c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

--The applicant shows evidence that a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework will be developed based on the Michigan Early Childhood Professionals: Core Knowledge and Core Competencies (CKCC) and the Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality for both Infants and Toddlers and Prekindergarten (ECSQ-PK and ECSQ-IT). --The CKCC and the early learning standards serve as a solid framework for reviewing and approving both professional development and education through the Great Start Curriculum Review Advisory Committee and the Institutions of Higher Education Advisory Committee. --In addition, Governor Granholm's Children's Cabinet adopted the CKCC in 2005, and it is the foundation for professional development for the Great Start Regional Resource Centers (RRC's). It is comprehensive and includes eight core knowledge domains: 1) Child Development and Learning, 2) Health, Safety, and Nutrition, 3) Family and Community Collaboration, 4) Program Management, 5) Teaching and Learning, 6) Observations, Documentation and Assessment, 7) Interactions and Guidance, and 8) Professionalism. Each domain contains up to eight competencies which are attained through a progressive process of professional learning and development. Knowledge and skills across the eight domains are interdependent, thus preparing Michigan's teachers using a whole-child orientation. --The Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Advisory committee is responsible for pursuing articulation agreements with higher education institutions to ensure a seamless career pathway that ultimately cultivates highly trained professionals. They have been successful in seven early childhood education/child development Bachelor degree programs that have been reviewed and approved by the IHE. It is not clear as to how the applicant will engage additional higher education institutions. --The IHE also adopted the NAEYC and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Associate Degree Accreditation Process for all associate degrees. A strength of this section is that this process directly linked to the NAEYC/NCATE accreditation processes to program assessment and ties directly to the state's early learning

standards that are used by Michigan State Board of Education to approve early childhood education endorsement programs. --Another strength is that the CKCC is integrated into the state's early childhood career lattice. This ensures that assessments of early learning and development programs are standards driven and that there is a feed-back loop that informs the training, improvement and retention of a high-quality early learning workforce.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	20	12
<p>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--</p> <p>(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(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).</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)
<p>--The development of the Michigan Model of School Readiness (MIMSR) was to close the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers. MIMSR will assist in the alignment of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and cover all essential domains of school readiness. --Michigan's school districts were looking at the status of children entering kindergarten using an assessment that focused on literacy. As a result of that finding, the partners decided to investigate another assessment that provided a greater amount of insight for a common, state-wide, kindergarten entry status assessment. --The University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities and the United Way Worldwide presented the Early Development Instrument (EDI) to Michigan. The tool measures five domains of early childhood development: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills, and communication skills and general knowledge. The state will use the tool for their data collection. --The applicant will use a policy framework to promote the preparation of young children for success in kindergarten and elementary school. Michigan will use the example from The Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) which includes the use of a customized version of the Work Sampling System® (WSS). WSS® is currently used with more than 850,000 students across eight States. --Extensive professional development is another key element of the Maryland Model for School Readiness. Prior to using the Maryland model, student performance assessment was collected only after the first quarter assessment. Now, Michigan will collect and analyze data, verify it and assure its reliability continuously throughout the year. The Michigan Department of Education will also issue an annual report on the findings and disseminates it to interested stakeholders. --There are many advantages that the use of the Work Sampling System® (WSS) brings to this application. It is a criterion referenced, observational performance assessment with extensive research supporting its reliability and validity. WSS® has been used successfully with children whose first language is not English as well as with children with special needs. It measures seven domains of development: Personal and Social, Language and Literacy, Mathematical Thinking, Scientific Thinking, Social Studies, The Arts and Physical Development and Health. WSS® documents children's skills, knowledge, behavior, and accomplishments, across these domains. WSS® is embedded into the classroom curriculum which enables teachers to collect extensive information from multiple interactions, and use this information to evaluate what children know and can do. WSS® relies on observation, recording and evaluating; organizing the assessment process so that it is both comprehensive in scope and manageable for teachers and students. --Michigan plans to customize the WSS®, by choosing a sub-set of the items from the WSS®. Kindergarten Checklists/Guidelines which will align with Michigan's early learning standards and core curriculum. This customization is a strength and will build upon work that is underway to extend the state's early learning standards from P-3. --The applicant provides evidence that by June of 2012, the Michigan Department of</p>

Education, Office of Great Start (MDE-OGS) will have completed the customization of WSS®. It will align with Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten (ECSQ-PK) and the five essential domains of school readiness. By November of 2012, a field test will be conducted of the modified WSS® to inform the processes and procedures that must be in place to support successful state-wide roll out. A pilot, 20 percent of the ISDs, targeting those serving local school districts with the highest number of children with high needs, will implement MIMSR. In 2013, and full statewide implementation of MIMSR will take place in 2014-2015 meeting the requirements of the RTT-ELC grant. The applicant does not explain how they will "customize" WSS®. It is not clear if the new customized tool will be valid. --The applicant provides evidence that the Center for Educational. --The kindergarten assessment is not fully implemented. --Performance Information (CEPI) at the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB) will be a key partner in this project with MDEOGS. CEPI will manage the individual child data gained from the WSS® in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and share it with Michigan's early learning data system, once that system is online. --The applicant shows evidence of funding from various sources. The Michigan Legislature is actively considering a supplemental appropriations bill and the state budget office has proposed examining policy change aimed at an annual appropriation for the kindergarten assessment through the state school aid fund. the Kellogg Foundation has funds to support ECIC's ongoing early childhood work. Michigan's private sector recently contributed \$3.0 million in matching funds to create local child care quality scholarships. A concern is: will the applicant be able to proceed with the plan if the Michigan Legislature does not provide an annual appropriation for the kindergarten assessment? There is no contingency plan. --The kindergarten assessment is not fully implemented.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	20	16

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 Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

--The applicant uses Figure 1-Vision to provide information about the four overall facets to the ELS vision: Improve Child-Centered Knowledge (reflecting the needs of the whole child), Connecting Conversations (feedback, leverage data etc.), Transparency (empower families, communities etc.) and Turning Data Into Actionable Intelligence (decision making, accountability, impact policy etc. --The applicant uses Figure 2: Conceptual ELS architecture for Michigan. The applicant provides a well calculated early learning system project timeline, divided into 4 quarters for 4 years, with 5 competently defined activities. The strength of this section is the ability to generate information in a timely, relevant and accessible manner. the information is clear and easily understandable and can be used for evaluation, ongoing improvement and decision making. --Michigan will establish a governance committee made up of representatives from each of the four agencies, and other primary system stakeholders, including MiHIN, local early childhood representatives, non-profits and research institutions and families to provide data system oversight. Because data governance issues will expand to link data across multiple state agencies and local communities there will be increased visibility and significance creating transparency and privacy policies that will govern the system. -- The State has a medium-quality plan and it is partially implemented at this time.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	229

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
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Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

10

9

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (P)(2)

--In Michigan all Head Start centers, Early Head Start centers and licensed family programs, Michigan's state-funded prekindergarten program -- the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), Title I Program sites, child care centers and community based preschool programs, and family homes must be licensed except those programs funded by IDEA. A goal of the high-quality plan is to implement rules to integrate IDEA funded programs into the licensing system by December 2013. --In addition to the licensed early learning and development programs, families eligible for child care subsidies may choose a family, friend, or neighbor (subsidized FFN provider) to care for their child. Subsidized FFN providers are not licensed and the applicant has no plan to change that status. If the FFN provider wants to participate in the Great Start to Quality program FFN provider must complete pre-service orientation training and become a licensed program. --Michigan appropriately begins all licensed early learning and development programs at Level One (equal to licensing requirements) of their Great Start to Quality tiered reimbursement system. All licensed early learning and development programs have the option to move through the quality continuum to higher quality levels.

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	0 or 10	No

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

Comments on (P)(3)

Michigan has a plan for implementation of a statewide common kindergarten entry assessment but it is not fully implemented. The applicant did not earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points on selection criterion (E)(1). Supports are not in place to begin a statewide implementation process.

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	Yes

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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 (sections (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.

Comments on Absolute Priority

--The applicant explains how the ECSQ-PK early learning expectations were specifically formatted and reviewed by in-state experts to ensure that the standards were culturally and linguistically appropriate for all children, including those with disabilities and developmental delays, English language learners, and those other factors that may cause them to be at-risk of school failure. --The State adopted early learning standards for Infants and toddlers, Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs (ECSQ-IT), and Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten (ECSQ-PK). --The State has been unsuccessful in securing appropriate funding to support the implementation of the ECSQ-IT and ECSQ-PK . The applicant has developed a High-Quality Plan to expand the reach and usage of the revised standards. --Professional development will include engagement with families that focuses on the early learning expectations and the connections between home and early learning and development programs to promote the achievement of those expectations. The applicant shows evidence that a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework will be developed. --The Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Advisory committee is responsible for pursuing articulation agreements with higher education institutions to ensure a seamless career pathway that ultimately cultivates highly trained professionals. --The IHE also adopted the NAEYC and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Associate Degree Accreditation Process for all associate degrees. The development of the Michigan Model of School Readiness (MMSR) has positive implications to close the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers.



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review



Technical Review Form Page

Application # MI-5018

Peer Reviewer: [REDACTED]
 Lead Monitor: [REDACTED]
 Support Monitor: [REDACTED]
 Application Status: **Reviewed**
 Date/Time: **11/16/2011 - 11:54 AM**

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

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

A. Successful State Systems

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development	20	14
<p>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--</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;</p> <p>(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and</p> <p>(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.</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(1)

The applicant outlines the state's past commitment to Early Learning and Development (ELD). A public/private partnership was formed in 2005, was charged with restructuring investment in children before school entry. The Office of Great Start, which functions within the state Department of Education, brings together services for children with High Needs in the following areas: (1) the Child Care and Development fund (CCDF), (2) Parts C and B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and (3) the Head Start Collaboration Office. This addresses some, but not all, of the areas considered 'High Need' in this grant competition. The applicant provides clear, convincing evidence of the economic challenges faced by the state and provides information about financial investments from (1) Head Start and Early Head Start, (2) State Funded Preschools, (3) Preschool Special Education Services, (4) the Child Care and Development Fund and (5) Other early learning and development programs. The applicant provides evidence that some, but not all, early learning and development programs served increasingly large number of children since 2007. The applicant lists and describes a wide variety of legislation, policies and/or practices that support the provision of services to specific populations of young children with High Needs. It appears that currently, services to young children and their families are supported by legislation and some policies and practices, but that the provision of services is widely varied. The application includes the Early Childhood Standards of Quality. These standards address both environmental issues and child development standards. Both categories are high quality and address key areas of a high-quality early education program, which are built on a philosophy that is consistent with current best practice. The application addresses the comprehensive assessment system, but indicates that some licensed Great Start to Quality providers choose to implement assessment, no mandate to do so is indicated. Of concern is inconsistent application of assessment across programs, which may lead to inconsistent service provision to young children and their families. Additionally, effective data practices are not well articulated. This state has a plan to address the Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) requirement of this proposal, but a KEA is not currently being implemented. Workforce credential programs above the CDA (child development associate) is not aligned, but work is being done to create articulation agreements and to link work done at the associate's degree level to NAEYC and NCATE standards. Both NAEYC and NCATE are well-respected and alignment with their programs is seen as positive.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	15

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

The application addresses the need for a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda. Clear evidence is provided regarding the need for reform. A strength of the state's work to date is the development of separate Infant-Toddler and Preschool standards. These standards address program performance and child knowledge and skill development across developmental domains. These standards have been encouraged, but not mandated for all service providers in the state, which may lead to inconsistencies. A clear plan for revising, distributing and encouraging implementation is outlined, however, multiple agencies serving in the lead role of responsibility could lead to confusion and be problematic. A rationale for choosing areas to address is provided. Rationales for C(1) and C(2) are clearly articulated and match the needs identified. C(4) indicates a need to enhance traditional family engagement and support strategies for families with the highest needs, but the proposal does not follow up with specific plans. Notably, children in foster care, children living on native lands and children who are homeless or in foster care are identified as small, but high needs populations. Further plans for statewide improvements do not specifically address these populations. The proposal addresses D(1) by stating that the review and approval process for two- and four-year programs needs to be strengthened and that formal relationships do not exist between the Office of Great Start and institutions leading those programs. This is a key activity to addressing a reform agenda. The state also currently lacks a KEA, which is an important aspect of understanding children's learning and development at kindergarten entry. A well-implemented KEA can help inform instruction in kindergarten and subsequent years and can help the state make decisions about strengthening its PreK system. Implementing a KEA is a vital step in helping the state reach other goals. The state's comprehensive early learning standards is a strength of the state's ELD system, however the lack of a single lead agency may lead to difficulty in moving forward with the state's plan as outlined in this proposal.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	6

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality and Implementation

Comments on (A)(3)

This application provides strong evidence of support from a wide variety of stakeholders including to interagency policy leadership groups. The proposed organizational structure incorporates existing entities into leadership roles. The state department of education will serve as the lead agency, and two interagency policy bodies are in place, which may be problematic. Tribal leaders and widespread College/University commitment are not included in the letters of support, but other stakeholders are represented in the plan. Governance-related roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated in both the text of the proposal and in Memorandums of Agreement (MOUs). Strong commitments to the state plan are outlined, to the extent possible, in the MOUs, however the sustainability of grant work after the grant period ends is not clearly addressed. The organizational structure of the work is outlined and is based on existing interagency structure. Participating state agencies will provide funds to be leveraged to extend the scope of work that is proposed. Of concern, however, is the stated need to move beyond the status quo and create a more efficient and effective system, but the plan is based on the continuation of service delivery and oversight by the same organizations. A structure for outlining responsibilities and resolving conflicts is discussed, however a clear delineation of a single authority at the outset of the work could lead to increased efficiency. In addition, two interagency bodies are described in the application; this is not an efficient way to address the needs outlined in the proposal. The application contains many strong letters of support from a wide variety of stakeholders including Early Learning organizations and outside stakeholders. Notably missing is commitment from tribal organizations and strong letters of support from a variety of institutions of higher education. This is a medium quality response that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	12

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 Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

This application describes existing Federal, State, private and local sources of funding for the proposed work; more than 70% of the support will come from existing funds that support ELD programs. The proposal states that CCDF (Child Care and Development Funds) will be blended with grant funds to purchase scholarship slots for high needs children in high quality early learning and development programs. Training and support for professionals who will work with children with disabilities and other High Needs is not specifically addressed and is not strongly supported with letters of support from institutions of higher education. Budget narrative and tables support the state's effective and efficient plan to use funding to achieve the outcomes of the plan. Costs appear to be reasonable and necessary and are in direct relationship to the stated outcomes. Sustainability is addressed by the applicant; investment in the TQRIS system, promoting programs that serve children with high needs to the highest tiers of early learning and development standards, and other long-term goals are part of the scope of work outlined in the proposal. These activities will help to form a solid foundation upon which further work can be built. Grant funds would be used to pilot and prototype reforms before they are implemented state-wide. The proposal indicates confidence that MOU signatories will develop a sustainability plan, but does not provide specifics to support this statement. A strength of the proposal is the use of a wide variety of sources to fund the work outlined in the proposal; this will help to ensure buy-in by multiple agencies and may help to ensure continued collaboration after the grant period ends. Sustainability will be enhanced through investment in the TQRIS with grant funds.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	5

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) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

High Quality, accountable programs that are based on a statewide set of tiered Program standards is discussed. The application includes copies of the early learning and development standards for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, which appear to be appropriate. These standards address key areas of development, and for infants and toddlers, relationships are considered key so they are integrated throughout the standards. A variety of methods of gathering information about child development are discussed including anecdotal records, screenings and administration of 'approved tools', although neither the specific instruments nor the process for approval is included. Early childhood educator qualifications and training are discussed. In the Great Start to Quality system, higher levels of education and continued professional development earn additional points. The applicant states that a minimum of three hours of professional development per year must be devoted to cultural competence and working with children with disabilities. This is a positive step, however, three hours is insufficient to make much of a difference for children with disabilities if the professional has had no previous experience. No mention is made of ongoing, onsite support to help care providers work with individual students with High Needs, particularly children with disabilities. Family Engagement strategies are address in the application. Strengths include strategies to address adult-child interactions that are integrated into the infant-toddler standards, and professionals are required to share assessment results with parents at least twice a year and a variety of other parent engagement strategies are discussed, but a previously stated need of engaging parents who are 'hard to

reach' is not specifically addressed. Health promotion practices are clearly addressed. All programs are required to meet minimal standards; further information is provided to support both environmental and individual health issues. The applicant indicates a plan to align the Great Start to Quality standards with the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). NAEYC is a highly respected organization and state alignment with their standards will be an important step to ensuring quality. The Great Start to Quality standards and progression up the TQRIS system is somewhat unclear. It is clear that participation in tier one is mandatory. Participation beyond tier one appears to be optional and not well-supported. While movement upward from level three of the Great Start to Quality system is well established, providers at levels one and two appear to be measured by self-assessment. While it is important to bring unlicensed providers into the system, a self-assessment does not provide high levels of validity and reliability. It may be difficult to link learning outcomes to programs at these first two levels. Great Start Connect is the state's link to the licensing system. All licensed programs will be included in this system. Unlicensed programs are not addressed and this may be where many high needs children, especially those living in poverty, are cared for. This is a medium quality response that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	11

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 Early Learning and Development 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) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

The applicant currently includes most publicly funded ELD's, including programs in all the mandated categories, in the TQRIS. The current exception is services provided for young children served by IDEA, but there is a plan to include programs serving these children. In addition, the applicant indicates interest in working with ELD's delivered by federal-land tribes and military child care programs but no specific strategies are addressed. The applicant indicates that in order to support programs' upward movement through the system, free quality improvement supports, teacher bonuses and higher reimbursement levels will be offered. Details about these inducements are not included. The applicant provides information about policies and practices to help more families afford high quality care: the current plan is to pilot the modifications to the state payment structure in areas of high concentration and to focus on care for infants and toddlers. Specific aspects of the program that will be considered a success are not outlined in the proposal. The applicant indicates a baseline of 100% participation in the TQRIS by all programs, with the exception of programs funded by IDEA. When those programs are licensed, participation is projected to be 100%. This is a high quality plan to address participation in a state-mandated system. This is a high quality response that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	7

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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

The state's rating system includes an on-line self-assessment for programs at the first two levels of the Great Start to Quality system. It is unclear that the monitoring system proposed for validity and reliability for these two levels will actually provide strong evidence. Beyond the self-assessment at levels one and two, the Program Quality Assessment (PQA) is employed. The multidimensional approach of the PQA includes compliance with licensing regulations and information about the child's day-to-day experience. Observations and interviews are used to rate these dimensions, which provides more reliability and validity than self-assessments. The proposal indicates a willingness to consider reciprocity with other forms of assessment (the Head Start Performance reviews, for example) but few specifics are offered. Licensing and quality rating information has been available to parents in the state, including links to community programs, services and resources, high quality ELD's and information in Spanish and Arabic. It appears that this information will be available only online, which is of concern. Parents in challenging circumstances, such as those living in poverty, who are illiterate or who are homeless may not have access to this information. This is a medium quality response with partially implementation.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	11

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

Promoting access to high quality ELD's for children with high need is addressed and an array of innovations are discussed. These include training grants, business development supports, and scholarships. While it is clear that these innovations will be available to programs – and individuals working in them – at higher levels of competence, specifics about how implementation decisions will be made are not included. In addition, with only one letter of support from an institution of higher education, it is difficult to discern the quality of the training that professionals may receive. One strength of the system is the Great Start Regional Resource Centers. These centers provide a wide variety of services to support programs. However, specifics (such as the availability of individuals with expertise in disabilities or behavior issues) is not provided. This applicant does, indeed, set ambitious goals. Baseline data indicate that no programs currently score above level one of the TQRIS and a goal of having 65% of programs operating at or above level 3 in four years is ambitious. Lower goals for numbers and percentages of children with high needs who are served in top tier programs are provided. At the end of the 2015 calendar year, 30% of children with high needs are expected to be served in state funded preschool programs. Four and six percent, respectively, is the projection for high need children being served in top tier Title 1 and CCDF programs by 2015. Programs funded by Part C and section 619, Part B are not currently licensed. Differences in the ways that programs designed specifically to serve children with disabilities may prove to be a challenge in a rating system that was designed for programs that serve typically developing children. This is a medium quality response that is partially implemented.

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

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 Early Learning and Development 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

The applicant’s plan to validate the effectiveness of the TORIS is seen as a strength of the proposal. Both qualitative and quantitative measures are proposed. The qualitative plan includes measures of progress that are associated with NAEYC accreditation criteria and the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System); both are highly regarded in the field of early childhood. Qualitative assessment will be done through interviews and focus groups with directors and early childhood educators. While care must be taken in designing and implementing these groups, it can be a very effective way to address the ‘face validity’ of the changes that are proposed. In addition, evaluating the effects of quality ratings of programs on the developmental progress of children is addressed, the measures and procedures described are high quality. Multiple measures of child development, learning and school readiness are proposed; this will provide the data needed to make determinations about the relatedness of program quality ratings and children’s progress. As with other areas of the proposal, a timeline of key activities to meet this goal is included.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application—

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	20	16

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

- (a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State’s K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;
- (c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

The applicant identified a long history of commitment to promoting success for its youngest citizens. Early childhood standards were mandated in 2005 for preK programs that were funded through the department of education and other programs were encouraged to implement them. These standards were built on licensing rules and incorporate a wide variety of developmental domains. The learning expectations specifically address culturally appropriate practices, children with disabilities or delays, dual language learners and other children who are at developmental risk. In addition, the state provides standards for infants and toddlers, which have partnerships with families interwoven into the standards instead of as a stand-alone section. Both sets of standards are seen as a strength on which to build as the state moves forward. Strong alignment of preK standards with K-3 academic standards is evidenced in the proposal. Proposed work includes further refinement of the standards by a team of professionals from a wide variety of professional fields, which will further strengthen the standards. Clear alignment of the state's workforce knowledge and competency framework with the standards is clearly articulated. The applicant addresses the need to move beyond establishing, revising and validating standards to ensuring implementation. The implementation plan includes IHE approval of the modules to be developed; the IHE community did not include a letter of support for this proposal, so if and how this implementation will occur is unclear. This is a high quality response that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	20	15

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

The applicant indicates that the state has established a progression of standards to identify and address a wide variety of health, behavioral and developmental needs of young children across a wide variety of domains. As evidence, physical activity, good nutrition and safety for young children and their families is addressed. The applicant indicates a current recommendation that paid and non-paid personnel have training in this area, but does not indicate that this training is, or will be, required. Funding will be directed to support health consultants to improve program quality as it relates to health and behavioral health. Health standards are currently addressed through Great Start Regional Resource Centers which provide no-cost or low-cost training to both early childhood professionals and parents on a variety of health-related topics. This system is tied in to the TQRIS system, which is a strength for the state. Additionally, funding is planned to train and support health consultants to further efforts to enhance health standards. Mentoring that will continue after the grant period is proposed. The applicant indicates that future funding will not be required for this activity, but this seems unlikely to continue without some financial support. Improvement in health promotion information and education is planned. Currently, the state provides support through collaborative efforts with statewide stakeholders to develop benchmarks for addressing the social and emotional health needs of children and families. Other grant work is mentioned, clearly addressing the state's current focus on this area. The state currently provides an array of developmental screening options for children in a variety of health and educational settings. A plan to centralize intake and processing of referrals is planned. This is a strong foundation on which to base future work. The need of young children, particularly young children from low-income families, enhanced standards and training, and the development and use of comprehensive data are all addressed as part of the state's proposed plan. What appears to be missing from the plan is the incorporation of knowledge and skill into the TQRIS program, which would provide encouragement, and possibly incentives, to service providers. Additionally, a specific plan to track participation in ongoing health care is not well defined. This is a high quality response that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.	20	16

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 Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(4)

The state has a long history of providing family friendly services to children with disabilities. The proposal clearly outlines six standards designed to ensure high-quality, responsive programs and addresses the need to support both generations of a dyad. The state plan will integrate increased workforce qualifications to support both professionals and families to improve outcomes for young children. Additionally, adult-child interaction is woven into the state's early learning standards. This may be helpful for professionals who wish to support families' understanding of and practice in supportive adult-child interactions. Educators who utilize the professional development registry will be able to code their professional development activities in family engagement activities into the system. A goal of the plan for this section includes development of a system to collect data about the educators who receive training and support on the family engagement strategies that are promoted as part of a high-quality early childhood system. No information about on-going support to professionals is provided. The applicant indicates support from foundations to support culturally appropriate family engagement activities. The applicant describes a current effort to provide information to parents through vignettes that were played on public television last summer. The plan includes exploration of ways in which more culturally and linguistically appropriate information into the homes of children with high needs. This is a high quality response that is partially implemented.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	40	32

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

- (a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;
- (b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
- (c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

The applicant has had a system of Workforce Knowledge and Competency since 2002. This system is closely linked to the state's standards for (a) infants and toddlers and (b) preschoolers. All early childhood programs in the state must adhere to the standards and competencies. Two committees (the Great Start Curriculum Review Advisory Committee and the Institutions of Higher Education Advisory Committee) oversee this work. A clear plan for coordination between these two committees is not outlined. The Core Knowledge and Core Competencies (CKCC) are based on validated, evidence-based resources from, among others, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Articulation agreements among two-year institutions and between two- and four-year institutions are discussed; to date, seven institutions have been approved by the IHE, which also follows high-quality standards. The applicant states that matriculation barriers have been reduced and articulation among institutions has been enhanced. Further work is needed to bring more state institutions into these agreements. The need to continue to review and update the CKCC is addressed in the state's plan. This will continue to ensure that the state maintains a workforce that is well-prepared to help children enter kindergarten ready to learn. This is a medium quality response that is substantially implemented.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	20	8
<p>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--</p> <p>(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(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).</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)		
<p>The applicant outlines the progression of work currently underway to implement a state-wide assessment of School Readiness for kindergarteners. The work is, and will continue to be, aligned with early learning standards. It is based on valid and reliable instruments and it is useful to predict health, education and social outcomes for a wide variety of students with high needs. The applicant has chosen a tool to work with and describes a plan to use portions of that tool. How using only parts of the tool will affect validity, reliability and appropriateness for the population is not clearly articulated. The state plan is to use a phase-in implementation plan; twenty school districts will participate in the customized assessment in the 2013-2014 school year and full implementation is scheduled for the 2014-2015 school year. No explicit statement is included to indicate that the assessment will not be used to keep children from enrolling in kindergarten. This instrument will be implemented after the child is enrolled in kindergarten. Specific information about how the instrument will address the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers is unclear. The applicant indicates that yearly reports will be available to interested stakeholders, but does not clearly address a link to the longitudinal data system. Data from first quarter assessments will be reported to the statewide longitudinal data system. Further testing will occur in the classroom and can be used to inform instruction. Funding for this work may be provided by a supplemental state appropriations bill and/or the state school aid fund. In addition, a private organization has indicated a willingness to financially support this work. This is a medium quality response that is minimally implemented.</p>		

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	20	8

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 Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

The applicant addresses the current statewide systems for data collection and provides a vision, and supporting plan, for enhancing the data system for early childhood. The enhanced system will be developed to support a wide variety of needs including, but not limited to, addressing four critical developmental domains, identifying children and communities with high needs, supporting early childhood programs and families, and assuring security, privacy and confidentiality. Currently, challenges in sharing information exist because different organizations interpret state and federal privacy mandates in different ways. In the planned system, multiple agencies serving populations with high need will have access to the system, which is designed to generate information that meets the requirements of the grant, namely that it is timely, relevant, accessible and easy to use. The system will be designed to comply with state and federal privacy laws, but its ability to facilitate the exchange of data and generate high quality information is not clearly articulated. This is a medium quality response that is minimally implemented.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	191

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	8

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (F)(2)

The applicant indicates that not all children with high need, notably children served under IDEA, are currently being served in programs that fall under state licensure. The proposal outlines a state plan to bring those programs into alignment with all other state programs that are licensed and entered in the TQRIS. However, service providers who are currently providing unlicensed services are not addressed in the proposal. In addition, FFN (Family, Friends and Neighbors) care providers who are subsidized are required to undergo entry level orientation training and must have an approved application. A variety of checkpoints are included in the expectations for compliance. These checkpoints range from a basic background check to inspection of the environment and daily programming for children. While the applicant indicates a desire to move all programs into

compliance, it is of concern that subsidized FFN providers are not required to move up the TQRIS. These providers may be used more by families with children with high needs and ongoing training would help to ensure that these care providers are aware of programs and resources to help families and children. This is a high quality response that is substantially implemented.

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	0 or 10	No
<p>To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--</p> <p>(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or</p> <p>(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.</p>		
Comments on (P)(3)		
<p>The applicant does not currently implement a Kindergarten Entry Assessment. Additionally, the applicant did not earn a score of 70% on criterion (E)(1).</p>		

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	Yes
<p>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 Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.</p> <p>The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development 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 (sections (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.</p>	
Comments on Absolute Priority	
<p>The applicant addressed the current implementation of early childhood services throughout the state and addressed both the need and plan for building a system that increases the quality of ELD programs across the state so that children with high needs enter kindergarten ready to succeed. The applicant demonstrates the use of the TQRIS to track and improve the quality of services. The state will build on their already strong system of Early Learning and Development outcomes for children, will continue to address the learning needs of professionals who deliver services to children and families, particularly families of children with high needs and will measure outcomes and progress through a re-vamped Kindergarten Entry Assessment. This proposal has demonstrated a high need for updating the current system and many parts of the proposal provide clear plans to improve the system. Many of the systems in the state appear to be disjointed; as evidence, two major agencies will share responsibility for implementation, two different advisory boards will continue to exist and evidence that institutions of higher education are 'on board' with proposed changes is not consistently presented in the proposal. The state has a long history of promoting early learning and development outcomes for children. The proposed plan will build on this history to more fully align PreK standards with K-3 standards - a positive step toward enhancing the quality of PreK programs. The proposal addresses the state's need to continue work on its Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. While work remains to be done in this area, the state already has a strong foundation. The state does not currently have a Kindergarten Entry Assessment, but plans are outlined in the proposal to continue work toward this goal. Overall, the need is evident and the stated desire for change is clear, but the proposed plan does not follow a clear and direct route to using the resources that would be provided by this grant to their fullest capacity.</p>	



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review



Technical Review Form Page

Application # MI-5018

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]
Support Monitor: [Redacted]
Application Status: Reviewed
Date/Time: 11/17/2011 - 11:49 AM

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

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

A. Successful State Systems

Table with 3 columns: Core Area, Available, Score. Row 1: (A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development, 20, 16. Includes detailed text description of Michigan's early learning system and list of criteria (a-d).

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

Comments on (A)(1)

The State of Michigan provides a high quality response as it demonstrates past commitment to Early Learning and Development. Through the Great Start system, launched in 2005, the State has implemented all the elements of a high-quality early childhood system. In addition to bipartisan support in Legislature, the State has benefited from extraordinary private sector involvement including business and philanthropic leaders. In 2011 the Governor of Michigan established the Office of Great Start within the Michigan Department of Education (MDE-OGS) which brings together into one office the State's early learning and development programs for children with high needs comprised of: the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), the State pre-kindergarten program-the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), part C and part B of 619 of IDEA, and the Head Start Collaboration Office. The State of Michigan gave a thorough account of the hard economic challenges it has been facing within the past decade state revenues fell 40% between fiscal years 2000 and 2010; child poverty rose 64 percent between 2000 and 2009 with more than half of all African-American and Hispanic/Latino children under the age of five living in poverty; approximately 63,400 young children have identified disabilities or developmental delays (8.8 percent of all children in the state); 51,000 are English language learners; and 6,000 children 0 to 5 (1 in every 100) are in and out of home care because of child abuse and neglect; 2,800 young children are living on Indian reservations representing 52 percent of all Native American children under the age of 6 in the State. In the application Michigan states that despite the difficult challenges it has maintained a commitment to strategic investments in early learning programs and the infrastructure needed to link them to create an effective early learning and development system that improves access, early learning and ultimately outcomes for children with high needs. Financial data were provided. For fiscal year 2012 the State funded preschool program was the only program where there was a significant budget increase (\$6.0 million) in the education budget and in the face of cuts in per pupil K-12. Furthermore, reviewer is concerned that faced with such high needs for children, the State contributions to the Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF) fell from 167.4 in 2007 to 52 million in 2011. This drop caused a decline in the average monthly number of children served from 106,062 to 53,827 because their unemployed parents were no longer available for subsidies. Faced with this huge decline there was no documented special initiative funded by the state, local and/or private sector agencies to support education for the

high-needs children faced with this challenge. There is evidence of increased support for programs and services through IDEA Part C. An increase of 10.6 percent over the four year beginning in 2007 has been registered. There is also a noticeable increase (32.7 percent since 2005) in the Great Parents/Great Start program. The State of Michigan provides evidence of existing early learning and development legislation, policies and practices. Despite limited resources, the State has put in place some major components of reform in:

- Effective state-level governance and cross-sector coordination: the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) functions as a bridge between the public and the private sectors. It connects the work of Great Start at the State level to the network of Great Start Collaboratives (GSCs) and Great Start Parent Coalitions (GSPCs) with the intent of balancing both local and state perspectives in decision making, accountability and policy.
- High quality state funded programs: Since 1985, the State has provided high quality early learning services for 4 year olds at risk of school failure through the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) authorized through the Michigan State School Aid Act. Michigan has also invested in a long-standing, longitudinal evaluation of the GSRP by the High Scope Educational Research Foundation and has evidence of positive outcomes in educational achievement, reduced grade retention, high school graduation and adult earnings, among other indicators.
- Improvements in child care quality across all settings: Since 2005 the ECIC has managed CCDF quality funds and has worked to improve the quality of childcare on a number of fronts. The transfer of the CCDF program to the Michigan Department of Education Office of Great Start (MDE-OGS) allows the State to integrate CCDF-funded programs with other early learning and development programs, implement common standards of quality, and more effectively use childcare subsidies to ensure participation of children with high needs in high quality early learning and development programs. ECIC has led the transformation of Michigan's child care quality investments implementing Great Start to Quality – the State's tiered quality rating and improvement system.
- Broad eligibility for services for young children with disabilities: Michigan has been a leader in special education with a "birth mandate" that authorizes special instructions and related services to eligible individuals from birth through age 26. Between 1992 and 2010 the number of children receiving Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services for developmental delays increased from 2,559 to 7,184.
- Strong mechanisms for community and parent engagement: The establishment of ECIC and its state-wide network of GSCs and GSPCs has greatly increased Michigan's ability to engage communities and parents.
- A focus on serving young children with the highest needs: In 2009 the State Board of Education adopted new GSRP eligibility and prioritization guidelines that streamlined the enrollment process and prioritized the children with highest needs. This change has allowed the state to estimate that now 90 percent of children in the GSRP are at or below 300 percent of poverty. The Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program focuses specifically on reducing infant mortality, especially in African American communities.
- Michigan's standards for infants, toddlers and preschoolers that incorporate all of the essential domains of school readiness. The State has developed comprehensive assessment systems for publicly-funded early learning programs, including GSRP, Head Start and Early Head Start. In Great Start to Quality, all licensed programs are required to meet additional health and safety, developmental screening and health promotion requirements to progress up the quality levels. There is evidence of strong commitment to family engagement. In 2005, the State created a statewide infrastructure for parent engagement through the Great Start Parent Coalitions (GSPCs). There are currently 18,000 active and engaged parent volunteers who are linked with GSPCs. Since 2007, several agencies have collaboratively funded the Parent Leadership in State Government Initiative, which provides leadership training for parents. Reviewer is concerned that the development of early childhood educators may remain a challenge. In its application, Michigan outlines ways it addresses the development of early childhood educators: Core Knowledge and Core Competencies (CKCC) for early childhood educators adopted by state leaders in 2005; the State Great Start Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) which strengthens the early learning and development workforce by providing professional development activities and resources for both licensed and subsidized Family Friend Neighbor (FFN) providers participating in Great Start to Quality, and by maintaining the Great Start Connect database that includes an early childhood educator professional development registry; and the T.E.A.C.H Michigan Early Childhood in coordination with RRCs which offers tuition scholarships and financial support for licensed early learning and development programs. Although the State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, only the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA) and the ZA/ZS Endorsement program (which prepares elementary teachers to work with young children from birth through 3rd grade) are aligned to it. There are, based on data provided, 24 postsecondary providers and professional development providers in the state that issue credentials however the percentage of early childhood educators with an Associate, Bachelor or Master Degree is low across the board except for Head Start/Early Head Start and Great Start Readiness Program providers. In regards to Kindergarten entry assessments the information provided states the fact that in 2010 the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA)-Early Childhood Committee, the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) joined forces to prepare a plan for implementation of a state wide common kindergarten entry assessment but field testing is not scheduled until 2012 and statewide implementation in 2014 thus it is right to conclude that Michigan does not have at present a statewide kindergarten entry assessment system. Effective data practices are put in place. Michigan has expanded the student unique identification code (UIC) into early learning and development programs for GSRP, Early On, and Section 619 of part B of IDEA. This UIC is now used to follow these children from their first early learning and development program experience through post-secondary education. The Michigan Statewide Longitudinal Data System (MSLDS) now includes Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) and early childhood special education data, as well as K-12 assessment data and there is plan as the State moves into the second phase of the MSLDS project to incorporate Early On (agency supporting children with special needs with identified delay of at least 20 percent or because of certain specified diagnoses).

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	15

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

The State provides a medium quality response as it shares its rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda. The States provides adequate data that support the needs for reform: Over 50 percent of children under the age of five have high needs. The number of children in families at or below 100 percent of poverty continues to climb. The States also recognizes the need for unified coherent governance and demonstrates some steps that have been taken by the Governor to create the Michigan Office of Great Start within the Michigan Department of Education (MDE-OGS) to define a single set of early childhood outcomes against which all public investments will be assessed. To ensure effective governance of public resources and connect the private to the public sector the charge was given to the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) to connect both sectors. The State clearly articulates ambitious but achievable goals for its Comprehensive Early Learning and Development Reform Agenda. The eight (8) goals outlined are developed to improve outcomes for children with high needs, improve program quality statewide, and close the readiness gap between children with high needs and their peers. However, there is not much information provided on how the States plans to provide support to identified high-needs children such as English language learners, children in foster care (1 out 100 children ages 1-5) and young children living on Indian lands (representing 52 percent of all Native American children under the age of 6 in the state). The State successfully provides rationale for selecting Criteria C(1), C (3), C(4), D(1), E(1) and E(2) and demonstrates how they would tied in an effective reform agenda: Michigan's early learning and development standards although highly regarded by state and national experts are not user-friendly for early childhood educators or parents; Michigan's dire economic situation over the last five years has seen investment in prevention and promotion take a back seat when the need for children to come healthy ready to learn still remains a priority that needs to be addressed; traditional family engagement and support approaches don't go deep enough to engage families with the highest needs; evidence of the Core Knowledge and Core Competencies framework (CKCC) in all professional development offerings for early childhood educators is limited. The process for reviewing and approving two and four year degree awarding programs is not substantial enough and a formal relationship does not exist between the Michigan Department of Education-Office of Great Start (MDE-OGS) and the institutions leading these program; Michigan does not have a common statewide assessment for kindergarten entry; Michigan has currently a very fragmented, highly proprietary array of data systems. The State recognizes the need to address those needs and provides a high quality plan to make needed improvement. Although it was clear that three participating agencies: the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC), were going to play a significant role in this reform, their roles and responsibilities are not fully delineated.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	10

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

The plan outlined by the State is of high quality and substantially implemented. Through the narrative, tables and graphs provided, the State demonstrates a governance structure for this grant that facilitates interagency coordination, streamlines decision making, supports the effective allocation of resources and creates long term sustainability. It is evident, as reported, that Michigan has put great thought and effort into the development of the state's comprehensive early childhood system: the Great Start System Team (GSST). This system has built effective working relationships that have enabled it to provide leadership necessary to secure three major grants. If this system has been successful in terms of the operations/management side of governance, the State recognizes though that its ability to impact interagency early childhood policy is nearly non-existent due to structural and membership limitations, therefore with this grant the State plans to make the critical and necessary structural changes to its interagency early childhood policy and operations structures. In the narrative and the figures provided the State is convincing in its ability to do so. Figure 1 depicts a clear picture of the Michigan Early Learning Challenge Grant Governance and Management, Fig. 2 gives a thorough understanding of Michigan Early Learning Challenge Grant-Interagency Initiatives and Operations. The critical roles played by each entity are well defined. There is a high level of interagency and stakeholder involvement in each and every aspect of Michigan's plan. The Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) provided demonstrate a strong commitment by the lead and participating agencies. The roles and responsibilities are clear. There were over 74 letters of support and/or intent reviewed. This support is manifest amongst many sectors.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	13

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 Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

Michigan's proposal provides a high quality response plan as it demonstrates how existing funds that support early learning and development will be used to support activities and services that help achieve the outcomes. Each source of funding is identified and the activities planned for use of these funds clearly stated. There are 16 sources of funding identified and in the narrative the State was successful in demonstrating how each of these funding sources will support implementation of the high-quality plans. Michigan has allocated nearly \$30.0 million of the grant to local implementation of the state's plan. This supports the State's commitment to successful implementation. There is no conclusive evidence that the State has a well-thoughtout plan for sustainability. The State appears to rely on future support of participating agencies to build such a plan but at present there is no concrete commitment. Michigan simply outlines some of the strategies it estimates will support its sustainability plan in the future such as: repurposing existing federal, state and private funds toward more effective use, educating state policy makers about the need for additional funding using evidence of successes earned, and seeking private investment for continuation of projects for which there is consensus among the agencies involved. To its credit though it is noted that the State current investments are not built on debt and have proven to have durable bi-partisan support. Michigan forecasts to use \$166,499,357 in existing federal, state, private and local funds to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan between Fiscal Year 2012 to Fiscal Year 2015.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

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

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) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

The information and documentation provided demonstrate that the State has substantially developed and implemented a common, statewide, tiered quality rating and improvement system (TQRIS) with the goal of improving the quality of all early learning settings for all children. This system is known as the Great Start to Quality which is predominantly funded through the State's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) quality set aside. The Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) is responsible for overseeing the implementation of Great Start to Quality via a contract with the Michigan Department of Education-Office of Great Start (MDE-OGS) which is the lead agency for CCDF in Michigan. Great Start to Quality includes all licensed early learning and development programs and unlicensed, subsidized family, friend and neighbor providers (subsidized FFN providers). The State Great Start Quality Continuum is adequately illustrated and facilitates the understanding of three tiers of quality improvements for subsidized FFN providers and five levels of rated quality and quality improvement supports for licensed early learning and development programs. Great Start to Quality uses stars as the symbol of quality with level one being one star and level five being five stars. The fact that all licensed early learning and development programs enter Great Start to Quality at Level One and participation in Tier one is not voluntary gives some assurance that, at a minimum, programs are in compliance with licensing regulations following review by childcare licensing. The State provides evidence that the Great Start to Quality standards include early learning and development standards and are aligned with the Early Childhood Standards of Quality

for Pre-Kindergarten (ECSQ-PK) and the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs (ECSQ-IT). The Curriculum and Instruction standard has criteria for screening and assessment with clear indicators. The standard for Early Childhood Educator Qualifications and Professional Development addresses early childhood educator qualifications. At least three annual clock hours of professional development must be focused on cultural competence and inclusive practices for children with special needs or disabilities and must engage diverse children and their families. The Family Engagement Strategies are included in the Family and Community Partnership standard. Health promotion practices are directly addressed through criteria of the Health Environment standards. Effective data practices are included in the Curriculum and Instruction standard. Clear indication of the State commitment to high quality standards is evidenced by its search to align the Great Start to Quality standards with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Childhood program Standards and Accreditation Criteria. The On-Line Assessment Process for Levels One through Three is well defined in the narrative and the illustration provided. The standards that differentiate program quality are clear and measurable. Upon achieving Level Three, an early learning and development program can request a validation visit through their RRC. An independent, impartial, trained rater will assess the program using the appropriate version of the Program Quality Assessment ® (PQA)® developed by the HighScope Educational Research Foundation. The PQA assesses 63 dimensions of program quality in seven domains.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	15

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 Early Learning and Development 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) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

There is evidence that the State has already fully implemented strategies to promote participation and further outlines a high quality plan to continue this work. Michigan has put in place effective policies and practices for all early learning and development programs. Since 2009, Michigan has focused its Child Care and Development fund (CCDF) quality set aside investments on improving the quality of early learning and development programs, i.e. licensed childcare centers and family homes, and subsidized family-friend-neighbor (FNN) providers to improve the school readiness of children with high needs. In 2009, the Michigan legislature required subsidized family-friend-neighbor (FFN) providers to participate in six hours of First Aid and CPR Certification and health and safety training to either become eligible or maintain their eligibility for subsidy payment. In 2010, over a period of eight months, the Great Start Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) trained 18,000 subsidized FFN providers. In 2010-2011, using CCDF American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, the Early childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) began to put in place quality improvement and rating resources to enable the implementation of the full continuum of Great Start to Quality in 2011. The State's goal for all publicly funded early learning and development programs to participate in Great Start to Quality is commendable and achievable since a great majority of programs already participate and there is continued interest to include other purveyors of early learning and development programs such as programs delivered by federal-land tribes and military child care programs. State-funded preschool programs, Early Head Start and Head Start programs, Early Learning and Development programs funded under Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program. A goal of the State High-Quality Plan is to integrate the Early Learning and Development programs funded under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and part C of IDEA into the licensing system. The information provided in the narrative supports the existence of policies and practices designed to help families of children with high needs afford high-quality early learning and development programs. Children with high needs attend Great Start Readiness Programs (GSRPs), Head Start and Early Head Start at no charge. Eligibility for childcare subsidy is at approximately 130 percent of the federal poverty guidelines and families can choose from a variety of settings. Subsidized FNN providers' rates are determined by the Great Start to Quality Tier. Family co-payments are based on the household income and can be waived for all categorically eligible families (families on cash assistance or

Social Security Income (SSI), foster children or children with an active protective case). In its high-quality plan the State describes its plan to pilot test and prototype the modification of the State's CCDF payment structure and increase access by working families to high-quality early learning and development programs through the innovative use of CCDF subsidy funds. CCDF subsidy funds will be used to purchase slots in Level Three-Five rated programs to ensure that children with high needs have access to highest quality full year, full-day programs.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	12

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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(3)

The State demonstrates partial implementation of its plan and provides a high quality response on how it intends to continue developing and implementing a system for rating and monitoring programs. Michigan plans to: improve internal policies and procedures for Great Start to Quality rating and monitoring; increase access to local and regional data related to program capacity and quality levels to Great Start Collaboratives and Regional Centers; increase access to parents to early learning and development program quality level information in formats that are easy to understand and use when making decisions. The State's plan includes some well thought activities, and provides rationale, timeline and parties responsible to implement the plan. Reviewer is not convinced about the validity and reliability of the On-Line Assessment Process used by Great Start to Quality to monitor all licensed early learning and development programs since the scoring and rating for Level Two and Three rely mainly on a program self-assessment and responses to a survey. This assessment has the potential to be subjective and may not give a true picture of the status of the program. The tool used by the State to rate programs moving from Level Three to Level Four and Five is valid and reliable. The Program Quality Assessment ® (PQA) is designed for use in all settings and employs a combination of observational and interview techniques. The PQA ® encompasses structural information used to determine compliance with licensing regulations as well as dynamic information that captures children's experiences in the physical and inter-personal learning environment. Great Start to Quality program quality raters who utilize the PQA ® are expected to achieve and maintain inter-rater reliability above 80 percent. The States also noted the Head Start Performance reviews and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation validation visits. It is evident that the State has in place a process to provide quality rating and licensing information to families. Licensing compliance history, including health and safety violations for early learning and development programs is available to parents on-line through the child care licensing database. The same data is shared with Great Start CONNECT where it is combined with other pertinent data and displayed in an on-line profile; every licensed early learning and development program has a profile in Great Start CONNECT. Beginning in the fall of 2012, Great Start CONNECT will begin to display the quality ratings, Level One through Level Five for all licensed programs. A detailed certificate that shows the program's star level will be provided for public display.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	20

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

The State's plan is fully implemented and of high quality. Throughout the narrative, tables and High-Quality Plan demonstrates a serious commitment to promoting access to high-quality early learning and development programs for children with high needs. Policies and incentives have been put in place. The Great Start Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) serve as the regional-to-local hub for the delivery of coordinated incentives and supports. The RRCs provide expertise, assessments, ratings, resources, specific guidance and instructions to inform and support the development of and the achievement of quality improvement plans. RRCs coordinate with existing community partners to deliver consultation, intensive supports and services to early learning and development programs participating in Great Start to Quality. As a key element to Michigan's high-quality plan Great Start to Quality, to support continuous quality improvement will pilot test and prototype the following innovations: Program Quality Assessment (PQA) training grants; Business Development Support; T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Scholarship Bonuses); Quality Improvement Funds; Private Sector Scholarships for Children with High Needs; There is evidence of State's supports to help working families access high quality settings. Proposed changes to the subsidy reimbursement system will impact families eligible for subsidy and allow those families to have greater access to high-quality early learning and development programs, and provide for continuity of high-quality early learning and development experiences for their children. Great Start Readiness Programs (GSRP) as well as Head Start currently have various program options, such as all-day/alternate-day, part-day, school-day, GSRP/Head Start blend and support services such as transportation. The Michigan School Aid Act for the 2011-2012 school year includes intent language regarding the establishment of an early childhood block grant that would allocate funds to intermediate school districts, rather than local school districts for GSRP and other early childhood programs funded from this source. The targets set by the State for increasing the number of programs in the top tiers of Great Start to Quality and the number and percentage of children in these programs are ambitious but yet achievable. Michigan outlines performance measures that are well defined and concrete. Thus, the goal at the end of this grant to have 50 percent of early learning and development programs serving children with high needs at the highest levels Four and Five appears attainable.

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

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 Early Learning and Development 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

The State's response if of high quality at it describes in the High Quality Plan and tables provided, a very thorough evaluation approach that employs multi-method, qualitative and quantitative, and multidimensional examination of data from the program, community, regional and state levels to examine the validity and the effective implementation of Great Start to Quality. The proposed evaluation design is intended to provide formative and summative feedback regarding key evaluation questions. The first question involves testing the validity of the Great Start to Quality standards in relation to program standards, well established in the literature, that address program staffing, administration, family and community partnerships, classroom environment, and curriculum and instruction. The second question addresses the relationship between program quality and children's development focusing on how initial program quality, as well as subsequent changes in quality, is most related to children's observed outcomes and progress during preschool and at kindergarten entry. A third evaluation question seeks to understand the context associated with effective Great Start to Quality implementation and improvements in Great Start to Quality ratings across the state. The State provides a detailed account of the approach it will undertake to validate Great Start to Quality, examine relations between program quality and children's development and learning, examine relations between program quality and children's school readiness, identify characteristics associated with effective implementation and growth in program quality and finally examine improvements in Great Start to Quality ratings. The unique features of the evaluation design include: 1) Assessment of early childhood educator and director/program readiness to participate in Great Start to Quality and readiness of the State and its RRCs to implement it 2) Longitudinal assessment of child development, learning and school readiness relative to program quality 3) The use of GIS mapping to better understand the intersection of geographic location, demographics (diversity characteristics, poverty rates, etc...) and access to resources as they relate both to successful Great Start to Quality implementation and to quality as it relates to children's outcomes 4) An

examination of program, local and regional characteristics that is associated with effective Great Start to Quality implementation and growth in program quality across the State.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	20	16
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--</p> <p>(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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> <p>(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;</p> <p>(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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</p> <p>(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

The State fully implements high-quality early learning and development standards. In the narrative Michigan successfully documents the state's over 40 years commitment to promoting the success of all children especially children with high needs and provides a chronological account of the development of quality standards. Beginning in 1971, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) required that local education agencies provide special education programs for qualifying children beginning at birth, and in 1985 MDE began its prekindergarten program for at-risk four year olds. In 1992 the state's first set of early learning and development standards, the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten to Second Grade (ECSQ/PK-2) were created. The standards included expectations for children's learning in all developmental domains, curriculum content areas as well as high-quality program standards. All early learning and development programs funded by MDE were required to implement the program standards. In 2005, in response to federal initiatives and the state's adoption of Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs) starting at kindergarten, a revised set of early learning and development standards, the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten (ECSQ-PK) was adopted by the State Board of Education. Quality program standards for prekindergarten and early learning expectations for three-and-four year old children were included. These expectations bridge the gap between developmental domains and content expectations for five year olds. The quality program standards in ECSQ-PK were built on the state's Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers. The ECSQ-PK early learning expectations were specifically formatted and reviewed by in-state experts to ensure their cultural and linguistic appropriateness for all children, including those with disabilities and developmental delays, those who are dual language learners, and those with other personal, family, or environmental factors that may cause them to be at-risk of school failure. In 2006, the Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs (ECSQ-IT) were adopted by the State Board of Education. The ECSQ-IT focuses on the special developmental needs of infants and toddlers and makes partnership with families an integral part of each standard. There is evidence that the Early Childhood Standards of Quality from Prekindergarten (ECSQ-PK) align with the State' K-3 Academic Standards. Initial alignment was accomplished through the evaluation of the Great Start Readiness Program – the state's prekindergarten program- by the HighScope Educational Research Foundation. The Program Quality Assessment (PQA) was developed to assess implementation of the program standards that have become the ECSQ-PK

Quality Program Standards. A study conducted by the Curriculum Unit at MDE mapped the new Career and College Ready Standards – Common Core State Standards (CCRS) to the Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs) in language, literacy and mathematics and found that alignment was good for kindergarten. The response provided is of medium quality as it is not evident that the States has needed supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to this task in the future. The State acknowledges in the narrative that resources to fund an intentional approach to supporting the implementation of the ECSQ-IT and PK have been extremely limited. Efforts to build a level of implementation that would support a discernible improvement in child outcomes have not been wide-spread or intentional. Distribution of the ECSQ-IT and ECSQ-PK documents has been primarily through the MDE website and by CD or DVD.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	20	16

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

The State demonstrates substantial implementation of a plan and provides a high quality response to continued improvement. The information and documentation provided evidence the state efforts to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs. The state's Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Pre-Kindergarten (ECSQ-PK) support the development and maintenance of intentional teaching practices and guide expectations that enhance all children's health, behavioral and developmental needs. The standards specifically target social and emotional, intellectual, language, creative, physical and health skills. The Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infant and Toddler Programs (ECSQ-IT) have an additional requirement for programs to develop a program-wide health plan, as well as an Individual Health Plan for each child enrolled. The standards recommend all early childhood staff and non-paid personnel have training, experience and access to staff development which enhances their knowledge and practice of the standards. The Great Start Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) provide access to no-cost or low-cost training to early childhood educators and families on topics related to child health, behavioral health and development. At present Michigan does not have child health consultants who work with early learning and development programs to improve their quality related to health and behavioral health. Therefore meeting health standards may still present some challenge. The State mentions the use of funding from this grant to support health consultants but does not elaborate on how it plans to utilize them and does not address current efforts to support this identified lack of support. The State outlines a clear plan to build on and enhance the state's current efforts to increase early childhood educator knowledge related to behavioral health through the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) pyramid framework. The State's commitment to Health Promotion is well documented. Improvement in physical activity, healthy eating habits and nutrition is a focus of many partner agencies and has been established as a priority for the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) by the Governor. In 2011, the Healthy Kids, Healthy Michigan (HKHM) coalition, in partnership with MDCH and other agency partners hosted an early childhood Obesity Prevention Summit. Additionally, the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) has convened statewide stakeholders to develop benchmarks for promoting, preventing and intervening on behalf of the social and emotional health needs of children and families. MDCH in collaboration with state partners, and local stakeholders is currently implementing a First Time Motherhood health messaging grant as well as developing a coordinated social emotional messaging strategy for state departments, local agencies and entities that are serving children 0-8 years old and their families. The State has currently in place some sound health and developmental screening, referral, follow-up and family education within agencies across the state serving children. The State's High-Quality Plan for this section outlines some comprehensive goals supported by key activities, rationale and timeline with clear identification of responsible parties and other key personnel. However the State appropriation of financial resources as reported is questionable. Michigan plans to spend \$8,104,800 from this grant but the number reported from other sources seems very high: \$1,222,849,200 and the State does

not substantiate the sources of these funds.

	Available	Score
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.	20	17

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 Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(4)

With the exception of training for early childhood educators, there is evidence of full implementation and a high quality response to future planning. The efforts put forth by the State to engage and support families are commendable and well documented. Commitment to the parenting leadership development across early childhood programs in Michigan is evident. Each of the State's Early Childhood Standards of Quality (ECSQ) documents includes a progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for family engagement. The Partnership with Families section of the ECSQ-Prekindergarten identifies six standards designed to ensure high-quality, responsive programs are attuned to the quality of family engagement as they move from traditional activities toward fully engaging families in all aspects of supporting their children's early learning and development. A dual generation approach supporting both children and parents simultaneously is reflected throughout the ECSQ-PK and ECSQ-IT. The standards require formal and informal communication and set the expectation for high-quality programs to seek guidance from families and weave culture and language diversity into programming. The intention is for family engagement strategies to be individualized based on family needs and early childhood educators to reflect this orientation in their day-to-day interactions with families. Additional standards outline the expectations for identifying resources for on-site participation of families, community supports for families, as well as the focus needed to support children and their families in the transitions into and out of the early learning settings. The State has much to accomplish in the area of training early learning program staff in family engagement. There are currently no comprehensive data collected that provide numbers and percentages of all early childhood educators who receive training and support on the family engagement strategies included in the ECSQ. The State wants to pursue this comprehensive data collection as a goal in its high-quality plan for this section. Michigan has demonstrated thoughtful and intentional commitment to promote family support and engagement statewide through direct investment and through the investments of individual programs where financial support for parent engagement and support is often embedded into other program costs. There is evidence of considerable financial investments (i.e. \$5.0 million each year for the Great Parents, Great Start program) in programs and initiatives that engage families with high need in communities that would likely not have other options to support their learning and growth as parents in the critical years before school. Michigan's Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program was recently awarded both a competitive development grant (\$5,392,805) and a 2011 formula grant (\$3,013,395). These funds are targeted for state and local infrastructures that support evidence-based programming in Michigan's ten highest need communities. With this new investment being matched with Medicaid funds, both federal and state investment in three critical programs serving families with significantly high needs (Early Head Start, Nurse Family Partnership, and Healthy Families) will be over 12.7 million. This represents a significant opportunity to place services in communities of high need and focus on the alignment and coordination of home visitation services with early learning and development programs. The aim of all these initiatives is to transmit parent and community voice into the policy and decision-making environment where state and local leaders can work in concert with parents to address the needs of Michigan's diverse populations. Another goal in Michigan's plan for increasing family support and engagement is to focus on field testing and prototyping approaches that are effective in promoting and sustaining family support and engagement statewide.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
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The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

- (a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;
- (b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
- (c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

The evidence provided supports partial implementation and a medium quality response to future planning. The State provides clear and detailed information about its current Common, Statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. This framework for Michigan is based on the Michigan Early Childhood Professionals: Core Knowledge and Core Competencies (CKCC) and the Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality for both Infants and Toddlers and Prekindergarten (ECSQ-PK and ECSQ-IT). The CKCC and the early learning standards serve as the framework for reviewing and approving both professional development and education through the Great Start Curriculum Review Advisory Committee and the Institutions of Higher Education Advisory Committee. All early childhood education development programs in Michigan must adhere to these established state standards and competencies. In addition to developing these plans, both Committees also oversee implementation. This ensures consistency across the professional development systems and institutions of higher education. The CKCCs were developed in 2002 with the assistance of key stakeholders and adopted in 2005 by the Governor's Children's Cabinet and has served as the foundation for professional development offerings provided by the Great Start Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) since their establishment in 2009. Eight core knowledge domains comprise the CKCC and prepare Michigan's teachers using a whole-child orientation: 1) Child Development and Learning 2) Health, Safety and Nutrition 3) Family and Community Collaboration 4) Program Management 5) Teaching and Learning 6) Observations, Documentation and Assessment 7) Interactions and Guidance, and 8) Professionalism. The State does not provide enough details to assess a statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. The Michigan Head Start Collaboration Office and the Michigan Department of Education co-convene the Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) Advisory Committee. This committee is responsible for pursuing articulation agreements with higher education institutions to ensure a seamless career pathway that ultimately cultivates highly trained professionals. The IHE has adopted the NAEYC and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Associate Degree Accreditation Process for all associate degrees. The impact of the IHE besides reducing student matriculation barriers and improving articulation within two-year and four year institutions is not evident. The State gives account of only seven early childhood education/child development Bachelor degree programs that have been to date reviewed and approved by the IHE. There is no data shared about credentials such as CDA. Investment of other sources in developing a workforce knowledge framework and a progression of credentials is not substantial which calls into question the level of buy-in for this task. The State is requesting \$988,900 from this grant compare to \$50,000 from other sources.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	20	12
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 Early Learning and Development 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).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)

The State provides a medium quality response to a partially implemented plan. Michigan does not have a Kindergarten Entry Assessment at present but it provides in the narrative a detailed step by step background of all events, activities, and rationale that led to the decision of moving forward with the development of the Michigan Model of School Readiness (MIMSR). It is evident that the MIMSR would align with standards and covers all domains. Three factors were considered as of highest value in choosing to move forward with MIMSR: 1) state and local understanding of the attributes of the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers would increase, based on the analysis of data on the status of what children know and are able to do in relationship to Michigan's early learning standards; 2) the information and knowledge developed from the analysis of the data produced by MIMSR would inform early childhood policy reform, including the creation of new and more effectively targeted early learning and development programs; 3) MIMSR would produce information that would inform professional development, curriculum, and the instructional practices of early childhood and early elementary educators. There is justification that the Work Sampling System® (WSS®) is a criterion-referenced, observational performance assessment with extensive research supporting its reliability and validity. WSS® is currently used with more than 850,000 students across eight states. It measures seven domains of development: personal and social, language and literacy, mathematical thinking, scientific thinking, social studies, the arts and physical development and health. WSS® documents children's skills, knowledge, behavior and accomplishments across these domains. WSS® relies on observation, recording and evaluating, organizing the assessment process so that it is both comprehensive in scope and manageable for teachers and students. Michigan plans to customize the WSS® by choosing a subset of the items from the WSS® "Kindergarten Checklists/Guidelines" which will align with Michigan's early learning standards and core curriculum. The State does not elaborate though on how its plan to customize the WSS will impact or not the validity and reliability of the system. The State did not specify if it would or not use the Kindergarten assessment as a tool to inform instruction and services in the early elementary grades. The State has already identified a key partner in this project, the Center for Educational Performance Information (CEPI) at the Department of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB) to work with Michigan Department of Education-Office of Great Start to ensure connection with Statewide Longitudinal Data. The State does not comply with the demand of the application as it relates to the use of funds for this activity. The State cites some possible sources of funding from the public and private sectors but is not convincing that the funds will be available. One source considered is a supplemental appropriations bill from the Michigan Legislature. The State expects to use; \$8,431,400 of this grant for this project and does not forecast the amount of funding expected from the supplemental appropriation and other sources.

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	20	12

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 Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

The evidence provided shows partial implementation and the State's response rates at medium quality. The State outlines its vision that aims to create a 21st century information architecture to link early childhood data across the critical domain areas (early care and education; health, mental health and nutrition; special needs and early interventions; and family support). It is evident that Michigan's early learning data system (ELS) will enable the state to increase the velocity at which it is able to respond to and serve children with high needs, as well as children with special needs. Furthermore, the information provided demonstrates that the ELS will assist the State with the accomplishment of many needed tasks (i.e. link of data, identification of children and communities with high needs, provision of data to a wide range of customers, real-time information exchange, provision of longitudinal visibility into a child's health and development, family empowerment to seek out the most appropriate services for their children, provision of core services to support policies, provision of security, privacy, confidentiality and compliance with all federal and state regulations). The four overall facets of the ELS vision are clearly articulated and easy to understand: improve child-centric knowledge, connecting conversations, turning data into actionable intelligence and transparency. However, Michigan Early Learning Data System Conceptual Architecture as presented in the narrative and the figure provided is complicated and very difficult to comprehend. Michigan ELS timeline is not easy to follow in the narrative as well as the figure presented. To its credit, the State provides clear evidence of the establishment of a governance committee with clear roles and responsibilities.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	223

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	10

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (P)(2)

With the exception of programs funded by IDEA for children prior to kindergarten, the State successfully demonstrates that all Early Learning and Development Programs are licensed and participate in the Great Start to Quality (Michigan's tiered quality rating and improvement system). The early learning and development landscape in Michigan is varied and offers families a great variety of choices. Although the programs vary they are all governed by the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS)- Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing (BCAL). Subsidized Family, Friend, Neighbor (FNN) providers are not licensed but are subject to background checks and are mandatory participants in Great Start to Quality at Tier 1 and have the option to move through the quality continuum to a higher quality level.

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	0 or 10	No

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

Comments on (P)(3)

The State has not already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment but is in the process of developing one. It further does not adequately address criterion (E)(1).

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	Yes

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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 (sections (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.

Comments on Absolute Priority

Throughout its application Michigan has demonstrated great commitment to Early Learning and Development. The State has made some considerable financial investment and put in place some sound legislation, policies and practices in support of children with high-needs. Michigan has evidenced a comprehensive Early Learning and Development Agenda. Michigan's overall goals are ambitious but achievable. These goals build on the foundation of work already underway by the lead and participating agencies, for the Great Start system and address the state's most pressing concerns by building a coordinated system of early learning and development. The State is positioning itself as a leader in the way it supports and engages families. The State has some inherent challenges in building a Great Early Childhood Education Workforce since buy-in from post-secondary institutions is not evident. Michigan understands the urgency of developing a system that will enable the State to adequately measure outcomes and progress but may want to ensure that reliability and validity of an established tool are not compromised by the process of customization it plans to adopt.



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page



Application # MI-5018

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]
Support Monitor: [Redacted]
Application Status: Reviewed
Date/Time: 11/16/2011 - 5:47 PM

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

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

A. Successful State Systems

Table with 3 columns: Core Area, Available, Score. Row 1: (A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development, 20, 12. Includes detailed description and sub-points (a) through (d).

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

Comments on (A)(1)

Despite what Michigan describes as 10 years of economic contraction and reduced state revenues, the state has made financial investments in early learning and development programs. The state also describes an increase in the number of children with high needs from low income families, stating that child poverty rose in the state by 64%. The state reports that almost 60% of infants are from low income families, and that about 50% of children age 1 to five are from low income families. Additionally, the state reports that 8.8% of children have developmental delays, and 8.4% of children in urban areas live below 100% of federal poverty guidelines. State funding for early learning programs largely peaked in 2009, and has declined slightly for most programs. The state has met its CCDF match each year. The number of children served in early learning programs has declined dramatically in the state, explained as a function of the high unemployment rate and the consequent reduction in the number of children served through CCDF funding. In that program, the number of children served declined from 106,062 in 2007 to 53,827 in 2011. Other programs have seen a slight rise in the number of children with high needs served. The state has made strides in coordinating its early learning programs through legislation, policies and practices. In 2011 the Office of Great Start (OGS) was established within the Department of Education, bringing oversight to one office for CCDF, Part C and B, state pre-k, and HS collaboration office. The state established the Early Childhood Investment Corporation, a public non-profit institution that bridges the private and public sectors. Since 1985, the state has had pre-k, focused on children with high needs. The state began a training program for friends, family and neighbors (FFN) providers receiving subsidies, a portion of the CCDF providers serving more than 50% of children in subsidized child care, in 2009. Michigan has invested in family engagement through their Great Parents/Great Start (GP/GS) program, an education and involvement program for parents with children birth to 5. The state has two ELDS, one for infants and toddlers, and one for preschoolers, and these ELDS include all the domains of school readiness. The state does not describe their Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) in detail. Health promotion practices appear minimal, and are related to licensing requirements for health and safety. Family engagement practices are a relative strength and include programs for parents, GP/GS, Great Start Parent Coalitions, and leadership training for parents. The state describes that a group is formed to prepare a plan for kindergarten assessment. Professional development

activities in the state include the development of core competencies, connected to the TQRIS system and participation in the TEACH program. The state describes multiple data systems and has a plan to integrate these systems. Overall, the state describes relatively new efforts related to its early learning system, with the OGS just being formed in 2011. The state has seen a dramatic decline in both funding and the number of children birth to five served. The state's response was therefore rated in the medium range.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	17

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

The state has a reform agenda, articulated and supported by the Governor, recognizing the importance of early learning in the effective reform of the education system and the development of an educated workforce. The state has a high quality plan, with goals, activities, responsible agencies, and a timeline in place. The state provides a rationale for selecting focused areas of: revising statewide ELDS, identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of children with high needs to improve school readiness, engaging and supporting families, development of a workforce knowledge and competency framework, developing a kindergarten assessment system, and improving and integrating their data systems. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is the lead agency for the RTT grant and has MOUs in place with Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH), Michigan Department of Human Services (MHS) and Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC), and each will take the lead in implementing that state's plan in 1 area respectively. Overall, the state has identified eight goals that will reform the systems that support early learning in the state. The state's score reflects that the plan is of high quality.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	9

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

The state has a comprehensive and coherent plan for RTT grant governance. The state has identified MDE as the lead agency for the grant, and a Deputy Superintendent of OGS as the Director. The state provides examples of successful interagency collaboration in the implementation of other grants. The state has active councils and advisory groups that it has incorporated into the grant's oversight and administration. The state has a clearly delineated decision making process for developing policies and resolving disputes. The state provides evidence of strong commitment from state agencies for the implementation of the RTT grant. It provides MOUs between the state agencies for the implementation of the grant. The state has provided preliminary scope of work descriptions for each agency. The state provides 74 letters of support for the RTT grant from stakeholders, including MIAEYC and the Michigan Head Start Association. The letters demonstrate wide community support for the Michigan reform agenda in early learning. The state provides evidence that collaboration between state agencies and the early learning community is established. The state has experience implementing federal grants that require collaboration. Overall, the state has substantially established partnerships, a clear grant management system in place, and support from community stakeholders. The state's score reflects this substantially implemented, high quality response.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	10

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 Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

The state demonstrates how it will use existing funds to help achieve the state plan. The state's budget is adequate to support the activities described in the plan, with reasonable costs associated with the plan. The state is cognizant of its economic position and realizes that sustaining these efforts are central to maintaining reforms in early learning programs. Michigan's plan recognizes that there will be legacy costs, and that agencies will need to repurpose funds, seek private investment, and build coalitions to press for continuation of the reform agenda. The state notes that it hopes to consolidate multiple funding sources within the OGS that will put Michigan on a path to realize efficiency and continuation of the reform agenda. The lack of evidence related to its capacity to continue to fund the reform agenda is a major concern. One way that the state proposes to increase the access of children with high needs to quality care is blended funding from CCDF and the RTT grant. This plan directly influences children with high needs and their access to high quality care. The state does not address how it plans to continue this program when the RTT grant period is over. While the state's plan for coordinating funding and efforts is strong, its plan for continued funding after the RTT grant ends is of great concern. The state's score in this area is in the middle range.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	5

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) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

The state reports that it has developed and fully implemented the TQRIS system that is linked to the licensing system. Incorporated in the TQRIS system are any FFN providers who receive CCDF reimbursement and licensed centers and home day cares. Participation in the TQRIS system is linked to higher reimbursement rates for higher quality, and quality improvement supports. The TQRIS system is called Great Start to Quality (GSQ), which has a set of standards for programs and home providers. Included in these standards are ELDS, comprehensive assessment, education qualification, family engagement strategies, health promotion, and data management. The CAS is the weakest of these standards, with the state noting that screening and assessment are apart of this system, but not elaborating to include which instruments are used or the link with curriculum. No assessment of the environment or adult child interaction are mentioned until a program is seeking level 3 rating. Then, an outside assessor uses the Program Quality Assessment from HighScope, which includes learning environment, daily routines, adult-child interaction, curriculum planning and assessment, parent involvement, staff qualification, and program management. The state indicates that a program completes a self assessment prior to level 3 and develops a QIP, but does not provide details on the self assessment instrument. The state's TQRIS system also has additional problems. The difference between level 4 and 5 is minimal (4 points) compared to 10 points between level 2-3 and 12 between level 3-4, leaving one to question whether there is a significant difference between level 4 and 5. The state further indicates that improvement continues to be needed related to measurability and reliability. The state has a plan to align their standards with NEAYC standards. While the state has fully implemented it TQRIS system, there are significant weaknesses in its plan. The state's score in this area reflects a medium quality response, fully implemented plan.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	12

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 Early Learning and Development 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) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

Michigan has made significant progress in maximizing program participation in the TQRIS system. Currently, the only programs that are not included in the TQRIS system are Part C and Part B programs. The state has a plan to include these programs in the TQRIS system by 2013. The state has licensed providers which include center based care and home based care and subsidized FFN providers. The state has included all of these providers in the TQRIS system. In addition to increasing the quality of its programs to benefit all children with high needs, Michigan describes a scholarship program for birth to five children with high needs to participate in high quality early care. This program will provide young children consistent high level care upon entry into the system until kindergarten. Given the state's high unemployment rates and subsequent decrease in the number of children served through CCDF, this program is an admirable approach to assisting children with high needs. Unfortunately, the state does not detail a plan for continuation. Beyond this, Michigan has a tiered reimbursement rate and incentive payments. Unfortunately, these incentives have not increased access to high quality care for the state's children with high needs. The state has fully implemented its TQRIS system and 100% of programs, home providers and FFN providers are participating. Michigan's plan to provide access to children with high needs to high quality program is ambitious. They do not describe other incentives, nor a plan for continuation. Therefore, the response was scored in the fully implemented, medium quality response.

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	9

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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency, and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(3)

Michigan has fully implemented its TQRIS system, but the monitoring and rating system that it has developed lack rigor, validity and reliability. All programs licensed and subsidized are enrolled in the TQRIS (or there is a plan to enroll these programs) at level one. To move to level two, programs must complete a self assessment. The state does not describe what is included in the self assessment or the QIP resulting from the self assessment. To move from level two to three, an outside assessor evaluates the program using the PQA. The state reports that internal reliability and validity are established. The state also reports that assessors must maintain an inter-rater reliability of 80%, but does not indicate if this expectation is fulfilled, nor does it address procedures for ensuring this goal. Through the CONNECT online system, parents can obtain information about a program's licensing history, including health and safety violations. The state has a plan to include detailed information on the program's quality beginning in fall 2012. The information will include details about the program's quality level such as staff qualification, curriculum and assessment, and management. The state has a fully implemented TQRIS system, but its plan for rating and monitoring is not high quality. Therefore, the state's score in this area reflects fully implemented, medium quality response.

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	12

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

Michigan has a plan to build quality in programs serving children with high needs. There are some strengths and concerns related to this plan. The state's TQRIS system has three tiers for FFN provider, and five levels for licensed providers. The state's incentives include Regional Resource Centers (RRCs) which provide training support to subsidized FFN providers at the highest level, tier three. Licensed programs at level three will have access to PQA training grants, aimed at helping programs rise to levels four and five. The First Children's Finance will provide business plan support to centers at level three. Centers serving children with high needs will be prioritized for to TEACH scholarship and quality improvement funds. Children with high needs will be prioritized for private sector scholarships for centers rated three or higher. The concern is that the training efforts support programs that have some quality, and do not address the supports needed or provided to programs at level 1 or 2, or FFNs at Tier 1 or 2. The state reports that between 50 and 70% of children are served by FFN providers, yet they do not include these providers in the quality improvement incentives. The state's supports for serving children with high needs includes scholarship funding, public and private, for children with high needs to access high quality early learning and incentives for programs to serve children with high needs. The state recognizes how changes in a parent's employment status can affect the quality and consistency of care to young children. The state's plan to offer scholarship slots to some children with high needs works to ameliorate this difficulty. The state's goals for the number and percentage of programs and children in the top levels are both ambitious and achievable. The state expects that 50% of its programs serving children with high needs will be at level four or five. Additionally, the state anticipates that 50% of children with high needs will be served in level four and five programs. The state's plan to improve the quality of early learning programs is partially implemented, and the response is of medium quality.

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

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 Early Learning and Development 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (E)(5)

The state has a comprehensive and coherent plan to evaluate whether the tier in the TQRIS system reflect differential levels of program quality and the effect changes in program quality have on child outcomes. The state describes a plan to evaluate the TQRIS using a quantitative and qualitative design. The plan includes establishing construct validity by cross walking the GSQ standards with NAEYC standards and measuring a sample of programs using the PQA and the CLASS. The state also plans to interview program directors and complete content analysis on their transcribed responses to questions related to the TQRIS system. To evaluate the association between program quality and child outcome, the state proposes using a stratified sample based on initial program quality, program size, community setting, program type, and percent of children with high needs. Data will assess impact on child development, learning and school readiness. Instruments identified include OWLS, TPEL, SCBE. The state also identifies that the creation of the universal identifier code will allow secondary analysis once the kindergarten assessment is revised. The state plans to contract for an evaluation team which will include a statistician and methodologist. The state provides a high quality response.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	20	12
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--</p> <p>(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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> <p>(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;</p> <p>(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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</p> <p>(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

The state describes a partially implemented ELDS, one for three and four year old pre-k children and one for infants and toddlers. The ELDS are integrated into the state's TQRIS system, with implementation of the standards representative of the highest level. The ELDS are inclusive of children with special needs, articulating typical child development and strategies to promote development. The state's ELDS are inclusive of all the domains of development. The state's ELDS pk-2 provide integration with the state's curriculum through 2nd grade. The state has distributed the standards to personnel and programs through out the state. Michigan also reports that the ELDS require further integration with the state's k-3 academic standards. The state does report that this integration is underway, and a consultant has been hired to complete this task. The state does not explicitly address how the ELDS are incorporated into curricula, CAS or the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, although evidence of this integration is found within the state's TQRIS system. Michigan acknowledges that efforts to mobilize support and implementation of the ELDS have been minimal. The state does not offer a high quality plan to promote understanding of the ELDS. For example, the state writes that Michigan proposes 21st century opportunities for families and EC educators to learn about both expectations for children and high quality experiences to meet expectations. The state does not delineate how it will accomplish this goal. The state has partially implemented its ELDS, and provides a medium quality response.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	20	8

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

In the state's ELDS are requirements for ensuring children's health and safety, including the development of an Individualized Health Plan. This health plan also facilitates the inclusion of children with special needs. The state's ELDS require assessment and screening of children, but do not provide explicit guidance on the valid and reliable instruments that should be used by programs or a referral and follow up process. Much of the states efforts in the area of screening are focused on training health care professionals in the use of instruments during well-child visits, and referral and follow up information. The state's ELDS do address the promotion of healthy development across the different domains, in a safe and healthy environment. The state has implemented some training of its workforce related to child health, behavior and development, largely through the ECIC and the GSRRRC. These trainings are tracked through the GS Connect registry. The state proposes RTT funding be utilized to hire health consultants with expertise in Social Emotional development and the use of CSEFEL curriculum. These health consultants would train EC providers, who would then mentor and train other providers, creating a sustainable system. Through the state's SAMSA funding for project LAUNCH, the state has some capacity with Center on the Social Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CSEFEL) training and implementation. Beyond support for increasing EC provider capacity in social emotional well-being, the state does not address how it will increase health promotion practices. Of particular concern is the state's lack of emphasis on screening and assessment, although the state reports that many programs provide screenings and the MDCH adopted the Bright Futures screening for Medicaid and SCHIP providers. A problem related to screenings being completed in a medical home is that the information is often not shared with the EC provider, and since many health care providers lack the resources for follow up and referral, children often do not receive necessary interventions. The state reports that currently 6.2% of children with high needs are screened. By 2015, the state's goal for screening is 25%, which while achievable, is not ambitious. The state does not report the number of children referred for follow up, and consequently, has not set goals related to follow up. The state reports that about 80% of children with high needs receive health care, and has identified a goal of 90%. The state does not report the percentage of children who are up to date with well child recommendations, nor set goals. The state does not elaborate on a plan to improve healthy eating habits and nutrition and expand physical exercise. For example, the state provides evidence from Kid Count that Michigan's children from low income families have needs related to oral health, mental health, physical health, asthma, and lead poisoning. The state's plan to address these concerns is enhancement of its

ELDS and health consultants through the GSRRC. This plan does not comprehensively address the widespread problem related to child health, behavior and development by addressing the training needs of parents and providers. The state's plan is minimally implemented and of medium quality in the response.

	Available	Score
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.	20	16

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 Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(4)

Michigan has made family engagement practices a strong part of their early childhood program. In their current ELDS, the state has infused family engagement throughout in formal and informal ways. The ELDS require programs to engage families in conferences, home visitation, resource sharing, and family education, with particular attention to families with children who have high needs and the unique challenges that these families face. The ELDS provide attention to the linguistic and cultural differences and ways to individualize to meet family needs. The ELDS for infants and toddlers recognizes that young children and their families are interwoven, and focuses on family engagement practices throughout all standard areas. One goal of the state's plan is to field test and prototype models of engaging and supporting families, and the state reports that this will be complete through foundation support. The state does not currently have a means of tracking training of its workforce related to family engagement. The state has made family engagement a part of its core competencies for EC educators, but cannot report on the number and percentage of educators trained in this area. The state does have a plan to include this in their Connect system. The state has prioritized family engagement, and this is also exemplified by the community partnerships, grant funding, and plan goals. For example, the state has partnered with public television to develop and air vignettes related to improving the quality of care for children with high needs cared for in an FFN home. The state has received additional home visitation funds (\$5,392,805), with a focus on increasing the number of families served in the 10 counties with the highest numbers of children with high needs. Michigan also spends more than 9 million annually on family engagement, including the Great Start Parent Coalitions, parent to parent education, and the Parent Leadership in the State Government initiative. These parent engagement strategies go beyond providing support to families and empower them to become active participants not only in their child's life, but in the policies the effect all children. The state's plan for family engagement is partially implemented and the state provides a high quality response.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	40	23

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;

(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

Michigan has a strong plan related to its workforce development and the creation of core competencies. The state has implemented the Connect data management for EC educators who self report their credentials, demonstrated in Table A (1) 10, which also illustrates the state's plan for increased credentials available within the system from CDA to Masters degree. The state has Core Knowledge and Core Competencies (CKCC), which combined with the state ELDS form the basis of its training and education programs. The state has a Higher Education Advisory Committee which is charged with establishing affiliations with higher education programs to include the CKCC as the foundation for EC education. The state has approved 7 BA level programs, and has a plan to increase this number, although they do not articulate a specific goal in this area. The state also has a Curriculum Review Advisory Council, which approves content and curriculum for ECE workforce. This council works with local RRCs and the training is linked to the TQRIS. The state does not provide much detail about the content of the trainings provided through the RRCs or the requirements related to professional development as it is linked to the TQRIS system. The state reports that it has the TEACH program to support the EC workforce in obtaining degrees, but does not include this program in its description or the funding support as part of the budget. The state's plan does also not address how CKCC framework and advanced credentialing will affect child outcomes. The state has partially implemented its plan for workforce development and provides a medium quality response.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points; if the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	20	4

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 Early Learning and Development 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).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)

Michigan does not currently implement a kindergarten assessment. The state recognizes the importance of kindergarten assessment to understand attributes of the achievement gap, to inform policy decisions, and update professional development planning. The state explored two options for a kindergarten assessment and selected the Work Sampling System (WSS), based on the Maryland kindergarten assessment and called MIMSR. The state reports that the WSS is criterion referenced but does not indicate whether it is reliable or valid in other ways. Further, the state plans to modify the WSS, further calling into question the reliability and validity of the assessment. The state has a plan to include results in the SLDS, including information on the early learning option in which the child was enrolled. The state does not indicate the timeframe for which the WSS will be implemented. Additionally, the state indicates the continued funding for the kindergarten assessment is being considered by the Michigan legislature, and the state is pursuing funding from foundations. The state has not implemented the Kindergarten Entry Assessment and provides a medium quality response.

	Available	Score
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(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.

20

12

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 Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

The state has a plan to create and integrate a data system that has all the essential data elements, enabling uniform data collection by participating state agencies. The state plans to update legacy systems that are not integrated to ease agency data analysis. The state reports it will comply with local, state, and federal privacy laws. The state does not explicitly address the link to the TQRIS system, but does indicate that the new data system will be linked to the SLDS providing birth to 20 data analysis capacity. The state has minimally implemented its data management system, but provides a high quality response

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	176

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	8

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (P)(2)

Michigan has the Great Start to Quality, its TQRIS system, in which all licensed programs are entered, including EHS/HS, Title 1, pre-k, CCDF funded centers and home. Michigan also has an FFN program for providers who are not licensed but receive subsidy payments. The state reports that between 50-70% of children with high needs are served by these providers and the state includes them in the TQRIS system, through a 3 tiered system rather than 5 level system which is applied to licensed centers. This inclusion is a strength for the state, although these providers are not subject to licensing inspections. The state has a plan to include Part C and B programs, the only programs not currently included, in the GSQ program. This inclusion will mean that all early learning programs are included in the TQRIS system. Further, the state proposes a plan to specifically enroll children with high needs in quality early learning centers by adjusting their CCDF requirements and funding scholarship opportunities to infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The state does not report the requirements for program licensure, nor does it

indicate the frequency or consequences for providing care in an unlicensed facility or home, or how it will include this care option within its TQRIS system.

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	0 or 10	No
<p>To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--</p> <p>(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or</p> <p>(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.</p>		
Comments on (P)(3)		
<p>The state has not implemented a kindergarten assessment and in its plan for a kindergarten assessment does not select a valid and reliable assessment instrument, does not indicate the timeline for the assessment, and does not have a plan for continued funding.</p>		

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	Yes
<p>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 Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.</p> <p>The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development 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 (sections (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.</p>	
Comments on Absolute Priority	
<p>Michigan has comprehensively and coherently presented a plan to improve the quality of its early learning programs, building on the strengths of its current system and beginning to address some of the deficits. The state links improvement of its early learning system to the k-12 system and the development of a competent workforce needed to reshape the state's dire economic situation. The state focuses on 6 areas: revising ELDS, addressing the health, behavior and development of children with high needs, engaging and supporting families, enhancing CKCC, kindergarten assessments, and expanding and integrating its data management systems. The state demonstrates how each of these goals is essential to closing the preparation gap and the achievement gap. The state has an almost fully implemented TQRIS system and has enrolled almost 100% of programs in this system. The state presents a plan to build on this TQRIS system to enhance the quality of programs and the number of children with high needs served in quality programs. The state's ELDS support both family engagement and CKCC/professional development. The state recognizes the importance of health, behavior and development and a young child's capacity to learn. The state has a plan to increase the support for providers and families in meeting the developmental and behavioral needs of young children. The state is less successful in describing a kindergarten assessment that is valid and reliable, implemented within 30 days, and funded following the end of the RTT grant period.</p>	



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page



Application # MI-5018

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]
Support Monitor: [Redacted]
Application Status: Reviewed
Date/Time: 11/16/2011 - 12:36 PM

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

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

A. Successful State Systems

Table with 3 columns: Core Area, Available, Score. Row 1: (A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development, 20, 18. Includes detailed text description of the core area and sub-points (a) through (d).

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

Comments on (A)(1)

a. Michigan has demonstrated past and current commitment to financially investing in high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs. This commitment is notable given the drastic financial downturn MI has suffered as a state. As state revenues fell, child poverty rates grew. In June 2011 about 380,000 children under six received some sort of public assistance. At least one half of all children birth through age 5 are considered high need based on income, including 57% of infants under age one year. The greatest amount of state funding from 2007 to the present has gone to the state's preschool program "Great Start Readiness Program" which is targeted for High Need 3 and 4 year old children. Funding rose from \$90,850,000 in 2007 to \$97,975,000 in 2011. Funding for this program was as high as \$103,250,000 in 2009. According to the narrative, the fiscal year 2012 includes a 6 million dollar increase for this program. "...the only significant budget increase in the education budget." The state chose to increase Early Head Start program funds in 2011 through use of Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program funds. State contributions to IDEA 619 preschool special education programs remained relatively stable at around 19 million dollars per year. No state supplements were budgeted for the IDEA Part C program. There was a large drop in CCDF funds from \$167,428,673 in 2007 to \$52,021,369 in 2011. This drop is based on the decrease in number of children served (106,062 to 53,827) attributed to the increase in unemployment. b. Overall, there has been an increase of children with high needs served in early learning and development programs. State preschool has increased by around 5% between 2007 and 2011. There has also been an increase in children served through Head Start and Early Head Start and Part C of IDEA. As noted above there was a marked decrease in children in childcare supported through CCDF funds. c. Existing early learning and development legislation, practices and policies in MI indicate a strong commitment to young children and their families. Evidence includes the creation of the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC), a public, non-profit corporation charged by the Governor (in 2005) to restructure MI's investment in early childhood initiatives. In 2011 the current Governor established an Office of Great Start within the state Department of Education. This is part of his reform "Prenatal to age 20" (P-20). This office houses all key early learning and development programs and is charged with aligning the state's early learning and development investments to achieve a single set of shared outcomes. Moving the CCDF and other agencies into one integrated unit will help to use funds and resources

most effectively. The use of their newly implemented tiered quality rating and improvement system should lead to improved services for children in family, friend and neighbor subsidized child care settings. MI also has a history of high quality preschool for 4 year olds at risk, a strong Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) service system with a birth mandate. Family engagement has been strengthened through state wide initiatives such as Great Start Collaboratives and Great Start Parent Coalitions. d. MI documents that they do have in place the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system. Their standards for infants, toddlers and preschoolers incorporate the essential domains of school readiness. These standards are vertically aligned with grade level content. MI has developed a comprehensive assessment system for publically funded early learning programs based on their early learning and development standards. Health promotion practices are included in licensing rules and Great Start to Quality Standards. Parent engagement is facilitated through numerous initiatives including Head Start policy councils, family involvement in Part C, Great Start Parent Coalitions, and family engagement requirement tied to the tiered quality rating system. Core Knowledge and Core Competencies provide a workforce knowledge and competency framework. TEACH Early Childhood TEACH Michigan offers tuition scholarships and financial supports for professional development, and articulation agreements are being developed between 2 and 4 year institutions. Effective data practices include use of a student unique identification code now being used with preschool, Part C and preschool special education programs. This longitudinal system will be expanded to include other early learning and development programs.

	Available	Score
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	19

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(2)

a. Michigan's plan clearly builds on the State's progress to date in identifying ambitious yet achievable goals. They provide evidence of how their current Governor has identified a quality early childhood system as a priority. b. The 8 goals documented frame Michigan's Comprehensive Early Learning and Development Reform Agenda. The goals indirectly and directly address the important outcomes: Children healthy, thriving and developmentally on track from birth to third grade; Children developmentally ready to succeed in school at the time of entry; and Children prepared to succeed in fourth grade and beyond. With the current status and planned goals, this reform agenda is comprehensive feasible and sustainable. c. MI provides ample rationale for choosing each focused investment area including revising the early learning standards so they will be more accessible to providers and parents; addressing health, behavioral and developmental needs of children so they can enter kindergarten ready to learn; developing innovative approaches to engage high need families; promote a wider adoption of the Core Knowledge and Core Competencies framework for personnel educators; developing a state-wide kindergarten readiness assessment to help inform instruction in Kindergarten; unify existing data systems into a highly sophisticated data system to inform and improve instruction.

	Available	Score
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State	10	10

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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (A)(3)

a. MI has already realigned agencies that provide early learning and development programs under one unified department, The Office of Great Start, housed in the Department of Education. With this in place, MI is in a good position to further enhance coordination of programs. The Great Start System Policy Team composed of leaders from related state agencies and from the Early Childhood Investment Team provides interagency leadership to oversee the RTT-ELC implementation group. This body links to other interagency councils (Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council; Early learning advisory council) and other interagency grant projects. The Lead Agency is the Office of Great Start housed in the Department of Education. Participating agencies include MI Departments of Human Services, Community Health and the Early Childhood Investment Corporation. Roles and responsibilities for each of these entities are clearly outlines in the narrative, MOU and Scope of work. The RTT-ELC MOU Implementation group is responsible for operations-level issues. Unresolved disputes would be taken to the Great Start System Policy Team for resolution. A plan for engaging stakeholders representation is clearly documented in the narrative, b. The scope of work and MOU document a clear commitment to the grant through continuing and extending grant related efforts. c. Letters of support from key agencies and stakeholder groups document a commitment to the state plan from a broad group. This criterion is substantially implemented and the response is high quality

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	14

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 Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (A)(4)

a. The RTT-ELC grant dollars will be used to fund about 30% of the grant activities. The other support will come from existing funding sources clearly outlined in the narrative and tables in the grant application. The grant documents that Medicaid will provide \$101,007,556 in leveraged funds over the total grant period. These funds will help support well child care and prevention services, Nurse Family Partnership Programs and developmental screening. Medicaid dollars will also be used in activities related to the longitudinal data system. CCDF will be blended with other funds to purchase scholarship slots for high need children in high quality programs. CCDF Quality set asides will be used to fund Quality Improvement Specialists and marketing the tiered system. The other sources of federal, state and private funds document a thoughtful comprehensive approach to blending and leveraging existing funds. b. The budget tables and narrative detail how funds will be distributed across agencies and project. The budgeted amounts seem to be adequate to support the activities with budgeted amounts linked to the relative magnitude of emphasis of project in the overall plan. The narrative and budget tables detail the plan of use for funds over the course of the 4 year funding period. The funds requested seem to be reasonable with personnel being hired to oversee or support key grant activities. About 30 million dollars well be targeted for local implementation of the state's plan. c. MI makes an excellent case for sustainability based on the track record for policy makers to sustain past investments in the state's pre-k program; using grant resources for products or projects which will build capacity for future efforts; and using evidence from grant activities to possibly re-purpose existing funds toward more effective uses. They intend to make the case to policy makers for increased funding.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	8

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) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(1)

MI has substantially implemented a statewide tiered quality rating and improvement system known as Great Start to Quality. a. The system is based on two linked tiered scales one for all licensed early learning and development programs which is a 5 star tiered system and the other developed for unlicensed family friend and neighbor providers which is a 3 star system. All licensed programs are required to enter the system at level one as are the subsidized FFN providers. The statewide standards for both scales include Early Learning and Development Standards and a comprehensive assessment system that includes all key components except for a measure for environmental quality and adult child interaction. The system has clear rating criteria for early childhood educator qualifications that include professional development in cultural competence and inclusive practices for children

with disabilities. Family engagement strategies, health promotion practices and effective data practices are specifically addressed in the system as documented in the narrative and appendix. Key goals linked to the high quality plan for this section include, expanding the data platform to better track licensing compliance and standards information; improve standards to support the development of high-quality programs that effectively serves children with special needs, and; better align standards with NAECTC and NAFCC accreditation standards. b. Great Start to Quality has clear, measurable standards that should differentiate program quality as documented in the narrative and appendix. Programs are required to participate in the system and can choose to climb levels through use of an on-line system and self assessment and quality improvement plan process. Level three early learning and development programs can request a validation visit for an independent rating based on the Program Quality Assessment. Note that this measure does include learning environment and adult-child interaction as domains in the assessment. c. The system is linked to the state licensing system. Great Start CONNECT is MI's web-based, searchable resource and referral source for early learning and development programs and professional development registry for Early Childhood educators. Every licensed program has a profile on the system and ratings will be posted beginning fall of 2012.

	Available	Score
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	15

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 Early Learning and Development 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) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(2)

a. Michigan promotes the participation in the state's tiered quality rating and improvement system to include all early learning and development programs. All licensed early learning and development centers and all subsidized FFN providers must participate. Quality improvement specialists provide consultations to assist in developing quality improvement plans. The goal of Great Start to Quality is to have all publically funded programs participate in the system. Their high quality plan includes adding ECSE part C and part B 619 programs to be completed by Dec 2013. They also plan to link provider bonuses and higher reimbursement rates to progression to level 3 and higher. b. Existing policies and practices provide early learning and development programs to children with high needs at no charge through pre-k, Head Start and Early Head Start. MI plans to pilot test and modify the state's CCDF payment structure to increase high quality child care access for working families with children who are high need. Subsidies will be used to purchase slots for high need children in level 3-5 rated programs to promote high quality, full day full year programs. c. MI already has 100% of currently licensed programs participating in the quality rating system. Targets of 100% participation for IDEA part C and preschool programs is slated for the end of 2013. This criterion is substantially implemented and high quality

	Available	Score
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	12

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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

a. Great Start to Quality monitors all licensed early learning development programs through an on-line process using self-assessment. Programs must update annually and are permitted to update their rating every 90 days. The Program Quality Assessment is used for on-site observations and interviews to move from Level 3 to level 4 and 5. Documentation provided demonstrates that this tool is reliable and valid. However, the self assessment used for tiers 1 and 2 has not yet been validated. b. Parents can access information about programs and their licensing information on-line. The data base Great Start CONNECT will add to these program profiles the quality rating beginning fall 2012. Information is offered in Spanish and Arabic. This criterion is substantially implemented and the response is high quality

	Available	Score
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs	20	12

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (B)(4)

a. MI has policies in place to support and provide incentives for continuous improvement on the part of early learning and development programs. Evidence includes the use of TA through the regional resource centers, information about professional development house on the on-line tool. Planned activities to further this effort include improvement training grants, scholarship bonuses, and incentives based on high quality centers who provide services to high need children. b. Program options regarding length of day, various supports for families and the proposed change to the subsidy reimbursement system are documented. c. MI set achievable and ambitious targets to increase the number of programs in the top tiers and the number of children with high need enrolled in top tier programs. Even though IDEA Part C and Part B 619 programs will be included in licensing and the tiered rating system, they are not included as part of the performance measure targets. This criterion is partially implemented and the response is rated medium quality because not all children with high needs are included in targets set for increasing number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

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

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 Early Learning and Development 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

Comments on (B)(5)

MI provides evidence for a high quality plan to validate the effectiveness of their Great Start to Quality tiered system. They pose important research questions that target the validity of the tiered system in differentiating ratings in quality as well as the effect of program quality on child development and readiness for kindergarten. They plan to develop a crosswalk using Great Start to Quality Standards and NAEYC accreditation criteria for construct validity. They will also use the CLASS and PQA to further test the construct validity of the quality rating system. Evidence is provided for high quality research designs and methods and for appropriate, valid, reliable measurement tools to measure dependent variables. They plan to use innovative GIS mapping strategies to illustrate program quality and quality improvement across the state.

Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)

Each State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C),
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.	20	16

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

- (a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;
- (c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development 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 Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(1)

a. Michigan has had early learning standards established for preschool through 2nd grade since 1992. These standards were revised in 2005 (Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten, ECSQ-PK). This document includes quality program standards and early learning expectations for 3-4 year olds. In 2006, Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Infants and Toddlers (ECSQ-IT) were adopted. These sets of standards cover all Essential Domains of Readiness. While adaptive skills are not specifically noted as a category, examination of the standards reveals evidence that this area along with other essential areas is covered. Evidence in the narrative and within the documents indicates that these standards are appropriate for all children including those with developmental delays or disabilities and English language learners. They are developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate. b. The narrative provides evidence of alignment between kindergarten standards and common core state standards and the Pre-k standards are aligned with kindergarten standards. MI is currently involved in reviewing and updating Birth through grade 3 standards to assure horizontal and vertical alignment. c.

The ECSQ-PK includes quality program standards. These standards are embedded in the quality rating system and serve as level 5 quality. It is less clear how the standards incorporate the Comprehensive Assessment System. The current review of the standards will include suggestions for incorporation into all professional development activities. d. The state documents a high quality plan to implement the revised early learning standards. Key goals include developing and using Professional Development modules on the quality standards and Modules that embed family engagement strategies into the professional development. This criterion is partially implemented with a high quality response.

	Available	Score
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.	20	13

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(3)

a. Michigan's Early Childhood Standards for Quality at both the Infant toddler and preschool level include a progression of standards related to the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of children. The standards document provides evidence of screening procedures and follow-up. b. There is no evidence provided regarding the current number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained on health related standards but their high quality plan states this as a goal. Their plan includes funding health consultants to work with providers to build knowledge and competence specifically related to social emotional development. c. Promoting healthy eating, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity are mentioned, however, health promotion in a comprehensive manner is not woven into the high quality plan. d. The narrative documents the use of screening, referral, follow-up, and family education on the part of child serving agencies across the state. However, data tables indicate only 6.2% of high needs children were screened and no data are available to indicate the number of children referred for service who received follow-up. While there are performance measures provided for the number of children screened across the funding period, no targets are set for the referral and follow-up. The state plans to set these targets based on information from the data application project. In a like manner MI indicates that 79.8% of children with high needs participate in on-going health care and ambitious yet achievable targets are set to increase this number. However, they do not know how many of these children are up to date in a schedule of well child care. Data collection and setting targets for this measure are in the plan. This criterion is partially implemented with a high quality response.

	Available	Score
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.	20	16

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 Early Childhood 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.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (C)(4)

a. Michigan provides evidence of a progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for family engagement across their Pre-k and infant and toddler early child development and program standards. The narrative provides clear documentation of how family engagement is interwoven throughout this state high quality plan across project areas. Standards provide a dual generation approach in meeting the needs of children within the context of family and culture. They plan to build on these practices by translating the standards specifically for families' use; enhance existing video vignettes to bring important information to families through PBS outlets; and make sure that family engagement competencies and strategies are built into the work force development plan. b. No comprehensive data are collected regarding the number and percentage of early childhood providers who are trained and supported on family engagement. These data will be collected through the professional registry portion of the Great Start CONNECT. c. The narrative provides specific evidence of how they intend to leverage existing resources to promote family engagement state-wide. These include aligning and coordinating early development and learning programs with home visiting; using the Great Start Parent Coalition to support this effort through peer-to-peer learning model; promote parent leadership; and field testing the Parent/Community Café model. This criterion is partially implemented with a high quality response

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	40	30
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--</p> <p>(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;</p> <p>(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and</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>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (D)(1)

a. MI's statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework is based on Michigan Early Childhood Professionals: Core Knowledge and Core Competencies (CKCC) and the early standards of quality for infant, toddlers and preschool. While the early childhood learning and development standards cover all essential skill areas including literacy and mathematics, the CKCC does not offer very much direction on "early mathematics and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and early literacy development in children," a required component of the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. A key activity for Michigan's high quality plan in this area is to update the CCKC to assure alignment with early learning standards and best practice. b. The Institutions of Higher Education Advisory Committee is working on improving articulation agreements within 2 year and across 2 and 4 year institutions. The Curriculum Review Advisory Council reviews and approves curriculum for professional development and approves trainers. c. The CCKC were developed with broad stakeholder feedback. The high quality plan for this area includes personnel from 2 and 4 year institutions in assisting with the alignment of standards with programs. It should be noted that only one University provided a letter of support for this application. This criterion is partially implemented with a high quality response.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.	20	8
<p>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--</p> <p>(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(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).</p> <p>Scoring Rubric Used: Quality and Implementation</p> <p>Comments on (E)(1)</p> <p>a. MI plans to develop a common statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment, the Michigan Model of School Readiness (MIMSR) to be based on MI's early learning standards to help inform instruction and policy. b. Evidence describing the Work Sample System is provided in the narrative. Michigan plans to choose a subset of items from the "Kindergarten Checklists/Guidelines" which will align with MI's early learning standards and core curriculum. However, the plan does not include information regarding how they will ensure validity and reliability with this customized model. c. The narrative documents a phase in process with full implementation occurring 2014-2015. d. MI plans to have the Center for Educational Performance Information manage the individual child data in the statewide longitudinal data system and share it with the early learning data system once that system is online. e. The plan suggests that funding for this effort is pending based on supplemental appropriations. Other private and foundation funds are listed as potential funding sources. This item is not currently implemented with a medium quality response.</p>		

	Available	Score
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.	20	12
<p>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--</p> <p>(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;</p> <p>(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;</p> <p>(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;</p> <p>(d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and</p> <p>(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and</p>		

local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)

MI's longitudinal data system is minimally implemented in that the state has begun work on the P-20 system. The high quality plan includes all required elements a. It includes all Essential data elements according to the narrative, which are currently captured in siloed systems. One of the first steps will be to develop a data mart to merge elements and create linkages. b. The plan includes developing uniform data collection and a set of tools for users to manage the data. c. A State Shared service bus is currently in development for a Medicaid Health Information Exchange. The plan is to leverage this effort to provide linkages to the early longitudinal system. Plans for creating a unique child identifier are documented along with a plan for first point of entry into the data system. d. The plan calls for a system that will be able to generate real-time data reports which will be useful for practitioners and policy makers. Data from the Kindergarten entry assessment and educator training programs will be added to the Early Learning Data Mart. e. A multiagency governance committee will guide and inform decision making about key data system areas. Evidence is provided in the narrative and work plan detailing this oversight.

	Available	Score
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	218

Priorities

Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	8

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 Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (P)(2)

As rated in section B MI has a system already on place to enter all licensed early learning and development programs and subsidized FFN providers in their tiered quality rating system. With plans to include all IDEA part C and Part B 619 programs into this licensing system all programs will be rated for quality according to tiered quality rating and improvement system. However, there is no plan to require that FFN providers become licenced. This competitive priority is substantially implemented with a high quality response.

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry	0 or 10	No

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

Comments on (P)(3)

a. MI does not have a Kindergarten Entry Assessment already implemented. b. The response for (E)(1) did not score at least 70% of the maximum points available.

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.	Yes
<p>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 Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.</p> <p>The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development 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 (sections (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.</p>	
Comments on Absolute Priority	
<p>As a whole this application meets this absolute priority through addressing the key criteria with a high quality plan. It is clear that a quality early childhood system is a priority for MI. They have a strong statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in place that will be strengthened. They have high quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are aligned across age levels and embedded into the tiered rating system and workforce framework. Finally, the longitudinal system planned will have the capacity to inform policy makers, practitioners and the public about the efficacy of MI's programs for on-going quality improvement.</p>	