

NEVADA'S  
PROMISE

OUR ROADMAP  
TO A  
BRIGHTER  
FUTURE

(b)(6)

Early  
Learning  
Challenge

STATE OF NEVADA

Race  
to the Top

CFDA Number: 84.412

**APPLICATION ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS**

**Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge**

**(CFDA No. 84.412)**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Legal Name of Applicant<br>(Office of the Governor):<br><br><b>State of Nevada</b>  | Applicant's Mailing Address:<br><br><b>State Capitol<br/>                 101 N. Carson Street<br/>                 Carson City, NV 89701</b> |
| Employer Identification Number:<br><br>886000022-19   | Organizational DUNS:<br><br>809888266   |
| Lead Agency:<br><br><b>DHHS Director's Office<br/>                 Head Start Collaboration and Early<br/>                 Childhood Systems Office</b><br><br>Contact Name: Margot Chappel<br>(Single point of contact for communication)  | Lead Agency Contact Phone: 775-688-7453<br><br>Lead Agency Contact Email Address:<br>mchappel@dhhs.nv.gov                                     |
| Required Applicant Signatures (Must include signatures from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. Insert additional signature blocks as needed below. To simplify the process, signatories may sign on separate Application Assurance forms.):<br><br>To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct. I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation: |   |
| Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):<br><br>Governor Brian Sandoval <i>Brian Sandoval</i>  | Telephone:<br><br>775-684-5670  |
| Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:<br><br><i>Brian Sandoval</i>  | Date:<br><br>10-11-11   |
| Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):<br><br>Mary Liveratti, Department of Health and Human Services Deputy Director  | Agency Name:<br>Dept. of Health & Human Services  |
| Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative:<br><br><i>Mary Liveratti</i>  | Date:<br>October 10, 2011   |
| Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):<br><br>Dr. Keith Rheault, Nevada Department of Education Superintendent  | Agency Name:<br>Department of Education   |
| Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:<br><br><i>Keith W. Rheault</i>   | Date:<br>October 10, 2011   |


**State Attorney General Certification**

|  |                              |
|--|------------------------------|
| <b>State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General Certification</b>   |                              |
| I certify that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions in its application concerning, State law, statute, and regulation are complete and accurate, and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation: |                              |
| State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General (Printed Name): Deputy Attorney General Keith Munro  | Telephone: (775) 684-1100    |
| Signature of the State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General :<br><br><i>Keith G. Munro</i>  | Date:<br><br><i>10/13/11</i> |

### Accountability, Transparency, and Reporting Assurances

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

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

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):               |          |
| Governor Brian Sandoval   |          |
| Signature:  | Date:    |
|  | 10/11/11 |

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

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

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

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

List of Participating State Agencies:

*For each Participating State Agency, the applicant should provide a cross-reference to the place within the application where the MOU or other binding agreement can be found. Insert additional rows if necessary. The Departments will determine eligibility.*

| <b>Participating State Agency Name (* for Lead Agency)</b> | <b>MOU Location in Application</b> | <b>Funds/Program(s) administered by the Participating State Agency</b>  |
|--|------------------------------------|---|
| Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)      | Appendix E                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Head Start Collaboration</li> <li>• Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems</li> <li>• Early Intervention Services</li> <li>• Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council</li> <li>• Child Care Development Fund</li> <li>• IDEA Part C</li> <li>• Maternal Child Health and Home Visiting</li> <li>• Early Childhood Mental Health</li> <li>• Child Care Licensing</li> </ul> |

|                                      |            |  |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--|
|                                      |            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medicaid</li> <li>• Nevada Check UP (SCHIP)</li> <li>• EPSDT</li> </ul>                         |
| Nevada Department of Education (NDE) | Appendix E | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IDEA part B section 619</li> <li>• State-funded Preschool</li> <li>• Title I of ESEA</li> </ul> |

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

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

Yes

No

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

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

Yes

No

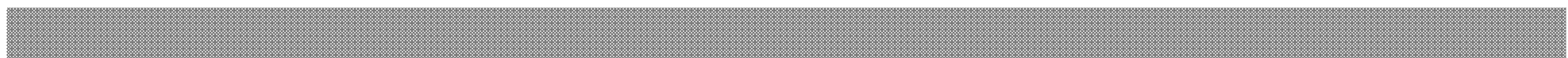


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*Nevada's Promise: Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application*

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## SECTION A: SUCCESSFUL STATE SYSTEMS

*“Nevada’s children will be safe, healthy, and thriving during the first eight years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential.”*

This is the vision that guides the State of Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), which was established by Executive Order in 2009 to develop a clear and credible plan for building an integrated system of early learning and development (ELD) for children from birth through age five. This plan is integral to Nevada’s comprehensive agenda for education reform that is known as *Nevada’s Promise*. Its fulfillment will result in a more unified approach that links early childhood programs to kindergarten through third grade (K-3) so that young children and their families have better access and successful transitions to high quality early learning and education, thus ensuring that children enter kindergarten with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions they need to be successful.

A strong commitment to ELD is reflected in Nevada’s agenda, which leverages existing resources and infrastructure across the state and articulates those that are needed in order to collaboratively plan, implement, monitor, evaluate, and ultimately sustain *Nevada’s Promise* to current and future generations. While reinforcing the progress made to date, this application acknowledges that Nevada must transform if we are to position our youth to successfully compete in a global economy. The Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant will support the refinement, implementation and scale-up of a sustainable strategic plan to build Nevada’s future through the delivery and accessibility of high-quality ELD programs statewide and ensure improved outcomes for children.

### **(A)(1) DEMONSTRATING PAST COMMITMENT TO EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Nevada’s current infrastructure speaks to our established history of providing services for young children and their families, training early childhood professionals (ECE), and supporting development of community resources. Nevada has demonstrated commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible early learning and development (ELD) programs and services for children with high needs, which are evidenced in a number of ways and outlined below.

**(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**

In contrast to many other states across the country, Nevada has actually increased its investments in early learning and development programs since 2007. These include pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) funding, Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funding, and other programs. The data in Tables (A)(1)-4 and (A)(1)-5 demonstrate the corresponding increase in the number of children with needs that have been served by these programs in that same timeframe. In addition to the state investment of resources in our youngest citizens, Nevada's commitment to early childhood learning and school readiness is reflected clearly in the delivery of federal programs such as the Child Care Development Fund, Head Start, and Even Start, as well as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); Part C, Infant Toddler Early Intervention; and Part B, 619 Preschool Special Education programs.

Nevada has a population of approximately 2,650,000 which includes 240,000 children ages zero to 5 years, or about nine percent of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). These children reside in distinctly rural and urban settings across Nevada's 17 counties covering a vast expanse of almost 110,000 square miles. Nevada also leads the nation in terms of unemployment and foreclosure rates which are negatively impacting already stressed families with children with high needs.

State funds were first committed to Early Learning Outcomes (ELO) through the passage of State legislation in 2001, which created a statewide early childhood education program. Since that time, the State has increased funding allocation for this project to approximately \$3 million per year for State-funded pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) programs. The major goal of this funding is to promote school readiness for children in Nevada's publicly funded Pre-K environments through high-quality early education with a strong focus on parent involvement. Even in the face of the challenging economic realities related to Nevada's current budget shortfall, funding for the state's early childhood education programs has not been cut. In fact, some state programs (e.g. Early Intervention Services) received an increase in funding for the upcoming fiscal year.

In mid-2010, an application was submitted on behalf of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory

Council (ECAC) to support a number of projects that, when combined with Nevada's Early Comprehensive Childhood System (ECCS) and Head Start State Collaboration initiatives, will inform and support development of a well-coordinated comprehensive system of early childhood services available to all children across the state. The following projects, which tie in to *Nevada's Promise*, will be supported with Nevada's ECAC allocation of \$600,000 from the Office of Head Start and will be completed in years one and two of the grant period:

1. **Needs Assessment** – Conduct a statewide assessment of the availability of quality early care and education programs using valid and reliable tools. The baseline data gathered will be support statewide implementation of the Silver State Stars Quality Rating and Improvement System (currently entering the second year of its pilot phase), and inform system improvement efforts about the most effective quality improvement efforts that will have the most positive impact on preparing Nevada's youngest children to enter kindergarten.
2. **Kindergarten Entry Assessment** – A need assessment study will be sponsored by Nevada's ECAC. Focus groups and surveys will be conducted to determine what kindergarten entry assessment tools are being used by local school districts (each of which serves as a local education agency or LEA in Nevada) to adopt a common kindergarten readiness assessment that enables long term data tracking for use in decision and policy making, and improves the capacity of early childhood educators to utilize data to improve program quality.
3. **Comprehensive Early Childhood Services** – Develop a strategic plan to provide comprehensive services to children statewide that meets their health, mental health, parent education, family support and early care and education needs in order to support readiness for school entry. This will be driven by a project timeline will begin in 2013 and be completely implemented by 2015.

Additional priorities that are supported by the ECAC and funded through other sources include: (1) expansion of the data warehouse developed by the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP), (2) a public awareness campaign, (3) Silver State Stars - a Quality Rating and Improvement System, (4) establishment of local ECACs, and (5) support for ad hoc workgroups as needed to address specific elements of the plan or urgent needs and issues. These



projects are further defined below.

- **Data Warehouse** – With significant stakeholder input, the NICRP has developed an early childhood data warehouse that is funded by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) quality set-aside dollars for the first two years. This sets the stage for implementation of Nevada's unified data system for early childhood, which is discussed in detail in Section E (2).
- **Public Awareness Campaign** – Building on a series of “Starting Early is Starting Right On Time” public awareness videos that have been developed, the ECAC will invest in a social marketing campaign that establishes a recognizable brand for *Nevada's Promise* specific to early childhood needs. Collateral materials will be developed for specific regions, communities, industries, and cultures that are accessible for all literacy levels, easy to understand, and deliver a compelling message about the importance of school readiness and early childhood development. Private investment will be cultivated to ensure funding for all children (e.g., economic summits and follow up).
- **Local Early Childhood Advisory Councils** – Since 2009, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) funding has been used to develop local Early Childhood Advisory Councils to support and promote a) local strategies to serve all young children through community-based providers, and b) communication with the Nevada ECAC that ensures that local priorities are incorporated in state planning and recommendations for resource allocations.
- **Ad-hoc Workgroups** – To support overall implementation and specific tasks related to Nevada's reform agenda, workgroups will be established as needed that involve non-council members with expertise in areas such as data systems, assessment, workforce development, child care, health, mental health, parent and family engagement or other issues that are identified in the needs assessment

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

Since 2007, every one of Nevada's Early Learning Programs has experienced an increase in the

number of children with high needs participating. During that time period, participation in programs funded under Title I of Child Care Development Fund (ESEA) have nearly doubled; State-funded Pre-K programs and programs receiving CCDF funds have increased the number of children participating by nearly a third; programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 have grown by over 20%; and Nevada has experienced a 26% increase in participation for its Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

**(c) Existing Early Learning and Development legislation, policies, or practices**

Since the Nevada Educational Reform Act (NERA) of 1997, Nevada has been committed in earnest to educational reform that improves student performance. The passage of NERA ushered in a new era of standards-based instruction, assessment, and accountability. In 1999, NERA was amended to ensure that teachers received the professional development needed to sustain student mastery of content standards through the creation of Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDP). These Regional Professional Development Programs have come to serve as the systemic backbone for providing training and technical assistance on content standards and instruction, as well as statewide administrative professional development.

As originally crafted, NERA outlined the first school and district improvement requirements to target reform for underperforming schools. The Act has evolved over time in response to emerging research and defines the accountability, support, and consequence structure for schools that have failed to reach desired outcomes. In 1997, a sister piece of legislation (NRS 386.650) created the State's automated System of Accountability Information for Nevada (SAIN), a comprehensive data system that has grown exponentially over the past 15 years.

Earlier this year, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) received one of only six **Striving Readers** grants awarded nationwide. The Striving Readers Literacy Team has identified the P-3 initiative (described in detail in Invitational Priority 4) as a core element to the plan for increasing literacy and language skills for children from birth to five years. Therefore, 15% of the Striving Readers grant award will support the implementation of activities related to P-3 which are outlined in *Nevada's Promise*.

Additionally, the *Nevada Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines and Pre-K Content Standards* (see

Appendix A) have been adopted and published that set forth standards that define expectations about the knowledge and skills that most children should possess before they enter kindergarten.

The standards are focused on the following six areas:

- Creative Arts
- Language/Literacy
- Math
- Physical Development/Health
- Science
- Social Emotional/Social Studies

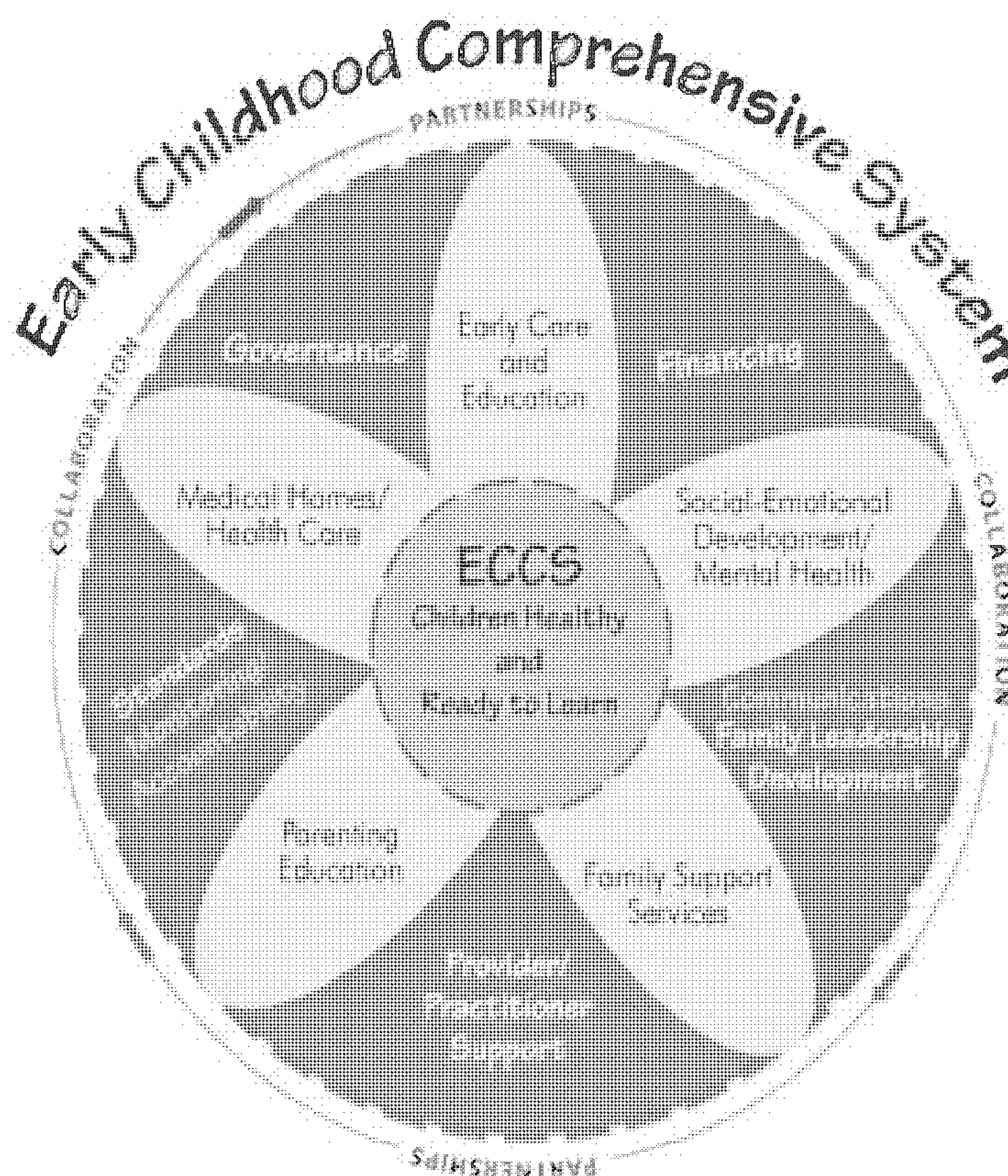
These standards have been carefully designed considering the typical development of infants and toddlers (0-36 months) and preschool children ages 3 to 5. The standards account for the reality that children develop at their own pace; therefore, and not meeting these standards does not equate to assessing as unsuccessful or ineligible for kindergarten. They are simply a tool teachers can use to strengthen their already quality and developmentally appropriate preschool environments. *Nevada's Promise* will build on these standards as part of the plan to adopt a common kindergarten entry assessment statewide.

With respect to progress toward developing a more skilled and higher quality workforce, Nevada has completed Teacher and Parent Guidebooks on Language & Literacy, Math, Social Studies, and Music & Movement. These four sections that describe the standards and offer suggestions for helping prepare preschoolers for kindergarten were recently integrated into the revised Nevada Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines and Pre-K Content Standards attached in Appendix A. A “train the trainers” training institute has also been developed to train qualified professionals in Nevada to work with teachers and others in the field of early learning and development. These trainings will help empower teachers to further understand and use the standards within preschool environments.

In 2007, the Nevada State Health Division convened a group of partners to create Healthy Child Care Nevada (HCCN) with the goal of reestablishing Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC)

training in Nevada. Several CCHCs trained under a previous federal grant or more recently are currently members of HCCN and are located in Washoe and Southern Nevada Health Districts. In 2009, the Healthy Child Care Nevada initiative moved into the Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office within the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services Director's Office.

HCCN objectives have been integrated into the Nevada Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Program Strategic Plan. The ECCS in Nevada coordinates efforts to obtain sustainable resources and policy development that support the education, safety, health and well-being of all children and their families. ECCS and HCCN partners are working together to improve child care standards and incorporate Child Care Health Consultants (CCHC) into child care systems in Nevada.



**(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.**

Nevada has the necessary statewide infrastructure on which to build a comprehensive, integrated ELD system for young children and their families. Impressive progress has been made, and intensive planning is already underway around many of the key elements that comprise *Nevada's Promise*. The data from Nevada Pre-K programs are strong. In 2008-2009, participating

preschool children made large cognitive gains, and evaluative results showed they were better prepared to enter kindergarten. In addition, children who participated in the programs during 2003-2004 and entered fourth grade in 2008-2009 scored higher than those who did not participate. These programs focus on serving students with high-needs based on poverty and/or second language considerations, and serve to help close the achievement gap.

**ELD Standards:** Early childhood standards were aligned with kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) standards originally, and are in the process of being aligned with the newly adopted Common Core State Standards. A key element in Nevada's approach to implementing the early childhood component of the newly awarded Striving Readers grant includes literacy assessments that will be conducted in grades K-2. The data gathered from these assessments will guide interventions and drive program quality. These activities will also include developing and conducting a needs assessment for kindergarten readiness upon entry to help establish baseline data on students. Early childhood educators will be included in professional development efforts, as well as the expansion of principal preparation and development programs, to ensure that leaders are equipped to support early learning opportunities and environments, and provide developmentally appropriate early childhood programs (P-3).

**Comprehensive Assessment Systems** – Nevada's plan to develop a comprehensive assessment system builds on tools already commonly used by ELD Programs, but for which no statewide coordinated data collection system currently exists. The Comprehensive Assessment System Nevada proposes to develop will include screening measures, formative assessments, measures of environmental quality as well as measures of the quality of adult-child interactions. A key goal of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council is that ECE educators receive training and technical assistance to improve their capacity to provide quality education and supports for all children, especially those with high needs. Using the comprehensive assessment system described in the table below, data collected from assessments will guide planning and training targeted to achieving quality improvement at the site level where children are directly served, at the community level (especially those serving the most children with high needs) and statewide. The following table indicates the type of assessment, the tool or tools to be used, and the current status of implementation.

| Assessment Type                        | Tool  | Status  |
|--|---|---|
| Screening Measures                     | Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) and ASQ-SE  | Most Head Start and Early Head Start grantees report using the ASQ-3, as do demonstration sites for the Technical Assistance Center for Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI). This will be integrated into the statewide coordinated early childhood data system proposed in section E.   |
| Formative Assessments                  | No Consensus  | Many Head Start grantees are using Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG), as are a number of state-funded Pre-K programs. However, state-funded Pre-K programs are only required to collect data on Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and the Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT). Part B 619 programs can choose from a list of five (including the TSG) and Part C is using the Hawaii Early Learning Profile. A study will be conducted in Year one of the grant period to see which tools are most commonly used. It will then be determined whether it makes sense in Nevada to choose one tool or whether a list of options with key data elements can be connected to the coordinated statewide early childhood data collection system. |
| Measures of Environmental Quality      | Environmental Rating Scales - assessment instruments for early childhood and child care program quality (ERS) | The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS-R) and the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS-R) have been the foundation for the Silver State Stars QRIS pilot since its inception. State Pre-K programs also currently use the ECERS-R. As revisions have been made to the QRIS structure after each year of implementation, these Scales remain an important, reliable and valid structural component of the system. This will be integrated into the statewide coordinated early childhood data system proposed in section E.   |
| Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child | Classroom Assessment Scoring  | Head Start grantees are using this tool, as is at least one state-funded Pre-K program in Nevada. Trainings on using the tool have been offered across the state. UNR Early   |

|              |                |  |
|--------------|----------------|--|
| Interactions | System (CLASS) | Head Start was one of the primary sites filmed during development of training videos for teaching use of the infant and toddler CLASS tool. Use of the CLASS will be integrated into the Silver State Stars QRIS and P-3 pilots in school districts implementing them. This will be integrated into the statewide coordinated early childhood data system proposed in section E. |
|--------------|----------------|--|

**Health Promotion Practices** – The Nevada State Health Division Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program contracts with agencies statewide to implement evidence-based home visiting programs and has enrolled families and children from two identified at-risk communities in Nevada in its first year of implementation. These communities were identified in a statewide needs assessment where the following risk factor data was collected: poverty, unemployment, pre-natal care, low birth weight, infant mortality, school readiness and achievement, domestic violence, child maltreatment, and crime.

The importance of health promotion practices is part of Nevada’s licensing and Tiered Silver State Stars model. The Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) which is used for assessment and QRIS star levels follows the latest health and safety practices from Caring for Our Children. Child care programs involved in Nevada’s Silver State Stars are trained on health and safety practices such as personal care routines. Licensed child care providers are required to complete a minimum of two hours of training each year on topics related to nutrition, physical activity, and obesity prevention. Any individual working with infants or toddlers must complete training on SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and all child care staff are required to complete training requirements for recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect, conduct CPR and identify the signs and symptoms of illness/blood borne pathogens within 90 days of employment.

Nevada’s office of CACFP (Child Adult Care Food Program) recently facilitated the convergence of a panel of health, nutrition, and physical activity experts to create Wellness Guidelines for Nevada’s child care centers and family child care homes. These guidelines will be distributed to child care programs by the end of 2011. Nevada’s Tiered Silver State Stars model includes Health and Safety quality indicators that include having program menus evaluated by a nutritionist, supporting breastfeeding by offering a designated location and having

a documented improvement plan based on a nutrition and physical activity self-assessment checklist (e.g. NAP-SACC or Let's Move child care checklists – Appendix B, p. 6). Several quality indicators address oral health and referring children in need of developmental or mental health services.

**Family Engagement Strategies:** The Nevada State Parent Information & Resource Center (PIRC) at the Education Alliance of Washoe County is a federally funded program through the United States Department of Education, Office of Innovation & Improvement. Parent Information and Resource Centers help implement successful and effective parental involvement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student academic achievement and strengthen partnerships among parents, teachers, principals, administrators, and other school personnel in meeting the education needs of children. The first PIRC project at the Education Alliance began in 2003 as a small grant with six schools in Washoe County (serving Reno and surrounding areas). In 2006 the project expanded its scope to cover the entire state, and subsequently increased the number of programs and services offered throughout Nevada. The Nevada State PIRC offers the following resources and programs for parents of young children.

- ***Virtual Pre-K*** -The Virtual Pre-K Program is offered statewide. It provides activities for parents to do with their children at home, as well as workshop activities and video instruction. Parents have access to web-based materials and links to community events. All materials are in English and Spanish. Video lessons demonstrate the importance of parent-child interaction, and demonstrate activities. Activity “recipe cards” are available on the Virtual Pre-K website, and are provided to parents. The Nevada State PIRC offers trainings statewide to parents, community organizations, home care providers and early childhood educators.
- ***Classroom on Wheels (COW) Adult Learning Facility (CALF) Van*** -The Classroom on Wheels (COW) Adult Learning Facility Resource Van: CALF provides parenting education for the Classroom On Wheels (COW) Preschool Program. CALF offers free training to parents/caregivers on child development, behavior management, appropriate expectations, and family literacy.



- ***Apple Seeds Home Visiting*** -Apple Seeds is a home-based, bilingual parent education program where a family advocate meets with a participating family weekly or bi-weekly in their home to address specific parenting needs over a period of three to 11 sessions. Individualized lessons are prepared that build on the family's particular strengths and address their unique family demographics (e.g. the number and ages of children, marital status, custody arrangements). Lesson topics include, but are not limited to, discipline alternatives, natural and logical consequences, brain development and attachment, developmental stages, praise, nutrition and proper rest, dental health, and the importance of parent-child reading time.

**Development of Early Childhood Educators:** Nevada was recently chosen to be one of two partner states in the federal Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) technical assistance partnership grants. One of the contributing factors to Nevada's success in being selected related to a demonstrated commitment of financial and staffing resources to the project from multiple stakeholders.

Nevada's TACSEI will provide support in addressing the needs of young children as part of *Nevada's Promise*. The goal of the TACSEI partnership is to “plan, implement and sustain a professional development system to enhance the knowledge and skills of the early childhood work force in meeting the social emotional needs of young children, particularly those with or at risk for delays or disabilities in inclusive and natural environments. To meet this goal, the specific objective of the state/TACSEI Partnership is to build state capacity to foster professional development of the early care and education workforce that:

- Enhances knowledge and skills;
- Supports the implementation and sustainability of evidence-based practices; and
- Increases the size of the workforce skilled in supporting the social-emotional development of young children (birth–5 years) in inclusive, natural environments.

This project will support early childhood programs across systems (e.g., Head Start, licensed child care, ECSE, State Pre-K, Title I, etc.), and provides professional development that

enhances the social, emotional, and behavioral development of children ages zero through five, focusing on children at risk for and with delays and disabilities.

Through Nevada's Child Care and Development Program, child development specialists across the state assist child care centers and family home providers with the process of accreditation. Technical assistance includes support navigating the accreditation process, classroom or home observation, and staff training. The Office of Early Care and Education covers all costs for accreditation materials and fees, provides quality improvement grants, and a one-time accreditation bonus. Grant and bonus amounts are based on the number of children served. The six approved accrediting agencies are:

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- The National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)
- The National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA)
- The National Accreditation Commission (NAC)
- The Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
- The National After-School Association (NAA)

In April 2002, a voluntary Career Ladder and a set of Core Knowledge Areas were formally adopted by the Nevada State Child Care Advisory Committee. Adoption of these systems was based on recommendations received from the Quality, Training and Licensing Sub-Committee and hundreds of ECE professionals across the state. Development of the infrastructure necessary to implement the Nevada Early Care and Education Professional Career Ladder (the Career Ladder) began at that time. The infrastructure was named The Nevada Registry, and officially launched in January 2004; and in April 2009, participation with The Nevada Registry was adopted into State Child Care Licensing regulations. The Nevada Registry definition was added to the child care regulations in Legislative Council Bureau (LCB) files No. R112-06 and No. R032.07. All caregivers working in licensed child care settings are now required to apply to The Nevada Registry by the end of 2012.

The Nevada Registry is a system of data collection, career development and recognition that supports professionals in the field of ECE by validating their professional and educational achievements. The program aims to help lessen the stigma and increase the status of the ECE profession by promoting a well-trained and skilled workforce and is one of the statewide efforts geared toward reducing staff turnover, increasing wages, heightening professionalism and increasing advancement opportunities for ECE practitioners. Serving the ECE community throughout Nevada, The Nevada Registry serves as a clearinghouse of information by offering Career Ladder placement, an online calendar of training, community resources/information, a statewide job board, professional development planning, a Trainer Directory and more. The Nevada Registry is also responsible for the approval of all informal (not-for-college credit) training in the state of Nevada.

Nevada's Early Childhood Education Core Knowledge Areas (CKA) found in Appendix J are a set of **content areas** that define what caregivers should know and understand in order to provide quality experiences for children. In July 2006, the CKAs were revised to be more closely aligned with national standards and include Core Competencies. Core Competencies are a set of **observable skills** that reflect a caregiver's knowledge and understanding of the Core Knowledge Areas. Core Competencies help to standardize the expectations for ECE professionals and are based on nationally accepted standards and best practice in the field of ECE. Nevada's competencies were developed by a statewide team of ECE professionals including higher education faculty and are part of the larger Nevada ECE Professional Development System.

Nevada is in the most recent cohort of states participating in the Expanding Opportunities initiative. Four federal agencies - the Office of Child Care, the Office of Head Start, the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, and the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) - have been collaboratively sponsoring Expanding Opportunities since 2005. Each year cross-agency teams from three or four states participate to develop and implement plans with the goal of increasing inclusive opportunities for young children with disabilities to quality early care and education programs and services in their communities, and to make their findings and resources available to other states. The federal partners support the state Expanding Opportunities teams through their technical assistance projects.

**Kindergarten Entry Assessments-** Nevada will implement a common statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment no later than the 2014-15 school year, which will evaluate readiness in a manner that covers multiple dimensions of a child's abilities, beyond simply tracking literacy skills. The primary goals of the assessment are to inform state efforts to close the readiness gap and to inform instruction and services in the early grades of elementary school utilizing data related to the essential domains of school readiness, including: a) language and literacy development, b) cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), c) approaches toward learning, d) physical well-being and motor development, including adaptive skills, and e) social and emotional development. The addition of this information to Nevada's data system will enable us to look at data on student growth and development before children reach third grade, when they typically participate in their first statewide standardized tests.

Upon implementation, the common assessment will determine the level of mastery that a child has attained which is aligned with selected Kindergarten Common Core State Standards and will eventually serve as the Standard-Based Report Card. Nevada's plan will ensure that assessments evaluate the multiple domains of readiness, including social-emotional development, but are not the sole determining factor for kindergarten entry. *Nevada's Promise* does not interpret school readiness narrowly, and therefore supports a common assessment process and protocol that values accountability and system performance as the means to an end that provides children, especially those with high needs, with the necessary preparation and support to enter kindergarten on an equal footing with their peers.

**Effective Data Practices-** Data use policies and procedures are well defined by both The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Nevada Department of Education (NDE), the two state agencies partnering in this project. Nevada's longitudinal data system within NDE includes the 12 elements described in section 6401(e) (2) (D) of the America COMPETES Act in accordance with Indicator (b) (1) of Nevada's State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Nevada does not allow identification of specific children by data system users through the unique student identifier code. Nevada's coordinated early childhood data collection system plan will adhere to all applicable local, state and federal laws as the plan is designed. The governance

policy will:

- Include identification of elements to be collected and maintained;
- Provide for training on internal controls to system users;
- Establish who will have access to the data in the system and how that data may be used;
- Set appropriate internal controls to restrict access to only authorized users;
- Set criteria for determining legitimacy of data requests;
- Establish procedures to verify accuracy, completeness, and age of data elements maintained in the system and for determining the sensitivity of each inventoried elements and the risk of harm if that data were improperly disclosed; and
- Establish procedures for disclosure review and auditing.

Additionally, a transparency policy will be developed that simultaneously informs the public, including families, early childhood educators and programs, of the existence of data systems housing personally identifiable information, explains the data elements within that system, enables parental (or legal guardian) consent to disclose personally identifiable information as appropriate, and describes how it will or may be used.

| <b>Table (A)(1)-1: Children from Low-Income<sup>1</sup> families, by age</b> |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | Number of children from Low-Income families in the State | Children from Low-Income families as a percentage of all children in the State |
| Infants under age 1  | 17,004   | 43%  |
| Toddlers ages 1 through 2  | 33,597   | 43%  |
| Preschoolers ages 3 to kindergarten entry                                    | 48,791   | 42%  |

<sup>1</sup> Low-Income is defined as having an income of up to 200% of the Federal poverty rate.

|  |         |     |
|--|---------|-----|
| Total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families  | 102,331 | 43% |
| <p>Data was provided by the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP), a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization housed within the School of Public Health at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. NICRP is dedicated to improving the lives of children through research, advocacy and other specialized services.</p> <p>Data for infants under age 1 and toddlers ages 1-2 were estimates calculated using the DataFerrett tool. The ACS Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) 5 year 2005-2009 estimates were analyzed. The variables selected were GEOG-102 FIPS State Code (selected 32-Nevada), AGEP- Age (selected ages 0-5 which allowed for breakdown by each year), and POVPIP- Person poverty status recode (included 0-200% poverty level). The estimates vary from the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) 2009 data because they are 5 year estimates and NCCP is 2009 only.</p> <p>Data for Preschoolers ages 3 to kindergarten entry and the total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families are estimates from the Demographics of Young, Low-Income Children (under the age of 6) found in the NCCP 2009 report.</p> <p>NCCP's estimate of the number and percent of children 0-3 are slightly higher for the year 2009. They estimate that 53,540 children representing 45% of that population lived in poverty that year. Although more recent numbers and percentages were not found, the fact that Nevada has had the highest unemployment and foreclosure rates in the last two years of the economic downturn means these numbers are most likely to have grown.</p> |         |     |

| Special populations: Children who . . .    | Number of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who... | Percentage of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who... |
|--|---|---|
|  | #   | %   |
| Have disabilities or developmental delays* | 21,124  | 10.8  |
| Are English learners*                      | 39,118  | 20  |
| Reside on "Indian Lands"***                | 815   | 0.4   |
| Are migrant*                               | 39  | 0.02  |

|                        |       |     |
|------------------------|-------|-----|
| Are homeless***        | 4,382 | 2.2 |
| Are in foster care**** | 2,190 | 1.1 |

\*Data extrapolated from the Nevada Accountability Report 2010-2011 found at Nevadareportcard.com. Estimates are based on the percent in K-12 and applied to the total population birth to k-entry

\*\*2000 Decennial Census ([http://factfinder.census.gov/home/aian/sf1\\_sf3.html](http://factfinder.census.gov/home/aian/sf1_sf3.html)). Given these numbers are from 2000, the numbers may be larger now.

\*\*\*Taken from [http://www.homelesschildrenamerica.org/pdf/report\\_cards/long/nv\\_long.pdf](http://www.homelesschildrenamerica.org/pdf/report_cards/long/nv_long.pdf), which cites (for children 0-6 years old) the following source: Estimate for K-12 based on research that 42% of homeless children are ages 0-5. Burt, M. et al. (1999). Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

\*\*\*\* The number and percentage of children birth through k-entry was provided by the Division of Child and Family Services 2010 NCANDS and AFCARS data

**Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age**

**Note:** A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.

| Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age   | Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age |                     |                     |                     |
|---|---|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|   | Infants under age 1   | Infants under age 1 | Infants under age 1 | Infants under age 1 |
| State-funded preschool<br>Specify: NV State Pre-K Programs<br><br><u>Data Source and Year:</u> Nevada Early Childhood Education Annual/ Longitudinal Evaluation Report FY10-11 (*Includes State | N/A   | N/A                 | 1,334               | 1,334               |

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|  |     |       |   |        |
|--|-----|-------|---|--------|
| Pre-K ONLY and blended State Pre-K/Title I classrooms)   |     |       |   |        |
| Early Head Start and Head Start <sup>2</sup><br><u>Data Source and Year:</u> 2011 PIR<br>Total Cumulative Enrollment:<br>children  | 308 | 703   | 3,700   | 4,711  |
| Programs & services funded by IDEA Part C & Part B, section 619<br><u>Data Source and Year:</u> Part C- TRAC database SFY 11 Year End (7/1/10 through 6/30/11); Part B Section 619- count date: 10/1/09 report due:2/1/10    | 436 | 3,900 | 6,872   | 11,208 |
| Programs funded under Title I of ESEA<br><u>Data Source and Year:</u> ePAGE Web-based reporting FY11*  | N/A | N/A   | 2,600- Clark<br>217- Washoe<br>36- Churchill<br>143- Lyon | 2,996  |
| Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program<br><u>Data Source and Year:</u> Nevada Child Care System (NCCS) SFY 2011  | 558 | 1,973 | 3,299   | 5,830  |
| Other: Early Intervention<br><u>Data Source and Year:</u> TRAC database SFY 11 Year End (7/1/10 through 6/30/11)   | 436 | 3,900 | N/A   | 4,336  |
| *includes Title I ONLY funded classrooms<br>Data fields labeled Not Applicable N/A indicate early intervention programs that limit enrollment by age group; therefore no children of that age can be served by that program. |     |       |   |        |

<sup>2</sup> Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.



| <b>Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development</b>   |   |            |            |            |            |
|--|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Type of investment   | Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years |            |            |            |            |
|  | 2007  | 2008       | 2009       | 2010       | 2011       |
|  | \$  | \$         | \$         | \$         | \$         |
| Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start and Head Start <sup>3</sup>  | 0   | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| State-funded preschool<br>Specify: Per NV Biennial Legislation   | 3,152,479                                   | 3,251,671  | 3,338,875  | 3,338,875  | 3,338,875  |
| State contributions to IDEA Part C   | 0   | 14,766,712 | 15,326,518 | 16,133,835 | 19,255,832 |
| State contributions for special education and related services for children with disabilities, ages 3 through kindergarten entry | 12,445,832                                  | 13,356,466 | 14,430,080 | 14,503,287 | 14,550,316 |
| Total State contributions to CCDF <sup>4</sup>   | 12,932,850                                  | 15,236,978 | 17,728,565 | 21,588,006 | 14,065,080 |
| State match to CCDF<br>Exceeded/Met/Not Met  | Met   | Met        | Met        | Met        | Met        |
| TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs <sup>5</sup>  | 0   | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          |

<sup>3</sup> Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

<sup>4</sup> Total State contributions to CCDF must include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), State Match, and any State contributions exceeding State MOE or Match.

<sup>5</sup> Include TANF transfers to CCDF as well as direct TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs.

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|   |            |            |            |            |            |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Other State contributions-<br>Autism  | 0          | 666,600    | 997,920    | 1,095,566  | 788,414    |
| Other State contributions<br><br>Specify: Programs funded<br>under Title I of ESEA<br>*Estimated figures based on<br>NDE ePAGE reporting system<br>and district reporting | 8,205,415  | 9,839,907  | 10,049,875 | 13,352,077 | 13,558,237 |
| Total State contributions:  | 36,736,576 | 57,118,334 | 61,871,833 | 70,011,646 | 65,556,754 |

Nevada's Fiscal Year ends on June 30. These figures are based on state fiscal year accounting records and applicable federal reports. State contributions are a combination of general funds allocated to the Child Care program (MOE and Match) for each SFY plus certified match used in each fiscal year from other programs in the state of Nevada which provide additional matching funds.

Although no state general fund is allocated specifically for Early Head Start and Head Start programs, every Region IX funded grantee (not including Migrant or Tribal) program has a contract to fund some full year, full day slots using CCDF subsidy dollars.

| <b>Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in early learning and development Programs in the State (Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs)</b> |  |       |                   |                    |                    |
|---|--|-------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Type of Early Learning and Development Program  | Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years |       |                   |                    |                    |
|   | 2007   | 2008  | 2009 <sup>6</sup> | 2010 <sup>17</sup> | 2011 <sup>17</sup> |
| State-funded preschool (Specify): NDE Early Childhood Database*   | 1,073  | 1,039 | 1,123             | 1,232              | 1,334              |

<sup>6</sup>Note to Reviewers: The number of children served reflects a mix of Federal, State, and local spending. Head Start, IDEA, and CCDF all received additional Federal funding under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which may be reflected in increased numbers of children served in 2009-2011.

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|  |                    |       |       |       |       |
|--|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Early Head Start and Head Start<br>(funded enrollment)   | 2,754 <sup>^</sup> | 3,116 | 3,116 | 3,462 | 3462  |
| Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 (annual 12/1 count)  | 7,655              | 7,767 | 8,062 | 9,216 | N/A   |
| Programs funded under Title I of ESEA<br>(total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report )<br>*Includes Title I only classrooms  | 1,439              | 1,665 | 2,351 | 2,436 | 2,996 |
| Programs receiving CCDF funds<br>(Avg monthly served) 2007 through 2009 data from two contractor computer systems; 2010 & 2011 from statewide NCCS system.   | 4517               | 4798  | 4,320 | 4,857 | 5,830 |
| <p>*Includes State Pre-K only and State Pre-K/Title I blended classrooms-Washoe, Elko, Carson</p> <p>***Includes Title I only classrooms</p> <p><sup>^</sup>Includes Migrant Seasonal and Tribal Head Start</p> <p>2011 count for Parts B and C of IDEA are tallied as of 12/1, which remains in the future at the time of this writing.</p> |                    |       |       |       |       |

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

Social and emotional development

X

X

X

Nevada's Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines and Pre-K Standards are aligned to our K-12 learning standards and are in process of being aligned to the recently adopted Common Core Standards.

**Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required in Nevada**

| Types of programs or systems                   | Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System |                       |                                   |   |   |
|--|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|
|  | Screening Measures                            | Formative Assessments | Measures of Environmental Quality | Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions       | Other   |
| State-funded preschool (Specify)               | Determined locally                            | PPVT<br>EOWPVT        | ECERS-R<br>ELLCO                  | Limited through the ECERS-R; some programs piloting CLASS |   |
| Early Head Start and Head Start <sup>7</sup>   | X   | X                     | X                                 | X   | X-Family Development Matrix                       |
| Programs funded under IDEA Part C              | X   | X                     |                                   |   | X-Child Outcomes Measurement                      |
| Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619 | X   | X                     |                                   |   | X- Early Childhood Outcomes data required by OSEP |

<sup>7</sup> Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

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|   |                    |                    |                    |  |  |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--|--|
| Programs funded under Title I of ESEA   | Determined locally | Determined locally | Determined locally |  |  |
| Programs receiving CCDF funds*  |                    |                    |                    |  |  |
| Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements<br>*Required for all Tiers | X**                | X**                | X**                |  |  |
| State licensing requirements***   | X                  | X                  |                    |  |  |

ECERS-R = Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised  
 ELLCO = Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation  
 EOWPVT = Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test  
 CLASS = Classroom Assessment Scoring System  
 OSEP = Office of Special Education Programs  
 PPVT = Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test

\*Programs receiving 15% additional subsidy dollars for accreditation would be conducting comprehensive assessment to meet accreditation requirements. They are not included here as there are no data collected on the assessment instruments used.

\*\*See Appendix C for Silver State Stars description and details

\*\*\* Child Care Licensing regulations require screening and regular assessment. However, use of a specific tool is not required.

| <b>Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required in Nevada</b>   |   |   |   |                 |                |
|---|---|---|---|-----------------|----------------|
| Types of Programs or Systems  | Elements of high-quality health promotion practices |   |   |                 |                |
|   | Health & safety requirements                        | Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up | Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits | Health literacy | Other          |
| State-funded preschool*   | X   | X <sub>1</sub>  | X   | X               |                |
| Early Head Start and Head Start   | X   | X   | X   | X               | X <sub>2</sub> |
| Programs funded under IDEA Part C   |   | X   |   |                 |                |
| Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619  |   | X <sub>3</sub>  | X <sub>4</sub>  |                 | X <sub>5</sub> |
| Programs funded under Title I of ESEA   |   |   | X   |                 |                |
| Programs receiving CCDF funds   | X   |   |   |                 |                |
| Current QRIS requirements   | X   | X   | X   |                 |                |
| State licensing requirements  | X   | X   | X   |                 |                |
| <p>*Health and Safety practices as measured through the ECERS</p> <p>Health and Safety practices are built in to all levels of the Silver State Stars. Please see Silver State Stars current pilot re-test model in Appendix C.</p> |   |   |   |                 |                |

1. Defined locally
2. Oral & mental health screening and treatment
3. As part of the eligibility process for Special Ed services
4. Wellness Policy
5. Zero Tolerance for Bullying Policy

| Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy required in Nevada |   |
|--|---|
| Types of Programs or Systems   | Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today  |
| <p>State-funded preschool</p> <p>Specify:</p> <p>NV legislation</p>                      | <p>Per Nevada Legislation, all state Pre-K programs must include longitudinal measures of the developmental progress of children and parental involvement in the program before and after their completion of the program. All programs are required to have a parental involvement component which includes reporting on three Parent Involvement program indicators. These indicators are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ninety-two percent (92%) of participating adults enrolled in Early Childhood Education for at least four months will meet at least one goal related to parenting skills (e.g., developmental appropriateness, positive discipline, teaching and learning, care-giving environment) within the reporting year.</li> <li>• Seventy percent (70%) of first-year Early Childhood Education parents will increase the amount of time they spend with their children weekly within a reporting year.</li> <li>• Seventy percent (70%) of first-year Early Childhood Education parents will increase the amount of time they spend reading with their children within a reporting year.</li> </ul> |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Early Head Start and Head Start</p>                | <p>Early Head Start and Head Start in Nevada are required to meet the Head Start Program Performance Standards related to parent involvement (45, CF Chapter XIII). Strategies include, but are not limited to involving parents in leadership roles, welcoming and encouraging families to observe and participate with their children, and increasing family access to materials that further literacy development. Head Start and Early Head Start are encouraged to use the Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework (2011) to further meaningful family engagement.</p>   |
| <p>Programs funded under IDEA Part C</p>              | <p>Families are partners in the development and implementation of their child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Families carry out activities during their daily routines to maximize their child's potential for learning and practice. All strategies are embedded into the family's natural environments including home, child care, preschool, play groups, etc.</p>  |
| <p>Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619</p> | <p>Assembly Bill 224 –Revises provisions governing parental involvement in education. <u>Summary of Statute Changes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement within the Department of Education and requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to appoint an employee of the Department to serve as the Director of the Office.</li> <li>• Outlines an extensive list of responsibilities and expected outcomes of the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement in Section 3 of the bill.</li> <li>• Authorizes the board of trustees of a school district to establish an advisory council on parental involvement and family engagement to work in conjunction with the State Parent Advisory Council.</li> <li>• Revises the required annual report of accountability information for the public schools by school districts and charter schools to include information on the involvement of parents and the engagement of families in the education of their</li> </ul> |



|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes the name of the current Advisory Council on Parental Involvement to the Advisory Council on Parental Involvement and Family Engagement.</li> <li>• Requires the Commission on Professional Standards, in cooperation with the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement, to adopt regulations prescribing course work on parental involvement and family engagement on or before December 31, 2011.</li> <li>• Adds the Director of the Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement to the membership of the Statewide Council for the Coordination of Regional Training Programs and requires the Statewide Council, to establish a statewide training program for teachers and administrators concerning effective parental involvement and family engagement to include training on how to involve parents and engage families and how to work with parent liaisons in public schools.</li> <li>• The bill makes an appropriation to the Department of Education to support the hiring of a Director of the Office of Parental Involvement (on or after October 1, 2011) and support for the Advisory Council in the amount of \$77,126 for FY12 and \$101,594 in FY13.</li> <li>• The Act became effective on July 1, 2011.</li> </ul> |
| <p>Programs funded under Title I of ESEA</p> | <p>Section 1118 of ESEA describes extensive requirements for parental involvement including, among other requirements, meaningful communication and training for parents. Each school and district must have and implement written parent involvement policies. Requirements for schools and districts to reach out to parents relative to pre-kindergarten transition and parent involvement/support are outlined. School/Parent/Student Compacts developed jointly with parents describe how</p>   |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
|                                      | <p>parents, school staff and students will share the responsibility for improved student academic achievement. Additionally, throughout ESEA parent involvement is emphasized in areas such as school choice options, supplemental education services, and notifications.</p>  |
| <p>Programs receiving CCDF funds</p> | <p>There are currently no family engagement strategies required; however, training materials and activities to support parent involvement have been integrated into all the content area materials.</p>  |
| <p>Current QRIS requirements</p>     | <p>The Silver State Stars QRIS required criteria are organized around four key categories, one of which is Family and Community Partners. Specific strategies required include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Families are encouraged to tour center before enrolling child</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Center has a documented procedure to receive family feedback on program quality</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Center has an advisory or governing board which includes at least one parent</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parent teacher conferences are scheduled on a regular basis</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Families' feedback is used to develop a written plan for program improvement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Center has a parent advisory board or association</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Center has a written plan for family involvement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Program distributes a quarterly newsletter to families</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A written procedure is in place to help families transition children to the next classroom, other programs, or school</li> </ul> |

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
|                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Center offers quarterly family involvement activities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Materials from community agencies are available for families at the center</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Center compiles and provides written program information for families in their home language</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Staff is available to attend IEP/IFSP meetings with family and service providers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Center offers quarterly classes or training opportunities for parents</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Breastfeeding materials and information are available for families at the center</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Center has a communication form families can use to communicate with teachers</li> </ul> |
| <p>State licensing requirements</p> | <p>Nevada licensing requires that directors of child care facilities work with parents and include them, whenever possible, in the programming and functioning of activities. Employees must be oriented within two weeks of employment, to include the policies and practices for relating to parents. Written curriculum must be available for parental review each day, and curriculum should reflect the child and family background.</p>  |
|                                     |  |

| Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all Early Learning and Development Program workforce credentials <sup>8</sup> currently available in Nevada |   |  |       |  |
|--|---|--|-------|--|
| List the Early Learning and Development Program workforce credentials in the State   | If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it?<br><br>(Yes/No/Not Available) | Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential |       | Notes (if needed)  |
|  |   | #  | %     |  |
| Level 1  | Not Available   | 1,074  | 15.34 | <p><u>1.1</u> Meet Child Care Licensing requirements and a minimum of 1,000 hrs. of direct experience</p> <p><u>1.2</u> All of 1.1 plus a high school diploma/GED</p> <p><u>1.3</u> All of 1.1, 1.2 and 1 ECE college credit or 15 hrs. approved training</p>      |
| Level 2  | Not Available   | 570  | 8.14  | <p><u>2.1</u> Current CDA or 8 ECE college credits and 2,000 hrs. direct experience, or high school diploma/GED, 120 hrs. of approved CKA training, and 2,000 hrs. direct experience</p> <p><u>2.2</u> 12 ECE college credits and 3,000 hrs. direct experience</p> |
| Level 3  | Not Available   | 242  | 3.46  | <p><u>3.1</u> Apprenticeship Certificate or 20 ECE college credits and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p> <p><u>3.2</u> 1-year ECE certificate or</p>  |

<sup>8</sup> Includes both credentials awarded and degrees attained.

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|         |               |     |      |  |
|---------|---------------|-----|------|--|
|         |               |     |      | 30 college credits with 24 in ECE and 4,000 hrs. direct experience   |
| Level 4 | Not Available | 164 | 2.34 | <p><u>4.1</u> Associate's degree in ECE or Associate's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits</p> <p><u>4.2</u> All of 4.1 and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p>   |
| Level 5 | Not Available | 214 | 3.06 | <p><u>5.1</u> Bachelor's degree in ECE or Bachelor's degree in another field with a state teaching licensing containing an ECE endorsement or a Bachelor's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits</p> <p><u>5.2</u> All of 5.1 and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p> |
| Level 6 | Not Available | 97  | 1.39 | <p><u>6.1</u> Master's degree in ECE or Master's degree in another field with a state teaching licensing containing an ECE endorsement or a Master's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits</p> <p><u>6.2</u> All of 6.1 and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p>       |
| Level 7 | Not Available | 7   | 0.10 | <p><u>7.1</u> Doctorate in ECE or Doctorate in another field with a state teaching licensing containing an ECE endorsement or Doctorate in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits</p> <p><u>7.2</u> All of 7.1 and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p>                           |

|  |               |     |                   |   |
|--|---------------|-----|-------------------|---|
| Birth-Kindergarten<br>Early Childhood<br>Endorsement           | Not Available | 71  | Not<br>Applicable | This endorsement is no longer available due to the pending change in licensing under exploration. The proposed change would result in P-3 teacher licensure and 4 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade teacher licensure. This is in process but not finalized yet.  |
| Birth-2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade<br>Early Childhood<br>Endorsement  | Not Available | 878 | Not<br>Applicable | To receive a special license to teach pupils from birth through the second grade, a person must hold a bachelor's degree or graduate degree from an accredited college or university and must meet additional early childhood coursework and student teacher requirements for that age group described at the NDE website.* |
| Early Childhood<br>endorsement -<br>developmentally<br>delayed | Not available | 784 | Not<br>Applicable | To qualify for the Early Childhood Developmentally Delayed endorsement, a person must have completed a program of special education, approved by the Board, for children who have disabilities and who are under 8 years of age plus other requirements described at the NDE website.**                                     |

Workforce credentials available in the state through The Nevada Registry are called Career Ladder Levels. Seven of them exist. The notes describe sub-levels of each career ladder level. Career Ladder level one has three sub-levels, while career ladder levels two through seven have two sub-levels each. See Appendix D for complete Nevada Registry 2010 annual report.

The data provided here is from The Nevada Registry, and was obtained from [http://www.nevadaregistry.org/fb\\_files/2010%20Registry%20Snapshot.pdf](http://www.nevadaregistry.org/fb_files/2010%20Registry%20Snapshot.pdf) It is now a mandatory requirement for all providers working within licensed centers. It is estimated that there are approximately 7,000 licensed providers in the state. At the time the data above was analyzed, in December 2010, the total number of licensed providers registered was 2,532. Percentages of

professionals on the Career Ladder were calculated using the entire estimated number of licensed practitioners however, not just the number currently registered

Mandatory registration is being phased in through the end of 2012. Thus, these numbers represent an estimated one third of all providers in the state. Although degree graduates from programs in the state are reported in table (A) (1)-11, there is no way of knowing, if an alum is not on The Nevada Registry, whether they remained in state or in the EC workforce. Therefore, the most accurate source of data is from The Nevada Registry. Whether degree coursework aligns with the Nevada Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies is not tracked. People with early childhood degrees from institutions outside of the state submit transcripts and are placed on the Career Ladder, but analysis of alignment with the CKAs and competencies is not performed at this time.

Numbers of credentialed teachers, by credential, were provided by NDE teacher licensure office. No percentages are calculated for early childhood endorsements issued by NDE. Teachers working in state pre-K and title I funded early childhood classrooms must have one or more of these credentials by statute, but early childhood programs in public schools are not regulated by child care licensing.

\* excerpted from [http://nvteachers.doe.nv.gov/EarlyChildhood\\_Birth2nd.htm](http://nvteachers.doe.nv.gov/EarlyChildhood_Birth2nd.htm)

\*\* excerpted from [http://nvteachers.doe.nv.gov/ExceptionalPupils\\_EarlyChildhoodDev.htm](http://nvteachers.doe.nv.gov/ExceptionalPupils_EarlyChildhoodDev.htm)

**Table (A)(1)-11: Summary of current postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators**

| List postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators | Number of Early Childhood Educators that received an early learning credential or degree from this entity in the previous year | Does the entity align its programs with the State's current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials?<br><br>(Yes/No/Not Available) |
|--|--|--|
| University of Nevada Las Vegas   | 37   | Yes  |
| University of Nevada Reno  | 20   | Yes  |
| Great Basin College  | 8  | Yes  |
| Truckee Meadows Community College  | 7  | Yes  |

|                                  |    |               |
|----------------------------------|----|---------------|
| College of Southern Nevada       | 7  | Yes           |
| Western Nevada Community College | 0* | Not Available |

\*Data not available at the time of application submission due to staff turnover

Common course numbering and alignment with core knowledge areas has been completed by the colleges and universities indicated in this table. Commitments have been made to align core competencies more accurately and consistently during meetings scheduled for 2012.

**Table (A)(1)-12: Current status of the State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment**

| State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment                               | Essential Domains of School Readiness |                                 |                            |   |                                  |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
|   | Language and literacy                 | Cognition and general knowledge | Approaches toward learning | Physical well-being and motor development | Social and emotional development |
| Domain covered? (Y/N)   | N/A                                   | N/A                             | N/A                        | N/A                                       | N/A                              |
| Domain aligned to Early Learning and Development Program Standards? | N/A                                   | N/A                             | N/A                        | N/A                                       | N/A                              |
| Instrument(s) used?   | N/A                                   | N/A                             | N/A                        | N/A                                       | N/A                              |
| Evidence of validity and reliability? (Y/N)                         | N/A                                   | N/A                             | N/A                        | N/A                                       | N/A                              |
| Evidence of validity for English learners? (Y/N)                    | N/A                                   | N/A                             | N/A                        | N/A                                       | N/A                              |
| Evidence of validity for children with disabilities?                | N/A                                   | N/A                             | N/A                        | N/A                                       | N/A                              |
| How broadly administered?   | N/A                                   | N/A                             | N/A                        | N/A                                       | N/A                              |
| Results included in Statewide Longitudinal Data System? (Y/N)       | N/A                                   | N/A                             | N/A                        | N/A                                       | N/A                              |



| <b>Table (A)(1)-13: Profile of all Early Learning and Development Program data systems used Nevada</b>        |  |  |                                |  |  |                                       |  |
|---|--|--|--------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| List each data system currently in use in the State that includes Early Learning and Development Program data | Essential Data Elements<br>Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems |  |                                |  |  |                                       |  |
|   | Unique child identifier  | Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier | Unique program site identifier | Child and family demographic information | Early Childhood Educator demographic information | Data on program structure and quality | Child-level program participation & attendance |
| Child Care and Development Fund   | X  |  |                                | X  |  |                                       | X  |
| IDEA Part C Tracking Resources and Children TRAC  | X  | X  | X                              | X  |  |                                       |  |
| Early Intervention Services (Part C)  | X  | X  | X                              | X  |  | X                                     | X  |
| Part B Section 619  | X  |  | X                              | X  | X  | X                                     | X  |
| State Pre-Kindergarten  | X  |  | X                              | X  | X  | X                                     | X  |
| The Nevada Registry   |  | X  |                                |  | X  |                                       |  |
| Child Care Licensing**  |  |  | X                              |  | X  | X                                     |  |

\*\*Child Care licensing tracks the number of children sites can enroll, records of substantiated and unsubstantiated complaints filed against licensed providers, and whether the site is accredited or not. Substantiated complaints are publicly available upon request. The Licensing office is in the process of making complaint records publicly available online. Licensing also ensures that licensed providers meet the requirements for annual training hours and core knowledge areas required annually and ongoing.

Child care regulations were revised to phase in requirements to "register" with The Nevada Registry, including placement on the Career Ladder. However, that database is not a requirement for NDE teachers or programs and does not link to any other databases in the state at this time. The Children's Cabinet, Inc., the statewide Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) tracks some demographic data on providers. However, they are a non-profit organization, not a state government agency.

**(A)(2) ARTICULATING THE STATE'S RATIONALE FOR ITS EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT REFORM AGENDA AND GOALS.**

- (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.**

The success of *Nevada's Promise* hinges upon the reform of Nevada's system of ELD, which will result in improved school readiness for all children, including those with high needs. The high quality plan for that reform agenda articulates the following goals and objectives:

**Nevada's Plan for Building an Integrated Early Childhood Learning System**

**GOALS FOR IMPROVING PROGRAM QUALITY**

- Expand statewide adoption of Nevada's Silver State Stars tiered QRIS model based on common program standards.**
- Build alignment between formal (higher education) and informal (non-credit bearing) training for early childhood educators that is linked to Nevada's workforce knowledge and competency framework.**
- Strengthen incentives and supports for early childhood educators to attain early childhood degrees, earn a livable wage, and improve environments for and interactions with children and their families.**
- Rate and monitor programs using valid tools, trained monitors, and sufficient frequency. Make ratings readily available and easy to understand.**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>GOALS FOR IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS ACROSS NEVADA</b></p>              | <p><b>Implement effective data practices that link to a statewide Early Childhood Development Data System and support early childhood educators to understand and utilize child assessment data to improve programs, curriculum and environments.</b></p> |
|  | <p><b>Implement a performance contracting system to ensure that most, if not all, publicly funded programs incorporate family engagement strategies based on the Five Protective Factors in the Strengthening Families approach.</b></p>                  |
|  | <p><b>Implement and expand evidence-based health promotion practices (including behavioral health, nutrition and physical activity) that are based on well-documented health and safety standards.</b></p>  |
| <p><b>GOALS FOR CLOSING THE READINESS GAP BETWEEN CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS AND THEIR PEERS</b></p> | <p><b>Administer a common, statewide kindergarten entry assessment that generates data which educators are trained to use in order to improve program outcomes for children.</b></p>  |
|  | <p><b>Help more families access high-quality child care at low or no cost and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs.</b></p>   |

These goals guide *Nevada's Promise* and are supported by the following strategies and resources:

GOALS FOR IMPROVING PROGRAM QUALITY

*A. Expand statewide adoption of Nevada's Silver State Stars tiered QRIS model based on common program standards that are:*

- 1) Built upon Nevada's infant and toddler early learning guidelines and State Pre-K and Kindergarten early learning standards; and
- 2) Measured using a comprehensive assessment system that is organized in three primary domains utilizing the following evidence-based reliable tools and data tracking system to ensure ability to use data for planning and program improvement:

- i. *Environmental Rating Scales* to measure the quality of environments,
- ii. *Classroom Scoring Assessment System* to measure the quality of adult-child interactions,
- iii. *Formative assessment* that uses Ages and Stages Questionnaire to screen and track children's development and developmental challenges over time, in conjunction with one or more assessment tools with a data collection component on which majority agrees to use across the field;

***B. Build alignment between formal (higher education) and informal (non-credit bearing) training for early childhood educators that is linked to Nevada's workforce knowledge and competency framework to:***

- 1) promote learning and improved child outcomes,
- 2) develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees, including a state credential aligned to Nevada's Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for early care and education professionals and teacher-child interactions as measured by the CLASS; and
- 3) link training, coursework and degree attainment from higher education and professional development providers to that progression of credentials and degrees which will include use of the CLASS assessment tool.

***C. Strengthen incentives and supports for early childhood educators to attain early childhood degrees, earn a livable wage, and improve environments for and interactions with children and their families.***

- 1) Integrate mentoring and coaching into degree and non-degree training for early childhood educators;
- 2) Include requirements for providing livable wages and benefits to early childhood educators into contracts with ELD Programs serving children with high needs;
- 3) Develop mechanisms for early childhood educators, K-3 teachers, principals and administrators to receive joint training in social-emotional supports and interactions with children and their families, especially those with high needs.

***D. Rate and monitor programs using valid tools, trained monitors, and sufficient frequency.***

***Make ratings readily available and easy to understand.***

- 1) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the ELD Programs with appropriate frequency; and
- 2) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in ELD Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting ELD Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

**GOALS FOR IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS**

***A. Effective data practices will be implemented that link to a statewide Early Childhood Development Data Collection System and supports will be provided for early childhood educators to understand and utilize child assessment data to design, plan, and improve programs, curriculum and environments.***

***B. Family engagement strategies will be employed in an increasing number of publicly funded programs that are based on the Five Protective Factors defined in the Strengthening Families approach:***

- i. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development
- ii. Social and Emotional Competence of Children
- iii. Parent Resilience
- iv. Social Connections
- v. Concrete Supports in Times of Need

***C. Health promotion practices (including behavioral health, nutrition and physical activity) will be implemented and expanded that are based on well-documented health and safety practices, e.g. Caring for Our Children, the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CSEFEL), and programs addressing health, nutrition***

*and physical activity developed by Nevada's Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and the Training and Technical Assistance System for the Office of Head Start and Office of Child Care.*

GOALS FOR CLOSING THE READINESS GAP BETWEEN CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS AND THEIR PEERS

*A. Administer a common, statewide kindergarten entry assessment that:*

- i. is aligned with early learning standards;
- ii. covers all essential domains of school readiness;
- iii. is valid, reliable, and appropriate for all children;
- iv. is reported to statewide data systems;
- v. is implemented by the 2014-15 school year; and
- vi. is funded, in significant part, with federal or state resources other than those available under this grant.

*B. 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 by:*

- 1) Increasing the participation of publicly funded ELD programs in the Silver State Stars, and providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate; and
- 2) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality ELD Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services).

**(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**

Over the next four years, *Nevada's Promise* will build a connected infrastructure of effective, integrated services and systems that blanket the state to promote school readiness, health and wellness for young children and their families. This reform will strengthen partnerships

between state and local systems, and leverage existing resources across the state to create an environment where families, schools and communities have the capacity and commitment to help children thrive and equip them to succeed throughout life.

*Nevada's Promise* will implement a comprehensive early childhood system of care that promotes positive cognitive, social and emotional development for young children, especially those with high needs. Once implemented, the capacity of the early childhood workforce will be strengthened in order to provide a complete array of educational, social, emotional and environmental supports to young children and their families that are family-centered, culturally competent, and evidence-based. Services will be added where they are missing and strengthened where they already exist. At the state level, this reform agenda will:

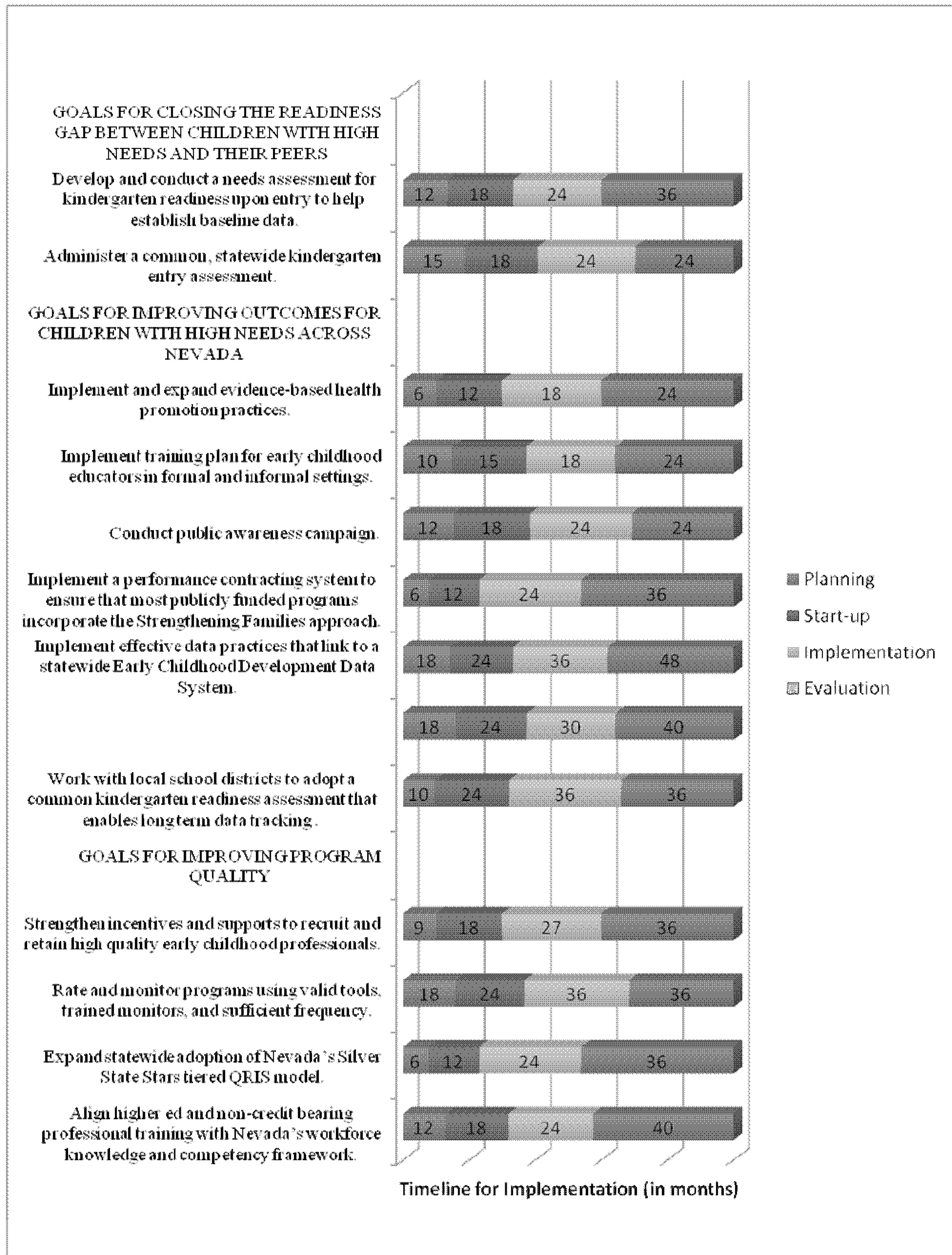
- a. Establish a cross-system coordination structure and forum for leadership from all agencies, programs and educators in Nevada's early childhood care system to integrate planning, share resources, reduce redundancies, address policy barriers, and establish shared accountability for jointly defined outcomes.
- b. Utilize the structure described in A (3) to ensure service integration and ease of access for all young children from birth to age eight and their families.
- c. Develop strong leadership to build a statewide network of communities that value and support the education, health and wellness of children and their families.

At the local level, this reform agenda will:

- a. Strengthen the capacity of the early childhood workforce to provide integrated, family-centered, evidence-based services, including home visiting services; family strengthening programs; and developmental assessments in a range of settings;
- b. Increase family, school, provider and community awareness of how to promote and support healthy learning and development in children;
- c. Implement a comprehensive early childhood system of care for each community's young children and their families that fosters positive social and emotional development so that better outcomes are achieved for children.

*Nevada's Promise* will produce a collaboratively developed and comprehensive framework for early childhood that supports and sustains a statewide infrastructure designed to ensure that children enter school ready to learn and equipped to be successful. By infusing a “whole child” approach systemically throughout every county and every school district, we will build capacity over the next four years to provide evidence-based child assessments, learning programs, and family strengthening supports that are aligned across all early childhood education settings that serve young children and their families. A high-level implementation timeline is provided as follows.





**(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**

Nevada's application addresses all of the focused investment areas in sections C through E, since they represent critical elements of the comprehensive system that is fundamental to fulfilling *Nevada's Promise*. Each of the focused investment areas are directly tied to Nevada's goals as articulated above. The specific rationale for addressing each area is presented below.

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

Recent information about children's development and learning underscores the importance of high-quality early education and care. Research has revealed overwhelming evidence that young children are learning from their earliest months and years. We know that high-quality educational experiences have a positive impact on learning in later years. In addition, research has shown that young children who live in circumstances that increase their risk of school failure are much more likely to be successful in school if they participate in high-quality early learning programs.

The Nevada Pre-K Standards describe appropriate outcomes for children at the end of their preschool experiences and entering kindergarten. These standards provide a framework for curriculum and instruction for all of Nevada's early childhood classrooms. The Pre-K Content Standards are guidelines for teachers and other adults to use when developing learning experiences for young children that are grounded in the following guiding principles:

- Children are Active Learners
- Development and Learning are Interrelated
- Growth and Learning are Sequential
- Each Child is an Individual learner
- Development and Learning are Embedded in Culture
- Family Involvement is Necessary
- Children's Learning can be Clarified, Enriched, and Extended

These principles align with Strengthening Families as well as the acknowledgement of the need for linguistically and culturally appropriate care that meets the unique needs of the child. The

content standards are used for planning curriculum, assessing growth and development, and for sharing important information with families.

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

Assessment is an essential component of all programs serving children birth to eight years, and an indispensable practice for all early childhood educators. The young children enrolled in community-based and neighborhood early childhood programs range from those that are developing typically, to those who may have specific or transitory issues in development, and also those at serious risk for school failure. Therefore, the need to provide early childhood professionals with sufficient and consistent opportunities for professional development and training related to the use of assessments and data about children's progress is fundamental to achieving positive outcomes – particularly for children with high needs.

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

Poverty alone can be attributed to poor grade retention, less educational success, and greater rates of withdrawal from school for students. Of particular concern are those students who become parents during adolescence. Babies born to teen parents are at a greater risk of experiencing developmental delays that may affect educational success later on in life. Furthermore, teen parents are more likely to drop out of school when faced with the rigors of parenthood. Research indicates that children born to young teen parents are more likely to be retained a grade and often perform below grade level on cognitive tests.

Early intervention for families is a critical component in improving overall family success in key areas such as literacy and mathematics. Nevada has been awarded the Center for Social Emotional Intervention and Expanding Opportunities Technical Assistance grants in recent years. Those projects are being implemented currently with support from National technical assistance providers jointly funded by the federal Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education. Race to the Top will support and blend with current efforts to develop plan for sustainability and integration of these systems to support children with

developmental delays, behavioral challenges and special needs find and remain in high quality care.

*(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.*

Positive educational impacts can occur throughout the entire family unit as education increases and graduation is achieved. Despite the challenges, young parents can support early learning through a variety of interactions with their children. As parents see themselves as their child's first and most important teacher, they can support school readiness through reading daily and recognizing that everyday moments can be teaching moments. The overall success of the young family unit begins with the attainment of a high school diploma for the parent. Research has shown that as a mother's education increases, their child's early acquisition of basic cognitive, social, and emotional skills increase as well. These skills are critical components that contribute to school readiness and overall educational success.

This application represents an unprecedented opportunity for Nevada to broaden and deepen our Strengthening Families efforts statewide using the three "levers for change" that facilitate implementation of the Protective Factors Framework at the program level and statewide – policy and systems, parent partnerships, and professional development. This responds directly to the goals articulated in *Nevada's Promise* related to incorporating the Strengthening Families approach into every aspect of its system of ELD.

The Strengthening Families Program strategies facilitate children's social and emotional development and are aligned to the criteria. By incorporating the Strengthening Families Protective Factors into Nevada's standards for ELD programs, it increases the capacity of programs to provide concrete support to families in times of need, create networks of support, assist parents in understanding child development, and provide appropriate social and emotional development of children. Many places are already using the Strengthening Families framework, which is evidence-based and reliable and not complicated to use.

*(D)(1) Developing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.*

Nevada has developed Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies in response to research findings indicating that professional education for Early Care and Education (ECE) practitioners is essential to the quality of care and education provided. Caregiver actions have also been shown to make a difference to the future learning capabilities and success of children. Core Knowledge Areas (CKA) are a set of content areas that define what caregivers should know and understand in order to provide quality experiences for children, regardless of the setting in which care and education occurs. Distributing learning across all CKA helps professionals build a balanced approach to providing quality Early Care and Education.

Core Competencies are a set of observable skills that reflect a caregiver's knowledge and understanding of the Core Knowledge Areas. The competencies identify skills at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of professionalism related to providing quality Early Care and Education.

*(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.*

Research links the quality of child care to the education level, stability, and compensation and benefits offered to staff. Challenging job conditions and low wages have led to a high rate of turnover in the early childhood workforce. High staff turnover can have detrimental effects on the quality of care in child care settings and the developmental outcomes of young children.

In the summer of 2005, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood NEVADA began its pilot run of the scholarship program. T.E.A.C.H. is an acronym for Teacher Education And Compensation Helps. The program is designed to address a lack of early childhood education, poor compensation, high turnover, and the need for increased professional recognition for child care providers in Nevada. T.E.A.C.H. provides scholarships to any Family Child Care Provider, Center Teacher, or Center Director working in a licensed facility. Nevada's program began by offering associate level scholarships for those working towards a Teacher's Certificate, Director's Certificate or Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. Currently, scholarships are available through all Nevada community colleges, colleges, and universities.

The Nevada Registry is a system of data collection, career development and recognition that supports professionals in the field of Early Care and Education by validating their professional and educational achievements. The program aims to help lessen the stigma and increase the status of the ECE profession by promoting a well-trained and skilled workforce and is one of the statewide efforts geared toward reducing staff turnover, increasing wages, heightening professionalism and increasing advancement opportunities for ECE practitioners. Serving the ECE community throughout Nevada, The Nevada Registry serves as a clearinghouse of information by offering Career Ladder placement, an online calendar of training, community resources/information, a statewide job board, professional development planning, a Trainer Directory and more. The Nevada Registry is also responsible for the approval of all informal (not-for-college credit) training in the state of Nevada.

*(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.*

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council will use funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to study the feasibility of using one kindergarten entry assessment with a statewide data collection system linked to the Nevada Department of Education longitudinal data system. The one tool will need to address essential domains of school readiness: language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge including early math and scientific development, approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development including adaptive skills, and social and emotional development.

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

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council had prioritized funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to study the feasibility of developing a state early childhood data collection system based on findings and recommendations of the Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC). The project will be very inclusive by scheduling focus groups in targeted communities across the state. Parents, providers and community members will be invited to have input into the development of the data collection system and confirming key policy questions the data will answer. The ECDC has identified 10 fundamentals of coordinated state early care and

education data systems, which include the data elements identified in the DHHS/ED definition in this application. The 10 fundamentals include:

1. Unique statewide child identifier
2. Child-level demographic and program participation information
3. Child-level development assessment data
4. Ability to link child-level data to K-12 and other important data systems
5. Unique program site identifier with the ability to link with child-level and teacher-level data
6. Program site data on the structure, quality and work environment
7. Unique identifier for teachers with ability to link to site and child-level data
8. Teacher demographics including education level
9. State governance body to manage data collection and use
10. Transparent privacy protection and security policies and practices

The Council wants to answer the following questions and will determine if any additional policy questions need asking. Are children, birth to age 5, on track to succeed when they enter school and beyond? Which children have access to high-quality early care and education programs? Is the quality of programs improving? What are the characteristics of effective programs? How prepared is the early care and education workforce to provide effective education and care for all children? What policies and investments lead to a skilled and stable early care and education workforce?

Answering these critical policy questions requires the data identified by the Early Childhood Data Collaborative to be collected over time at the individual child level and to be linked to data on ECE programs and the ECE workforce. These systems also require structures and policies that can ensure appropriate access to and use of data, along with security and privacy protection.

By ensuring that data are accessible and stakeholders have the capacity to use data appropriately, coordinated state ECE data systems will promote data-driven decision making to improve the quality of ECE programs and the workforce, increase access to high-quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve child outcomes.

The 10 Fundamentals allow stakeholders to better understand the relationships among children, program sites and ECE workforce characteristics over time. In addition to collecting data, coordinated data systems have the capabilities to link select information longitudinally and with other key programs. A governance structure manages data collection and use, and states have transparent privacy protections and security practices and policies. These ECE Fundamentals are the backbone of the data systems, but based on a state's unique interests and political realities, state stakeholders may choose to include additional information and capabilities.

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

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

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

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



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

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

**(A)(3) ALIGNING AND COORDINATING EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE STATE**

**(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--**

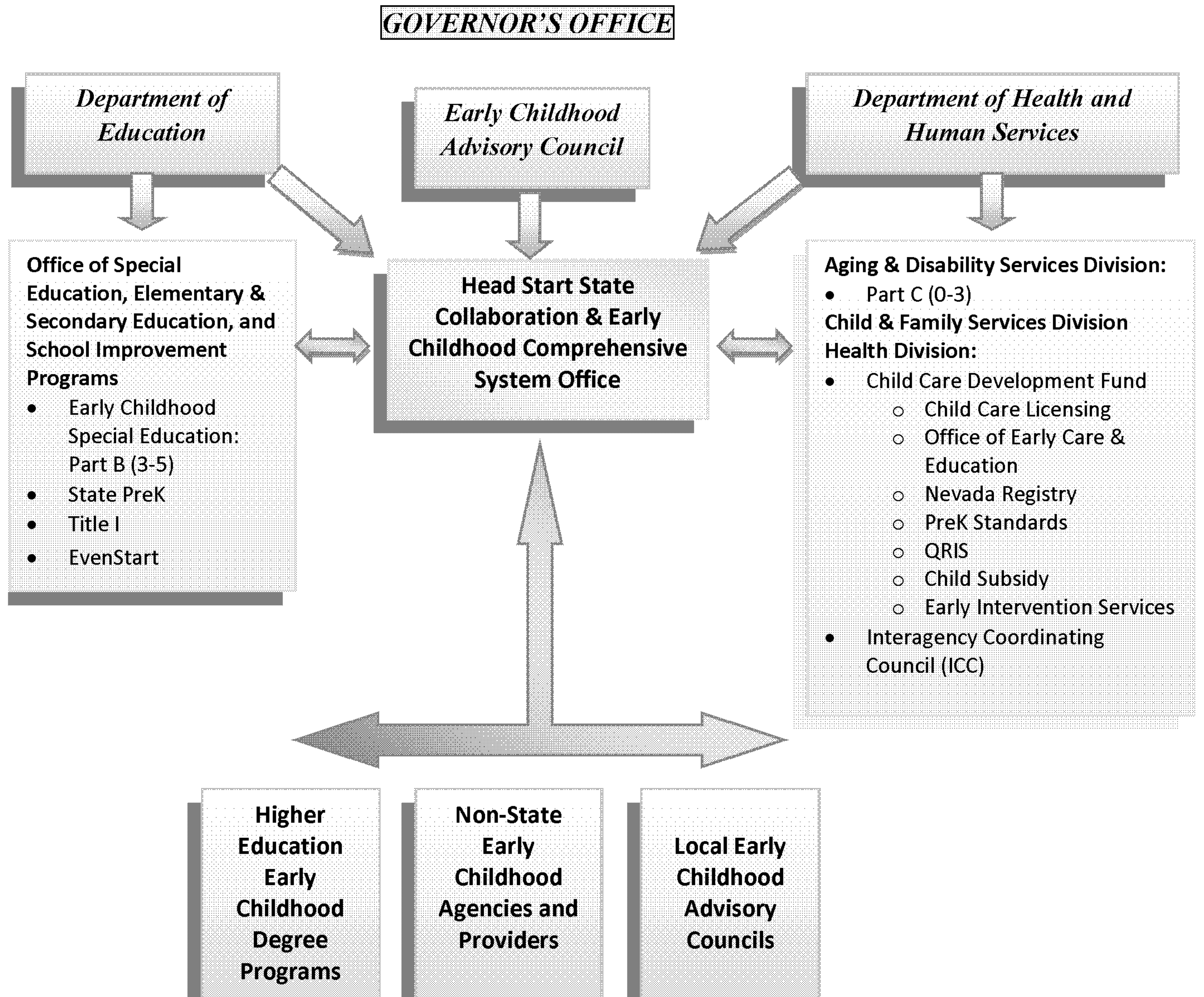
*(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;*

The Nevada Departments of Education (NDE) and Health and Human Services (DHHS) will provide primary leadership and support for *Nevada's Promise*. Their MOU can be found in Appendix E. The reform agenda will be guided collaboratively by both departments, and managed by the Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Office. Nevada's Early Childhood Advisory Council will serve as the accountability agent for the reform agenda. The Council will serve at the Governor's pleasure, having been established by Executive Order in 2009 and renewed again in 2011 expressly for this purpose. The Council will serve as the external monitor of the plan for reform articulated in *Nevada's Promise* and will report to the public on the progress of the state's reform efforts. Having early childhood experts and other policymakers on the Council will assist in ensuring that communication remains constant to help leverage ongoing support.

The Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Office will serve as the liaison between local Early Childhood Advisory Councils and other critical entities with a role in the implementation of the plan. This Office will supervise and manage all activities associated with *Nevada's Promise*, and will work closely with NDE and within DHHS to guide the implementation and evaluation

of the reform effort. This office will be located in the DHHS Director's office. Staffing will include the Executive Director and Project Coordinators, as well as content area experts, reform initiative leaders, a webmaster, information technology staff, and grants management and administrative support staff. The Executive Director will report directly to the Director of DHHS, who in turn is under the direct supervision of the Governor. The figure below shows an organizational chart describing how *Nevada's Promise* will be achieved, followed by a description of the associated leadership responsibilities of each entity:

NEVADA EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM



*(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;*

The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services and the Nevada Department of Education will partner to provide the leadership and resources for this reform agenda, with Nevada's Early Childhood Advisory Council providing guidance and the State Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office assuming overall responsibility for meeting the goals and objectives of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge. This Office is strategically positioned to lead the systems change aspect of *Nevada's Promise*, and will have responsibility for and oversee all activities related to:

- Convening and facilitating the Early Childhood Advisory Council;
- Coordinating an integrated strategic planning process with local and state leaders to achieve cross-system alignment of priorities and policies;
- Developing a framework and corresponding evaluation plan for shared accountability for joint outcomes related to young children and their families;
- Brokering federal, state and private resources for funding, training and technical assistance to build local capacity and infrastructure;
- Facilitating formal and informal cross-system and public/private linkages that will expand opportunities to improve policy, remove barriers, establish cooperative agreements, and share funding and other resources to improve.
- Implementing a statewide workforce development strategy to enhance the expertise of early childhood educators and child care providers;
- Working with local leadership and community partners to develop outreach and engagement strategies to ensure that families have access to resources when they need them without barriers of culture, cost, or type of service;

- Ensuring that all project activities are inclusive of families and key community stakeholders as partners in the development and implementation of preventive interventions.

Nevada's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) will serve as the lead and liaison between the Governor's office and the public in engaging communities across the state in creating and implementing the vision for this initiative and incorporating public input into program and policy recommendations to see to it that **Nevada's children will be safe, healthy, and thriving during the first eight years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential.** The ECAC is both proud and humbled to be charged with helping to shape a more unified system of early learning and childhood development in Nevada that will support young children and their families by increasing access to quality early learning environments and ensures that children enter kindergarten with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions they need to be successful.

The Nevada ECAC was established in 2009 by Executive Order to strengthen state-level coordination and collaboration among the various sectors and settings of early childhood programs and perform the tasks required of state advisory councils in section 642B of the Head Start Act. The ECAC was recently continued by Executive Order signed by Governor Sandoval in July of 2011 with the added task of leading development of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge. The letter of support from ECAC members is included in Appendix. F. The following goals/outcomes for Nevada's children have been adopted by the Council and guide activities and priorities of the Council and addressed through this application:

- All children are supported and ready to make a successful transition to school.
- All children have access to early childhood services that are accredited or meet national standards.
- Parents know child development.
- Parents know what to expect from programs and advocate for their children or self.
- Families partner in decision making at all levels and are satisfied with the services they receive.
- Families with young children are supported in their communities (employment, education, etc.)

- All children have access to medical home and health insurance.
- Social, emotional, mental health and developmental needs of young children and their families are supported by community-based services.
- Early childhood service provider workforce stabilizes.
- Early childhood workforce receives professional development to ensure quality services for all children (e.g. mental health, disabilities, early childhood education, etc.)
- More families report that community-based services are organized so they can use them easily.

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

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) will serve as the governing body for policy making and prioritizing activities related to the state's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge approach. Daily activities will be performed and managed by identified staff in the Department of Health and Human Services and Nevada Department of Education. Details regarding those activities are listed in the MOU attached in Appendix E. Daily activities and decisions will align with goals and activities described in this application. If conflicts arise, staff will work to resolve disputes themselves. If disputes are unable to be resolved between staff in each department, supervisors at similar levels within each agency will be brought into the conversation. Should it be required, the NDE Superintendent and DHHS Director will come together to resolve issues. Ultimately, the Governor of the State of Nevada, now Brian Sandoval and the DHHS Director, now Michael J. Willden will have the final say should issues rise to that level. That way the lead agency and the Governor have the final resolution responsibility. This is not anticipated, but is described here in that potentiality and for future staff who may be responsible for implementing Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge related activities.

*(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*

Many of the documents included in the appendices to this application were developed by including stakeholders as well as parents and families. The State intends to use this all-inclusive approach in planning and implementing the activities carried out under the grant. During its writing, the state plan proposed here was widely distributed for public input, which included the comprehensive assessment

system structure. Public input will also be included during the data collection system planning phases for all components of the kindergarten entry assessment tool as well as the formative assessment tool determination process. Additional efforts will be made to involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators, Children with High Needs and other key stakeholders when planning and implementing the activities carried out under this 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*

The MOU between DHHS and NDE, with scope of work and terms and conditions is signed and can be found in Appendix E.

**(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--**

Many organizations, workgroups, family advocates and professionals have joined forces with DHHS and NDE, including licensing entities, school districts, colleges and universities, councils, and local programs, in an effort to positively impact the quality of life, care, and education for all young children in Nevada. These same entities, as well as civic leaders, funders, and other key stakeholders in our early childhood system, are vocal and active in their support of *Nevada's Promise*. Those that have submitted letters of support for this application are listed below, and a copy of those letters can be found as follows:

Appendix F: Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council

Appendix G:

UNLV College of Education

T.E.A.C.H.

Northern Nevada Immunization Coalition

Senator Harry Reid

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

Nevada TACSEI

United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra

Education Alliance of Washoe County

College of Southern Nevada

Washoe County School District

The Children's Cabinet

Family to Family Connection

UNR College of Education

United Way of Southern Nevada

Nevada Office of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement Programs

Appendix H:

NevAEYC

The Nevada Registry

Appendix I: PTA



Nevada's vision for an integrated state and local approach to building an early learning system relies on partnerships and coordination with local early learning councils and Early Learning Intermediary Organizations. Letters of support from these entities can be found in Appendix G.

| <b>Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities</b> |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Participating State Agency</b>                                    | <b>Governance-related roles and responsibilities</b>   |
| Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)                | <p>Lead agency and fiscal management will be provided by the Director's Office, which houses the Head Start Collaboration, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems and Early Childhood Advisory Council coordination.</p> <p>Other programs managed within DHHS include: Child Care Development Fund, IDEA Part C, Maternal Child Health and Home Visiting, Early Childhood Mental Health, Child Care Licensing, Medicaid, Nevada Check UP (SCHIP) and EPSDT. These programs will work with the Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office and the Early Childhood Advisory Council to align program priorities and funding to achieve the goals set herein without jeopardizing the integrity of implementation or unique requirements of the programs listed.</p> |
| Nevada Department of Education (NDE)                                 | <p>Longitudinal data collection and tracking, assigning of unique child identifier, IDEA Part B 619, State-funded Pre-kindergarten and Title 1</p>   |
| State advisory council on early childhood education and care         | <p>The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council will make recommendations to the Governor's Office, DHHS and NDE regarding policies, funding and program priorities and practices.</p>  |
| State Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA            | <p>The State ICC for Part C is represented on the ECAC by the Part C Coordinator. Should additional representation from parents receiving or providers offering Part C be needed, additional members can be appointed by the Governor,</p>   |

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
|  | according to the bylaws. |
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| <b>Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils</b> |  |
|--|--|
| List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State | Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix (Y/N)? |
| Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children   | Y  |

**(A)(4) DEVELOPING A BUDGET TO IMPLEMENT AND SUSTAIN THE WORK OF THIS GRANT**

**(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;**

To achieve the goals outlined in Nevada's plan, significant commitment has been made by DHHS and NDE will align funding, data collection and policies to support early learning and development. In the MOU (see Appendix E), the two agencies have committed to using Nevada's Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines and Pre-Kindergarten Standards, common program standards, participation in the Silver State Stars QRIS, and Nevada's Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals. Total investments in support of this project equal over \$31 million.

The Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council committed to support Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge proposal by funding the planning processes in tandem for development of a common kindergarten entry assessment tool and a coordinated early childhood data collection system. Also managed within DHHS, Nevada's CCDF quality set aside has and will continue to support workforce development, Silver State Stars, and training and technical assistance. Early Intervention Services committed to supporting workforce development, while the Maternal Infant and Child Home Visiting program committed funds to support development of a statewide kindergarten entry assessment tool. Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems will support training and technical assistance related to using the tools in Nevada's Comprehensive Assessment System, and the Head Start State Collaboration project will support the infrastructure building to support training and technical assistance and workforce development.

The Nevada Department of Education has committed vital resources through the recently awarded Striving Readers project and State Pre-kindergarten funding. The entire 15% allocated for children 0-5 will align with the standards outlined in this application, as related to literacy and language skills. State Pre-Kindergarten awards are determined biennially. Current awards were made for FY 12 and 13. NDE committed to align the next biennial state pre-K awards for fiscal years 2014 and 2015 with the Comprehensive Assessment System described in this application. Additionally, as NDE prepares its competitive application for the next round of state longitudinal data systems, early childhood and kindergarten entry assessment data systems will be included in their request for funding that project.

It is the intent of the Department of Education, as indicated in the MOU, to work with DHHS to support the common use of Nevada's Infant Toddler Learning Guidelines, Pre-Kindergarten Learning Standards, Environmental Rating Scales, selected formative assessment and screening tools including one common kindergarten entry assessment tool, and Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals. During the first year of planning, DHHS and NDE will engage early childhood community stakeholders in consensus building to address the components of these standards, tools and data collection system as yet undetermined at the time of this writing.

There are two state agencies responsible for implementing Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge: the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE). DHHS will serve as the Lead Agency, responsible for the majority of this project including the distribution of the largest portion of federal funding requested, which will be competitively awarded to local LEAs, Early Childhood Councils, and Early Childhood and Development Programs for providing high quality care to children with high needs. Almost 40% of the budget for implementing *Nevada's Promise* comes from existing sources within each department. This level of state commitment during some of the worst budget shortages in the history of the state, combined with the capacity building activities designed to result in lasting reforms to Nevada's early childhood comprehensive system, assures sustainability of that reform. Direct support of state and local efforts to improve early care and education environments for children with high needs in communities most hard hit by the economic downturn will result in higher quality care and better prepare children for school. This will be demonstrated by data tracked using the comprehensive assessment system described throughout this proposal.

NDE will participate in implementation of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge as described in the attached MOU (see Appendix E). Together, the two State departments determined seven projects on which to collaborate in order to meet the goals iterated throughout this proposal. They are:

1. **Kindergarten Entry Assessment** – During the first year, facilitated planning and engagement of localities will be conducted to achieve consensus in selecting a common kindergarten entry assessment tool. This will be incorporated into the corresponding statewide data collection system to measure status of children's skills, knowledge and development upon school entry will be determined. The selected tool will not be used to screen children out of eligibility for kindergarten based on low scores, but to track where children are on a continuum of learning and development upon entry into kindergarten. Long term tracking of this data will allow state leadership and decision makers to see how reforms implemented as part of this project have impacted children's readiness for school over the period of four years of funding from this grant and beyond. Funding for this project will be used for developing the database, purchasing (or licensing use) of the

selected kindergarten entry assessment tool, and provide intensive education for kindergarten teachers and school administrators using the tool.

This project addresses selection criteria focused investment area (E) (1) and Priority 3, understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry. It also supports Priority 5, encouraging private sector support, by providing private sector partners with aggregated kindergarten entry assessment data, which can be used to inform selection of targeted communities as well as investment in efforts to improve early learning and development programs.

2. **Unified Data System** – In the first year of the grant, strategic planning will be conducted that includes a feasibility plan for building and implementing a unified data system for early childhood that accommodates cross-system information sharing and allows tracking of progress on performance measures for each child served by *Nevada's Promise*.

Common data elements that will be derived from the shared use of screening and assessment instruments will be defined during the first year of the grant as well. Planning will address how privacy laws and regulations will be maintained for each participating entity. NDE will include early childhood data into its longitudinal data tracking system. During the second year, the data system will be built and tested. During the third year, data in areas where children with high needs comprise the highest percentage of the population will be collected and aggregated. During the fourth year, data collection and tracking will be conducted statewide. Funds for this project support the building of the data system itself including estimated cost of contracts to build local and state level linkages to the statewide longitudinal database housed in NDE.

This project supports criteria (A)(3) Aligning and coordinating work across the State, (C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems and (E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies. It also supports Priority 5, encouraging private sector support, by providing private sector partners with aggregated data on early childhood, which can be used to inform selection of targeted communities as well as investment in efforts to improve early learning and development programs.

3. **Silver State Stars** – Nevada's tiered QRIS will center around the comprehensive assessment system described in this proposal including the Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS-R, ITERS-R, etc.), the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3), and either a list of formative assessment tools from which early childhood educators and programs can choose, or possibly the selection of one common assessment tracking the same domains and skills as the one kindergarten entry assessment. The decision regarding formative assessment will be made during the first year of the grant. Over the four years of this project, all publicly funded programs will adopt the comprehensive assessment system tools, enabling both public and private Early Learning and Development programs to participate in and be rated according to Nevada's Silver State Stars. Funding for this project primarily supports performance contracts with local early learning and development programs to improve the quality of their programs, as measure by tools described within Nevada's comprehensive assessment system, to children with high needs at no or low cost.

This project supports criteria in all of section B, promoting development of high quality, accountable programs by (B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, (B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System , (B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs, (B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs, and (B)(5) Validating the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. This project also supports all criteria in section C, promoting early learning and development outcomes for children by: (C)(1) promoting use of Nevada's statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards for infants through pre-kindergarteners linked to the K-12 standards; and (C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems. Silver State Stars promotes (C) (3) Identifying and addressing health, behavioral, and developmental needs and (C) (4) Engaging and supporting families by including these criteria in the star rating system.

Finally, Nevada's QRIS, Silver State Stars addresses Competitive Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the QRIS by committing to comprehensive

standards, based on use of common tools that can be used by private and public programs. Local contracts will be open to for profit, non-profit and publicly funded early learning and development programs that demonstrate how they will meet the requirements as measured by tools within Nevada's comprehensive assessment system.

4. **Workforce Development** – A high quality system of early childhood care and education relies on a highly qualified workforce. DHHS will fund professional development activities leading to credentials for professionals working with children in a multitude of Early Learning and Development Programs. Funding will be used to support teachers in attaining degrees, building on already significant investments from programs such as Child Care and Development funds.

This project supports both criteria in section D: A Great Early Childhood Workforce by (D) (1) expanding the use of and strengthening linkages between college coursework and not-for-credit training to Nevada's already existing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials, which Nevada already has in place; and (D) (2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in gaining the knowledge and skills needed to help children get ready for school.

5. **P-3** – Through continuing education opportunities and state conferences, NDE will use Striving Readers and Race to the Top funds to support a continuum of training to strengthen the instructional skills of early childhood educators working with children from birth through third grade, particularly in the areas of literacy and language, math and science, and social emotional skills. Common assessment tools will be used across programs serving these age groups and data will be tracked to determine effectiveness of these efforts over the period of the grant. Funding for this project supports two staff for NDE to support and promote local school districts in developing P-3 approaches to supporting children's learning to close the achievement gap.

This project supports criteria in focused investment area C by promoting all criteria described therein and promoting linkages between early childhood programs and kindergarten through third grade schools. It also addresses Invitational Priority 4: Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades.

6. **Training and Technical Assistance** – DHHS and NDE will work to develop training and technical assistance focused on using the tools in Nevada's comprehensive assessment system and improving the quality of early learning and development programs to improve Silver State Star ratings, especially in communities with high populations of children with high needs. Funding for this project supports NDE staff to provide training and technical assistance to local school districts implementing a P-3 approach, and regional or state contracts to provide training and technical assistance related to use of the comprehensive assessment tools and increasing Silver State Star ratings of early learning and development programs.
7. **Statewide Leadership** – DHHS and NDE will employ staff to work together to provide leadership for Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge and the projects described herein. DHHS will create two new positions: one to provide leadership and one to manage the contracts related to implementing the project. No funding for staff is requested by NDE as they have appointed the position currently managing the State Pre-kindergarten program to serve as lead management staff for their Race to the Top related projects. Funding for participation in the required training and technical assistance related to Race to the Top is also included in this project (\$400,000), as are indirect costs incurred by NDE and operating expenses and supplies for DHHS related to it.

**(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,**

This section can be found in the Budget Summary Section of this document beginning on page 180.

**(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.**

Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge proposal outlines a plan for building capacity in existing environments so that by the end of 2015, as illustrated in tables (B)(2)(C) on page 79.



Programs not in the top two tiers will be on a trajectory to do so with support from non- Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge funds such as CCDF set aside. By 2015, however, enough evidence collected from this project will result in a combination of legislation to support additional state general fund investment in early childhood as well as cultivating local relationships between ECDPs and local private & community foundation grantors.

| <b>Table (A) (4) – 1 Existing other Federal, State, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.</b> |                  |                                       |                   |                  |              |
|--|------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Source of Funds  | Fiscal Year 2012 | Fiscal Year 2013                      | Fiscal Year 2014  | Fiscal Year 2015 | Total        |
| State Advisory Council (ARRA)  | \$300,000        | \$300,000                             | Funding ends FY13 |                  | \$600,000    |
| Child Care Development Fund  | \$3,692,150      | \$3,680,000                           | \$3,680,000       | \$3,680,000      | \$14,724,693 |
| Nevada Early Intervention Services   | \$16,200         |                                       |                   |                  | \$16,200     |
| Home Visiting  | \$10,000         | \$10,000                              | \$10,000          | \$10,000         | \$40,000     |
| Head Start State Collaboration   | \$25,000         | \$25,000                              | \$25,000          | \$25,000         | \$100,000    |
| Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems  | \$250,000        | Unknown whether funding will continue |                   |                  | \$250,000    |
| NDE Striving Readers   | \$2,137,500      | \$2,137,500                           | \$2,137,500       | \$2,137,500      | \$8,550,000  |
| State Pre-K  | \$92,565         | \$0                                   | \$3,338,875       | \$3,338,875      | \$6,677,750  |

|   |           |          |          |          |           |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| NED Leadership Staff  | \$300,000 | \$92,565 | \$92,565 | \$92,565 | \$370,260 |
| <p>DHHS and NDE programs have committed to working to develop common assessment system during the first year of this project. Based on that plan, funding commitments from sources only listed in FY2012 will be renegotiated. All programs have promised to engage in planning during the first year of implementation to align data and funding.</p> <p>CCDF is comprised of quality improvement dollars and 15% bonus for accredited programs. Estimate is based on current dollars due to lack of knowledge regarding future budget cuts.</p> |           |          |          |          |           |

## SECTION B: HIGH-QUALITY, ACCOUNTABLE PROGRAMS

### **(B)(1) DEVELOPING AND ADOPTING A COMMON, STATEWIDE TIERED QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM**

The state of Nevada completed a two-year pilot study of its Tiered QRIS Model called the Silver State Stars QRIS in June 2011. The Model was revised summer 2011 based on the evaluation of the initial pilot, and a third-year pilot of the revised model began on September 2011. Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars QRIS model (Appendix C) is a 5-star model developed using a set of tiered Program Standards that includes the following:

1. **Early Learning Development Standards:** Nevada developed Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Content Standards in 2004. Nevada's Pre-K Standards provide the framework for curriculum and instruction in all of Nevada's State Pre-Kindergarten classrooms. The Pre-K Standards are used for planning curriculum; assessing growth and development of preschoolers; and for sharing important information with families and as such have been aligned with several commonly used formative assessments. The Pre-K Standards describe appropriate outcomes for children at the end of their preschool experience as they prepare to enter kindergarten. The Pre-K Standards are linked to Nevada's K-12 Standards and are designed to assist parents and teachers in supporting children's attainment of necessary skills in language and literacy, math, science, social emotional development, physical development, health and creative arts so that children are ready to make a successful transition to school. The Pre-K

Standards were updated in 2010 to align with the new Infant-Toddler Early Learning Guidelines and to address developmental, linguistic, and cultural appropriateness. The standards are in the process of being aligned with the common core standards recently adopted by the Nevada Department of Education.

In 2008, a committee of early childhood professionals began developing Nevada's Infant and Toddler Early Learning Guidelines. The Nevada Infant and Toddler Early Learning Guidelines are best practice approaches for teachers and parents of infants and toddlers. The Pre-K Standards and Early Learning Guidelines are embedded in Nevada's Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies for Early Childhood Education professionals. Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars QRIS model includes quality indicators tied to the Early Learning Development Standards (e.g.) Preschool lesson plans align with Nevada Pre-K Standards, Infant/Toddler care is planned based on Early Learning Guidelines – Appendix C, p. 4). The current Silver State Stars model is designed to include all types of ELD Programs. The model will be enhanced to include family child care homes and friend, family and neighbor care by the end of 2012. At that time, all components of the proposed comprehensive assessment system will be included in the revised model.

2. ***Comprehensive Assessment System:*** Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars will expand to include the comprehensive assessment system previously described in detail in Section C (2). Currently all child care centers (including the largest Head Start grantee in the state) involved in the Silver State Stars pilot project are assessed using the Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) specifically the ITERS-R (Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale-Revised) and the ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised). The Environmental Rating Scales provide a global assessment of child care quality within specific child care settings. The proposed tiered Silver State Stars will incorporate use of the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) tool as a measure of teacher-child interactions. Simultaneously, a pilot P-3 project in Washoe County will use the CLASS with K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers. The CLASS assessment looks at three domains of high quality teacher-child interactions. These domains are Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. Because variations of the tool are available for use in toddler,

preschool and K-3 classrooms, common training and data collection will be facilitated.

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars model currently includes quality indicators addressing the need for on-going child assessments including at least one informal method (e.g.

observations, portfolios) and one formal method (i.e. valid and reliable screening tools such as Ages and Stages Questionnaire [ASQ-3]; and formative assessment tools) [See Appendix C, p. 4]. Child care licensing requires child care programs to conduct, within three months after a child enrolls, an assessment or screening (e.g. ASQ-3) and such assessments must be repeated biannually, and thereafter to monitor and support the learning and development of each child. The use of additional assessments is determined by each child care program. A statewide early learning data system will be set up to collect child assessment data and a review of formative assessment tools currently used by Early Childhood and Development Programs in all sectors of service will be engaged to determine one specific assessment or a list of tools that will be included in Nevada's Silver State Stars Tiered QRIS model.

Development of the plan for that data collection system is already a priority for Nevada's Early Childhood Advisory Council's allocation from the Office of Head Start.

3. ***Early Childhood Educator qualifications:*** In Nevada, Senate Bill (SB) 27 now requires that employees of a child care facility are required as of July 1, 2011 to complete at least 15 hours of training (with at least two hours of wellness including childhood obesity, nutrition and physical activity). At the same time, at the end of 2010, approximately half way through the phase in process requiring mandatory registration on the Career Ladder for licensed early childhood and development programs, 80% of licensed providers placed on Career Ladder levels three or below (none of these are achieved by degree attainment in early childhood). One goal of Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars is to increase the criteria of Early Childhood Education qualifications by tying qualifications to star levels. Nevada follows an Early Childhood Education Career Ladder. The seven levels of the Career Ladder represent various combinations of formal education, training and direct experience (up to 4,000 hours). The levels are described in detail in table (A) (1)-10 and range from Level 1.1 (meets child care licensing requirements and a minimum of 1,000 hours of direct experience) to Level 7.2 (earned doctorate in Early Childhood and 4,000 hours of direct experience). Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars model requires child care directors to place on a higher level of the Career

Ladder for the three, four, and five star levels as the education and experience of child care directors has been linked to higher quality programs. The Career Ladder is found in Appendix K.

Additionally, Silver State Stars quality indicators include requirements such as the percentage of staff having attained a certain placement on the Career Ladder (i.e. 50% of teaching staff have a minimum placement of Level 4.1 on the Career Ladder) and that the center is a T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) Early Childhood site (Appendix C, p. 5). Nevada has made a significant investment in T.E.A.C.H. the past five years described in detail earlier in this proposal. In addition, to promote the pursuit of professional development, administrators and an increasing percentage of the teaching staff are required to have written professional development plans as part of Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars at the two stars and higher levels (Appendix C, p.2). Quality indicators also include administration and teaching staff attending training on topics such as cultural competencies, inclusion, early learning standards and early childhood mental health (Appendix C, p.5).

Professional development standards for directors and staff are also quality indicators. These quality indicators include child care programs offering quarterly staff development activities, requiring teachers to complete five additional training hours above the current licensing requirement of 15 training hours/year, directors completing Program Administration Scale (PAS) training and developing improvement plans based on PAS or ERS assessments. Quality indicators can alternatively be achieved by completion of 21 college credits in management or business related courses, participation on early childhood committees and being a member of a national early childhood professional organization (Appendix C, p. 5). Directors also promote staff development by meeting Silver State Stars quality indicators of completing observations of teaching staff at least three times a year and providing staff with written feedback based on observations of teachers (Appendix C, p.5).

4. ***Family Engagement Strategies:*** Family engagement is promoted at all child care programs in Nevada. The Tiered Silver State Stars model includes numerous quality indicators related to the Strengthening Families approach to parent, family and community engagement.

Nevada's Silver State Stars model focuses on connecting family and community partners and addressing the special populations of children with high needs. Silver State Stars Family and Community Partners quality indicators include having parent teacher conferences on a regular basis, providing written program information for the families in their home language and having written procedures for helping families' transition children to the next classroom, program or school (Appendix C, p.7).

Additional quality indicators include having a written plan for family involvement, offering quarterly family involvement activities, and quarterly classes for parents. Child care programs can also meet quality indicators by having a parent advisory board, including parents on an advisory or governing board, and having procedures in place to receive family feedback on the program. These practices promote the six areas of the Parent and Family Engagement Framework which includes family well-being, parent connections to peers and community and intentional transitions (NCPFCE, Parent, Family and Community Practices and Outcomes). Administrators and teaching staff can also meet quality indicators by attending IEP/IFSP meetings with family and service providers.

5. ***Health Promotion Practices:*** The importance of health promotion practices is part of Nevada's licensing and Tiered Silver State Stars model. The Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) which is used for assessment and Silver State Stars star levels follows the latest health and safety practices from Caring for Our Children. Child care programs involved in Nevada's Silver State Stars are trained on health and safety practices such as personal care routines. During the 2011 Legislative session, SB 27 was passed, requiring employees of a child care facility to complete at least two hours of training each year related to nutrition, physical activity, and obesity prevention. Any individual working with infants or toddlers must complete training on SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and all child care staff are required to complete training requirements for recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect, CPR certification, and signs and symptoms of illness/blood borne pathogens within 90 days of employment.

Nevada's office of CACFP (Child Adult Care Food Program) recently facilitated the convergence of a panel of health, nutrition, and physical activity experts to create Wellness Guidelines for Nevada's child care centers and family child care homes. These guidelines

will be distributed to child care programs by the end of 2011. Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars model includes Health and Safety quality indicators that include having program menus evaluated by a nutritionist, supporting breastfeeding by offering a designated location and having a documented improvement plan based on a nutrition and physical activity self-assessment checklist (e.g. NAP-SACC or Let's Move child care checklists – Appendix C, p. 6). Several quality indicators address oral health and referring children in need of developmental or mental health services (p. 6). Nevada is also very interested in the social and emotional development of young children. Participation in the national TACSEI (Technical Assistance Center for Social Emotional Intervention) project led to including quality indicators related to the social emotional development of young children. These indicators include using the ASQ-SE to screen children's social emotional development, becoming a TACSEI Project demonstration site and having a documented plan based on the Inventory of Practices for Promoting Social Emotional Competence (p. 6).

6. ***Effective Data Practices:*** The Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy (NICRP) has been overseeing the collection of data in relationship to Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars pilot project. Data including Environmental Rating Scale scores have been collected and analyzed. The goal of Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars is to connect the level of program standards to the star quality levels. Nevada currently has a data warehouse with a searchable database of state reports. The *Nevada's Promise* plan includes the development of a statewide early childhood data collection system that would provide a depository for data collected on child and program outcomes from child care programs participating in Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars. Currently many programs such as Head Start, Title 1 and State Pre-K Programs are collecting data using assessments including ERS, CLASS, ELLCO (Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation), High Scope COR (Child Observation Record) and Teaching Strategies GOLD. The implementation of a statewide early learning data system would facilitate having existing and future data collection housed in one location.
- 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-*

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars has clear and measurable standards that differentiate program quality levels based on the required criteria (e.g. ERS scores) and the number of documented quality indicators (Appendix C). These standards reflect high expectations of program excellence. Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars model is an accreditation plus model. The highest star level of 5 requires the child care program to be National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited and meet additional standards for director qualifications, classroom group sizes and ratios and have a minimum average Environmental Rating Score (ERS) of 5.0 with no classroom score under 4.5. It has been well documented that higher quality programs have higher ERS scores and/or are NAEYC accredited. Other accreditations are accepted as a quality indicator under Policies and Procedures (Appendix C, p. 4). For several years, in the absence of a true statewide QRIS, 15% additional reimbursement from Nevada's Child Care and Development has been paid to accredited centers accepting children on the subsidy program.

*c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs-*

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars is linked to the state licensing system for ELD programs. The one star level requires a child care program to have a current child care license. Great care was taken during the development of Nevada Tiered Silver State Stars model not to duplicate but to enhance Nevada's child care licensing requirements. Many state licensing requirements are minimal; therefore the implementation of the Silver State Stars model is moving Nevada toward higher quality care and professionalism. Additionally, Child Care Licensing within the Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance (BHCQC) in the DHHS Health Division plans to advocate for graded licenses in the coming year. The administration agreed to issue joint license certificates that will indicate both the graded license and the star rating when the statewide tiered Silver State Stars is implemented.

**(B)(2) PROMOTING PARTICIPATION IN THE STATE'S TIERED QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM.**

**(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**



Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars is designed to maximize program participation by implementing effective policies and practices that will promote the participation of all ELD Program in the system. Representatives from State-funded preschool programs, Early Head Start, Head Start, and ELD Programs funded under section 619 of part B and C of IDEA, Title 1 of the ESEA and the State's CCDF programs have participated in the development of Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars and expressed support for full participation when Silver State Stars goes statewide. It is proposed that participation in Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars will become a mandatory requirement for receiving child care subsidies or quality set aside funding (programs to be phased in over a four year time frame).

One of the main objectives for promoting participation is to reduce the barriers and increase the incentives for participation. This in turn is anticipated to increase access to high quality ELD Programs for Children with High Needs. Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars will include programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start and State Pre-K programs by aligning Silver State Stars documentation with the comprehensive assessment system previously described.

Additionally, the Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance, which regulates licensed child care facilities in the state, will work with the Silver State Stars and other publicly monitored programs (such as Head Start and State Pre-Kindergarten) to eliminate duplication and increase effective monitoring practices. For example, the bureau has expressed willingness to eliminate some regularly scheduled inspections if Head Start grantees submit a letter from the Office of Head Start confirming compliance with all performance standards, since Head Start performance standards are far more stringent than licensing regulations. The top three star levels of Nevada's Silver State Stars model will receive higher tiered reimbursement rates (Appendix C, p.8).

During Nevada's pilot project, programs participating in Silver State Stars were provided with a quality improvement grant (ranging from \$4,000 to \$8,500) based on licensing capacity to purchase approved materials and equipment designed to increase the quality of the child care program. The ERS assessments were used to guide purchasing of developmentally appropriate materials and equipment. Nevada's Silver State Stars also included a one-time initial application bonus based on star level and an advancement bonus at renewal (See Appendix C, p. 8).

Technical assistance (training and coaching) was provided to programs participating in Nevada's

Silver State Stars. Coaches worked directly with directors and teaching staffs on a weekly basis for approximately six months on program improvement. The coaches facilitated the development of program and classroom improvement action plans and provided resources and supports to assist program staff in reaching goals for improvements.

It is proposed that during FY12 while the current Silver State Stars is in its final year of evaluation, the expanded Silver State Stars proposed herein to include the comprehensive assessment system will be revised as a contract opportunity for any public or private ELD program. Programs awarded these contracts would need to agree to participate in using, collecting and submitting data related to the assessment tools used. Technical assistance (TA) will be provided for using the assessment tools. TA would include coaching and specific training, including use of assessment tools. Successful contractors would propose how funding would be used to purchase equipment, pay and provide benefits for staff, use assessment data for continual program improvement, and serve children with high needs in their high quality environment at no or low cost to parents. The receipt of extended technical assistance would be based on a child care program personnel's ability to meet certain benchmarks (i.e. completion of program and classroom action plans). Benchmarks help to ensure that the child care program is moving forward and increasing in quality.

Programs reaching the top star levels (four stars and five stars) and accepting a higher percentage of subsidy children would be eligible to receive a higher amount of funding per child to maintain this high quality care. Additional expenses related to providing nutritious meals and transportation will be allowed. However, outreach will be done in communities where children with high needs reside to focus efforts on increasing access to high quality environments in their own communities.

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars model would be expanded to include family child care providers and family, friend, and neighbor care during the second year of this proposal.

**(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**

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars will implement 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. As stated in (B) (2) (a) contracted programs will ensure that parent co-pay requirements are not a barrier to participation at high quality centers. Identifying barriers to access requires further assessment in order to understand and prioritize needs. One practical strategy for increasing access is to increase the supply of high-quality child care programs in areas with high concentrations of children with high needs.

In the current Silver State Stars, child care programs at two stars or higher are required to serve children on the Child Care Subsidy Program. To increase child care placement stability it is proposed that the family eligibility determination period in Nevada be changed from six months to one year. Communities with high levels of children with high needs will be targeted for seeking contractors to provide high quality care. These targeted communities would be supported by outreach and technical assistance necessary to develop four or five star early childhood development programs during the second year of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (FY2013). Targeted centers would also be enrolled in the Nevada Accreditation Facilitation Project currently funded by Child Care and Development Quality dollars in order to obtain NAEYC accreditation.

**(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**

The current Silver State Stars pilot is already in progress. In order to complete the evaluation of this third pilot and develop the plan for integrating all ECDPs, no current QRIS participants will be counted as "participating" or receive funding through this application in the first year except for TA. Implementation of the revised tiered Silver State Stars to include all ECDPs will begin Fall 2012.

- 1) *State-funded preschool programs* – There are currently 11 state funded preschool programs. By the end of the second year three (30%) would participate; during the third year six (60%) would participate; and in the fourth year 10 (90%) would participate in Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars system.

- 2) ***Early Head Start and Head Start Programs*** – There are currently 11 Early Head Start and Head Start grantees in Nevada, most with multiple sites. One Head Start program participated in the pilot. By the end of the second year three (30%) would participate, by the end of the third year six (60%), and during the fourth year 10 (90%) would participate.
- 3) ***ELD Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA*** – There are currently nine programs funded by IDEA, Part C. By the end of the second year 5 (55%) would participate and all nine (100%) would participate by the end of the third year. There are 17 programs funded by IDEA, Part B. By the end of the second year three (30%) would participate; during the third year six (60%) would participate; and in the fourth year 10 (90%) would participate in Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars system.
- 4) ***ELD Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA***. There are 86 programs funded under Title 1. By the end of the second year 26 (30%) would participate, by the end of the third year 52 (60%) would participate and during the fourth year all 77 (90%) would participate.
- 5) ***ELD Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program***. There are 367 programs and an additional 297 family child care homes receiving subsidy funds. By the end of the second year 73 (20%) of programs would participate, by the end of the third year 147 (40%) of programs and 60 (20%) of family child care homes would participate and during the fourth year 220 (60%) and 60 (40%) of family child care homes would participate.

**Performance Measures for (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System**

| Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State | Number of programs in the State | Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System |   |                                  |   |                                    |     |                                   |     |                                   |     |
|---|---------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|-----------------------------------|-----|
|   |                                 | Baseline (Today)  |   | Target-end of calendar year 2012 |   | Target - end of calendar year 2013 |     | Target- end of calendar year 2014 |     | Target- end of calendar year 2015 |     |
|   |                                 | #   | % | #                                | % | #                                  | %   | #                                 | %   | #                                 | %   |
| State-funded preschool                                      | 11                              | 0   | 0 | 0                                | 0 | 3                                  | 30  | 6                                 | 60  | 10                                | 90  |
| Early Head Start and Head Start <sup>9</sup>                | 11                              | 0   | 0 | 0                                | 0 | 3                                  | 30  | 6                                 | 60  | 10                                | 90  |
| Programs funded by IDEA, Part C                             | 9                               | 0   | 0 | 0                                | 0 | 5                                  | 55  | 6                                 | 60  | 9                                 | 90  |
| Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619                | 17                              | 0   | 0 | 0                                | 0 | 5                                  | 30  | 10                                | 60  | 15                                | 90  |
| Programs funded under Title I of ESEA                       | 86                              | 0   | 0 | 0                                | 0 | 26                                 | 30  | 52                                | 60  | 77                                | 90  |
| Programs receiving from CCDF funds                          | 367                             | 0   | 0 | 0                                | 0 | 73                                 | 20% | 147                               | 40% | 220                               | 60% |
| Other- family child care home receiving CCDF                | 297                             | 0   | 0 | 0                                | 0 | 0                                  | 0   | 60                                | 20% | 120                               | 40% |

<sup>9</sup> Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

| funds Describe   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p>State Pre-kindergarten and Part B programs are operated by school districts. In Nevada, there are 17 counties, each one with its own school district. Ten school districts and one college have state pre-k grants. Part B Section 619 is operated by every school district. Some districts have one classroom, while the largest school district in the state, Clark County, operates multiple classrooms. Title I classrooms however, are counted by the number of classrooms, as declared by the Nevada Department of Education.</p> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**(B)(3) RATING AND MONITORING EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

**(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**

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars QRIS model currently used the Environmental Rating Scales (ITERS-R and ECERS-R) for assessing program quality. The Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) are valid and reliable tools for evaluating the global quality of child care programs. A level of inter-rater reliability above 85% on the ERS will be used by Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars. All ERS raters will be required to obtain a reliability level of 85% or higher. Raters will be monitored and periodically conduct parallel ERS assessments to ensure reliability is maintained. Once a network of strong raters is created, Nevada's Silver State Stars will move toward exact reliability of raters.

The second valid and reliable tool that will be used to assess programs is CLASS. The same model will be followed to ensure rater reliability for this tool. The level of acceptability for inter-rater reliability will also be set at 85% with a movement toward exact reliability of raters. CLASS raters will be monitored and provided training and support. Additionally, training for all early childhood educators and programs will be available at low or no cost in all assessment tools comprising Nevada's comprehensive assessment system.

Child care programs participating in Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars will be required to be reevaluated every two years. Strong communication channels will be developed with child care

licensing. If a program experiences a significant change (e.g. new owner), licensing will inform the QRIS management team of the change. To ensure accuracy with regard to data entry, initially double data entry will be used until an accuracy level of 95% or higher is obtained and then thereafter 30% of the data will be double checked.

**(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs 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**

Parents will be provided with information on Silver State Stars star level ratings at child care program sites. As Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars becomes statewide, community roll out events will be planned to increase parent and community awareness. Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars has a strong taskforce of over 40 members from community organizations and child care programs that will initiate the promotion of public awareness of Nevada's Silver State Stars. Public service announcements and news releases will share information on Silver State Stars. Programs participating in Silver State Stars will proudly display their joint license indicating both their graded licensing level and their star rating. Flyers on the Tiered Silver State Stars will be available for parents at child care and community sites.

Workshops on Silver State Stars will be presented at programs targeting children with high needs such as Head Start, Early Head Start, state Pre-K, Nevada Early Intervention Services, and the Subsidy Program. All programs will be given information to share with families. All of the information will be presented in English and Spanish (4th grade reading level) as Nevada has a high percentage of Spanish-speaking families. A Silver State Stars website using a format that is easily accessible will be publicly available for parents to access and will include information in English and Spanish. The website will include the current star levels of each program participating in Silver State Stars. Information on Silver State Stars and the difference between each of the star levels will be included. The website will include FAQ and have an option for parents to ask questions about Silver State Stars, and will link to the licensing website. The Child Care Resources and Referral websites will also include links to the Silver State Stars

website and resource and referral specialists will share information on the Silver State Stars with parents inquiring about child care options.

**(B)(4) PROMOTING ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS**

**(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve**

Nevada is developing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for ELD Programs and Early Childhood Educators to continuously improve. Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars will support reasonable proposals to pay staff livable wages at parity with school districts depending on degrees earned, classroom (CLASS), program (ERS scores) and child outcomes. As mentioned in (B) (2) (a), quality improvement of child care programs is an essential component of Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars as child care programs are provided with training, coaching, other technical assistance, financial incentives and higher subsidy reimbursement rates for eligible children. All directors of child care centers involved in Silver State Stars are required to attend a three-hour orientation and seven-hour training that covers documentation requirements for each of the star levels and an overview of the ERS rating scales. Lead teachers are required to attend a six-hour training on coaching, creating classroom action plans and understanding the ERS.

Administrators and teaching staff can meet quality indicators by completing specific training requirements. Mini-conferences are periodically offered to child care program staff to provide them with a venue for completing specific quality indicator training requirements (e.g. inclusion training). Silver State Stars child care programs can request additional training based on program needs and interests (e.g. setting up a quality environment, introducing new materials). Child care programs involved in the Silver State Stars are given technical assistance and coaching. A coach visits a child care program weekly to guide and facilitate the completion of program and classroom improvement action plans. Action plans are data driven and include measureable outcomes. The action plans are developed collaboratively by the coaches and child care directors and teachers based on the results of ERS assessments and program priorities.



During Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars pilot project, sites that received coaching demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in child care center ERS scores. Coaching resulted in substantive changes in classroom environments that improved the flow of children in the classrooms and decreased behavior problems. Interest areas were added to classrooms to support developmentally appropriate practices. Commercial displays were replaced with displays at the child's eye level and included photos of families, process artwork and representations of diversity. Classroom schedules were modified to increase child engagement and increases in age-appropriate materials were purchased with Silver State Stars program improvement grants.

Higher levels of tiered reimbursement are currently part of Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars plan. Programs at the three stars level receive a six% increase, four stars level receive a 9% increase and five stars level a 12% increase (Appendix C, p. 8).

**(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**

Successful contracting early childhood development programs will demonstrate how their program will support working families who have children with high needs. Through Nevada's Child Care Resource and Referral system families will be helped in finding programs that meet their specific needs. Many program such as Early Head Start and Head Start offer full day, full year programs. School districts transport children with disabilities to and from programs. Meals are provided to children during hours of care and the state has a strong Child and Adult Food Program that provides funding to child care programs for meals and snacks. Linkages have been formed with child care programs to provide families with information on community family support services. Programs such as Head Start routinely do mental health screenings and Nevada mental health offers mental health consultation services to any child care program requesting services.

Once the final structure of Nevada's comprehensive assessment system including a common kindergarten entry assessment are established, competitive contracts to begin implementation in the Fall of 2012 will include requirements to describe how full-day, full-year care, transportation

meals and family supports will be provided. Guidelines will be developed in alignment with these priorities for those competitive contracts.

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

*(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers:*

The target goals for the number of ELD Programs in the top two tiers (four and five stars) of Nevada's Silver State Stars are as follows:

| Year 1-         | Year 2-        | Year 3-         | Year 4-         |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 10% of programs | 15% of program | 18% of programs | 20% of programs |

The overall target for Nevada's Silver State Stars at the end of the four year Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge period will be to have 20 to 25% of all programs in the top two tiers. An additional 30% of programs will be targeted for the three stars level.

*(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:*

The percentage of children with high needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs in the top two tiers will be as follows, based on the total known numbers who are currently served and the projections for percentage of programs as listed previously:

- Year 1- 10,233- 10%
- Year 2- 15,350- 15%
- Year 3- 18,420- 18%
- Year 4- 20,467- 20%

**(B)(5) VALIDATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STATE TIERED QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM**

*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 QRIS 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**

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars will validate its model using research-based measures to determine differential levels of program quality. The level of required ERS scores at the three stars and higher levels is one factor that differentiates the top three levels. Using an accreditation-plus model also helps to ensure higher quality at the top tier as research has demonstrated that higher quality is connected to NAEYC accredited sites. An evaluation of the Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars model will be conducted to validate that the different star levels equate to different levels of quality.

An external evaluator will develop a plan using the early childhood data collection system developed as part of this proposal. The researcher will use data from the comprehensive assessment system to measure increased quality of early childhood environments, teacher child interactions, screenings, and child outcomes as indicated by formative assessments. Finally, kindergarten entry assessment will be used to see whether the new system improves skills of children at kindergarten entry.

Nevada will conduct a needs assessment to determine current kindergarten entry assessment tools used across the state. An inclusive planning process to select or develop an assessment that can be used statewide aligning with ELD standards and covering all essential domains of school readiness will be conducted during the first year of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge. Data to be collected will include child and family demographics, educator information, preschool program-level data, child-level program participation and attendance data. The data will be entered into the statewide early learning database and then an analysis will be conducted to determine the correlation between child kindergarten readiness and attendance at early learning programs. This data will be used to further validate the differentiation of Nevada's Silver State Stars star levels. Uniform data collection will facilitate the generation of timely and relevant information for programs and educators.

**(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.**

Appropriate research designs and measures of progress will demonstrate the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development and school readiness. This process will involve a longitudinal approach to data collection on both participating centers as well as the children in those centers. The Nevada Department of Education will assist with assigning children unique identifiers that will follow them throughout their school career and enable longitudinal data collection. The expectation would be that as centers improve their overall quality and move up in their star rating within the tiered system, children in those centers would also demonstrate increased gains in measures of school readiness, learning and development.

Early Childhood Development Programs will be required to participate in the evaluation and as part of their contract. The participating centers would agree to participate in a longitudinal study which would allow children in their center to be given assessments related to school readiness, learning, and development at regular intervals to measure student improvement over time. These assessments could be given to all children at the start and end of each academic year – or could be staggered to be administered when children enroll in the center and then again after nine months of full time attendance. At the same time the center would work to improve overall quality in the center with the goal of improving their star rating.

At the end of a three year period the centers would be re-assessed and assigned a new star rating. Gains in outcomes for children in the centers from year to year would then be measured against improvements in the center's overall star rating to understand whether the center's improvement really did translate into improved gains for children in those centers. Even incremental improvements in center quality could be measured if centers did not improve by a full star level. This study would require an extensive commitment from these early learning centers and therefore would require incentives for centers, teachers, and parents to continue to participate over time. Contracting centers would demonstrate how they would use funding to address all of these components, while also using the comprehensive assessment system tools. In addition, the study would require someone trained in administering the assessment tools to be available to

complete assessments for children at these regular intervals to reduce the burden on participating centers.

## **SECTION C: PROMOTING EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN**

### **(C)(1) DEVELOPING AND USING STATEWIDE, HIGH-QUALITY EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.**

The Nevada Pre-K Standards found in Appendix A describe appropriate outcomes for children at the end of their preschool experiences and entering kindergarten. The Nevada Pre-K Standards were recently revised and approved in June 2010. A draft version of the Nevada Early Learning Guidelines for zero to 3 has also been developed that are aligned accordingly. These standards provide a framework for curriculum and instruction for all of Nevada's early childhood classrooms. As noted in the Standards, "Recent information about children's development and learning underscores the importance of high-quality early education and care. Research has revealed overwhelming evidence that young children are learning from their earliest months and years. We know that high-quality educational experiences have a positive impact on learning in later years. In addition, research has shown that young children who live in circumstances that increase their risk of school failure are much more likely to be successful in school if they participate in high-quality early learning programs."

The revised standards include the content standards as well as resources and materials that were previously printed in teacher and family guidebooks as separate documents. These guidebooks have now been integrated into a more user-friendly, single document that was developed to meet the needs of teachers, parents, and early childhood professionals.

The Pre-K Content Standards are guidelines for teachers and other adults to use when developing learning experiences for young children that are grounded in the following guiding principles:

- Children are Active Learners

- Development and Learning are Interrelated
- Growth and Learning are Sequential
- Each Child is an Individual learner
- Development and Learning are Embedded in Culture
- Family Involvement is Necessary
- Children's Learning can be Clarified, Enriched, and Extended

These principles align with Strengthening Families as well as the acknowledgement of the need for linguistically and culturally appropriate care that meets the unique needs of the child. The content standards are used for planning curriculum, assessing growth and development, and for sharing important information with families. These were created through a joint effort supported by the NDE's Office of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement Programs, aligning with the NV K-12 Content Standards, as well as the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) where the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program is housed.

**(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**

The importance of maintaining culturally and linguistically appropriate standards that are matched to a child's development are referenced in the Standard's "Culture, Diversity, and Language" section. This is a critical component to addressing school readiness in a context relevant for the growing diverse population in Nevada. Early childhood programs that model acceptance and respect of a child's native language will help them to feel more included in the classroom. A program that supports the use of a child's home language sends the message that their culture is important while exposing them to an enriched bilingual environment. Currently, Nevada State Pre-K programs include 50% of children enrolled having limited English skills. Almost 40% of children enrolled in Early Head Start and Head Start programs in Nevada have a primary language other than English spoken at home. Therefore, this focus and using appropriate curriculum and support for these standards as it relates to diverse language and culture are

essential.

**(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**

As the research confirms children's readiness for school is multi-faceted, encompassing the whole range of physical, social, emotional, and cognitive skills that children need to succeed. Nevada's Pre-K Standards and Early Learning Guidelines have been aligned with the National Education Goals Panel recommended five domains of children's early development and learning that define school readiness: *Health and Physical Development; Social/Emotional; Approaches to Learning-Creative Arts; Communicative Skills-Language and Early Literacy; and Cognition & General Knowledge-Math & Science*. Nevada's Early Learning Standards also have expanded content headings to align with the revised K-12 standards.

A crosswalk is currently being developed to align the revised Pre-K Standards with the new Common Core Standards in literacy and mathematics. This work will be supported through the Nevada State Literacy Plan and Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy grant. The *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative will focus on the elements of effective literacy and language instruction to include:

1. *Curricula and instruction materials* (including those which incorporate technology and early language development) that (a) align to CCSS and Nevada Pre-K Standards, (b) adhere to principles of effective instruction, and (c) incorporate technology with universal design.
2. *A coherent computer-based assessment system* that includes: (a) valid and reliable screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring measures that are aligned to the CCSS; (b) easy access to and use of data; and (c) accommodations for students with special needs.
3. *Job-embedded professional development* provided by implementation specialists/literacy coaches assigned to each school (minimum 1 FTE specialist per site) whose primary duties will be to train and support teachers in (a) implementation of specified curricula and instructional materials with a high degree of fidelity; (b) all of the components of effective literacy instruction; (c) use of specified assessment protocols and resulting data to support instructional decisions; and (d) how to use instructional technology to effect systemic and

effective improvement in teaching and learning.

4. *Data-Based Decision-Making (DBDM) Literacy Teams* in each school to: (a) support continuous improvement; (b) monitor program implementation and outcomes at the student, classroom, grade, and school levels; and (c) identify professional development needs.
5. *Multi-leveled, evidence-based intervention and remediation programs* based on student needs that are informed by continual monitoring of data documented student progress.

Training for implementing these elements will be provided to teachers of children from birth to third grade, to assist in continuity of curricular implementation across the child's early school years. This will ease transition from early childhood classrooms into schools.

**(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**

Incorporating ELD Standards throughout program standards, curricula and activities, comprehensive assessments systems, and the state's workforce knowledge and competency framework are key components to Nevada's professional development initiatives. In October 2010, seven representatives from Nevada attended the *Pre-K-grade 3: Foundation for Educational Success Institute* at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Nevada entities represented included the NDE, Washoe and Clark County School Districts (WCSD, CCSD), and DHHS. The institute focused on four important drivers of early learning foundations, including: (1) instructional quality and effectiveness; (2) language, literacy, and early math; (3) social-emotional behaviors and climates; and (4) family engagement. The attendees developed a mission and vision plan for Nevada which included increased collaboration, communication, determination of data collection tools and reporting systems, and professional development. This plan is an integral component of the Nevada State Literacy Plan, found in Appendix M. Also the work of The Nevada Registry which is currently mandatory for all child care programs supports the work of an integrated professional development system and standards for all early childhood professionals.

**(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.**

The work of implementing the statewide Silver State Stars system will help ensure that all early childhood programs are included in these initiatives including but not limited to early intervention, early childhood special education, NV State Pre-K, local Head Start and Early Head Start programs, and child care. Also supporting the facilitation of this collaboration across programs is the work of the State Early Childhood Advisory Council and Nevada State Literacy Team which includes all appropriate representatives.

**(C)(2) SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE USES OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

Nevada's plan to develop a comprehensive assessment system builds on tools already commonly used by ELD Programs, but for which no statewide coordinated data collection system currently exists. The comprehensive assessment system that Nevada proposes to develop will include screening measures, formative assessments, measures of environmental quality as well as measures of the quality of adult-child interactions. A key goal of the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council is that early childhood educators receive professional development to ensure quality services for all children. Using the comprehensive assessment system described in the table below, data collected from use of the instruments will guide planning efforts for targeted training and quality improvement efforts at the site level where children are directly served, at the community level (especially those with the most children with high needs) and statewide.

The following table indicates the type of assessment, the tool or tools to be used, and the status of implementation at this time.

| <b>Assessment Type</b> | <b>Tool</b>                                      | <b>Status</b>   |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Screening Measures     | Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) and ASQ-SE | Most Head Start and Early Head Start grantees report using the ASQ-3, as do demonstration sites for the Technical Assistance Center for Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI). This will be integrated into the statewide coordinated early childhood data system proposed in section E. |
| Formative              | No Consensus                                     | Many Head Start grantees are using Teaching   |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Assessments   |   | Strategies Gold, as are a number of state-funded Pre-K programs. However, state-funded Pre-K programs are only required to collect data on Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) and the Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT). Part B 619 programs can choose from a list of five (including the TSG) and Part C is using the Hawaii Early Learning Profile. A study will be conducted to see which tools are most commonly used. It will then be determined whether it makes sense in Nevada to choose one tool or whether a list of options with key data elements can be connected to the coordinated statewide early childhood data collection system. |
| Measures of Environmental Quality                   | Environmental Rating Scales - assessment instruments for early childhood and child care program quality (ERS) | The Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) and the Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS-R) have been the foundation for the Silver State Stars QRIS pilot since its inception. As revisions have been made to the Silver State Stars structure after each year of implementation, the ERS remain an important, reliable and valid structural component of the system. This will be integrated into the statewide coordinated early childhood data system proposed in section E.   |
| Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions | Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)   | Head Start grantees are using this tool, as is at least one state-funded Pre-K program in Nevada. Trainings on using the tool have been offered across the state. UNR Early Head Start was one of the primary sites filmed during development of training videos for teaching use of the infant and toddler CLASS tool. Use of the CLASS will be integrated into the Silver State Stars QRIS and P-3 pilots in school districts implementing them. This will be integrated into the statewide coordinated early childhood data system proposed in section E.  |
| Measure of Development of the Five Protective       | Strengthening Families Family Protective Factors  | Once other assessment tools have been finalized, the ECAC will implement the Protective Factors to measure the development  |

|         |        |   |
|---------|--------|---|
| Factors | Survey | of protective factors for families with young children. |
|---------|--------|---|

**(a) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target populations and purposes**

Multiple assessments are used by Early Childhood Educators at this time. Part B 619 providers can choose from a list of five child assessment instruments including: Teaching Strategies Gold; the Brigance; the Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS); Get it Got it Go; and the Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC). Nevada Early Intervention Services (NEIS) uses the Hawaii Early Learning Profile statewide as both a screening and child outcome measure. NEIS is piloting the AEPS, which is also used by UNR Early Head Start, one of ten recently designated Centers of Excellence in the nation. The most recently adopted state licensing regulations include a requirement that licensed early childhood educators assess an enrolled child's development within three months after enrollment and biannually thereafter (pg. 21 Revised Adopted Regulation R032-07).

Building on this support for using child assessment tools to guide program planning, the ECAC will sponsor a needs assessment to determine which child assessment tools are being used and study the feasibility of either having one child assessment tool linked to one kindergarten assessment tool, and integrating data tracking for both within NDE's longitudinal data collection system. Optionally, a list of approved validated reliable assessment tools such as that developed by the ECSE Part B 619 program may be linked to key elements that are linked to determinants of school readiness domains.

The Five Protective Factors survey will be used by ELD providers. Many ELD providers already use the protective factors survey developed by Strengthening Families. Sponsoring statewide use of the Strengthening Families framework will validate and build upon the strengths already present in their setting. One local ECAC covering three Nevada counties has already formally adopted the Framework in its strategic plan. By surveying families served throughout Nevada in ELD settings on the Five Protective Factors, families and programs will have a common vocabulary for talking about essential issues that impact success as well as life-long learning.

The first year will be spent building the data collection system based on the confirmed assessment instruments described in the table above. The feasibility study regarding the use of one statewide formative assessment tool and/or identification of key data elements across a list of approved formative assessment tools will be conducted simultaneously. By December of 2012, the exact structure and data collection system will be designed. Implementation will begin in January 2013 in Washoe and Clark counties.

**(b) Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to strengthen Early Childhood Educators' understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment System**

Young children spend much of their time in ELD programs, and numerous studies show the quality of those programs significantly impacts their lives. ECE educators in Nevada understand that experiences in ELD programs affect the emotional, social and self-regulatory development of all children. Early Childhood state programs including Early Intervention Services, Part B 619, State Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start State Collaboration Project, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems, Early Childhood Mental Health, Early Childhood Advisory Council and the University Center for Excellence in Disabilities have partnered to support statewide implementation of the TACSEI project, using the Center for Social Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CSEFEL) Pyramid Model to improve the single most important factor in quality; the relationship between the child and the caregiver. ECE Educators across the state also recognize that other important components of quality are: consistent care-giving, continuous monitoring of all aspects of the ELD program, professional training, and health and safety regulations and standards. Standardized assessment tools can help identify health and safety needs, and help target interventions.

The School Readiness Summit is the first planned event to work with early childhood educators to raise understanding of the purposes and uses of the Comprehensive Assessment Tools on which Nevada's Comprehensive Assessment System is being built. The event, which will occur in 2012 and annually thereafter, will orient participants to how the ECERS-R, CLASS, Five Protective Factors Survey, and ASQ-3 help them meet their children and family's needs. Training sessions on several commonly used formative assessments will also be provided, and conversations regarding the pros and cons of the various formative assessment tools currently

used will be launched at this event. Subsequent training and targeted technical assistance will be collaboratively co-sponsored to deepen learning. Since the commitment has been made to using Environmental Rating Scales, Ages and Stages Questionnaire, the Protective Factors Survey, and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, training will begin around those as soon as possible.

The Nevada Registry tracks training for ELD programs regulated by child care licensing. In 2010, only 103 out of 3,193 or 3% of trainings focused on Core Knowledge Area Observation and Assessment. ECE faculty at Nevada State Higher Education (NSHE) institutions addresses use of appropriate assessment tools in at least one course in each degree program. Higher education faculty agreed during the planning of this proposal to integrate information and practice using the tools in Nevada's Comprehensive Assessment System into degree coursework. Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge funding will be used to develop training approved by The Nevada Registry for licensed providers that links to college coursework. Content and delivery of informal training will be planned and/or approved by higher education faculty so it can link to credit later as those beginning in the field decide to pursue degrees.

In addition to the use of performance contracting and incentives, Nevada will incorporate multiple professional development and in-service opportunities for educators and program administrators to learn how to determine what to teach to whom (curriculum), and to measure whether or not children are learning and developing to expectations.

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

A phased-in approach will be developed during the first year of this grant to assign all children participating in licensed or publicly funded ELD programs including home visiting a unique state identifier that links to the K-12 longitudinal data system. During the first year of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, the NDE and DHHS will work together as committed to in the MOU found in Appendix E of this application to determine exactly how best to proceed. It is anticipated that the infrastructure plan for this data collection system would be developed in the first eighteen months (2012/13). In the latter half of the second year, infrastructure development will be initiated, followed by a pilot by the end of year three and statewide implementation in

year four. This timeline enables each participating agency to include ongoing funding for the system in state budget and federal allocation commitments beginning in Year five.

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

The first statewide professional development opportunity designed to train early childhood educators on the use of the ERS, CLASS, Five Protective Factors Survey and ASQ-3 will be held in January 2012, as part of a School Readiness Summit already committed to using ECCS funding. Thereafter, training and technical assistance activities will be supported for all publicly funded programs both administratively at the state level and through local contracts. State and local Early Childhood Advisory Councils will work collaboratively to co-sponsor training events around the tools comprising Nevada's comprehensive assessment system. Since the commitment has been made to using Environmental Rating Scales, Ages and Stages Questionnaire, and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System, local training will begin around those as soon as possible. Once the specific formative assessment tool(s) are determined, targeted training will be incorporated regularly as part of sponsored training events, such as those that have been historically offered through the ECCS and NevAEYC. Subsequent training will revolve around the Strengthening Families Framework and the survey used to measure development of the Five Protective Factors.

**(C)(3) IDENTIFYING AND ADDRESSING THE HEALTH, BEHAVIORAL, AND DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS TO IMPROVE SCHOOL READINESS.**

As indicated in Section A, Nevada has been awarded the Center for Social Emotional Intervention and Expanding Opportunities Technical Assistance grants in recent years. Those projects are being implemented currently with support from national technical assistance providers jointly funded by the federal DHHS and the Department of Education. This grant award will support and blend with current efforts to develop plan for sustainability and integration of these systems to support children with developmental delays, behavioral challenges and special needs find and remain in high quality care.

**Key Activities:**

- Support statewide implementation of the Expanding Opportunities project by creating a sub-committee of the Early Childhood Advisory Council.
- Support statewide implementation of the Technical Assistance Center for Social Emotional Intervention built on the pyramid model of social emotional supports (see figure).



Nevada's participation in the TACSEI project led to including quality indicators related to the social emotional development of young children in the Silver State Stars QRIS. These indicators include using the ASQ-SE to screen children's social emotional development, becoming a TACSEI Project demonstration site and having a documented plan based on the Inventory of Practices for Promoting Social Emotional Competence.

**(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**

Nevada is making headway toward establishing a progression of health standards that align with its ELD program standards. The State BHCQC and the Silver State Stars program will combine efforts to implement a graded and star rated license to appropriately addresses health and safety standards; developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up; health promotion including healthy eating habits, improved nutrition, and increased physical activity; oral health; and social and emotional development; and health literacy among parents and

children. The bureau has begun issuing graded licenses for groups it regulates in recent years and has seen a tremendous jump in compliance rates as a result. Once confirmed, the jointly issued license will include both the grade (A to D) and the Silver State Stars rating (1-5). Both grade and star rating will appear on the same certificate to hang on the wall of the licensed facility.

Recent research<sup>10</sup> shows that children of engaged families are more likely to be successful in school and in life. In response to these findings, schools and community-based organizations have designed and implemented a variety of family strengthening models designed to increase families' abilities to guide their children's learning and create networks of support. Of these, the Strengthening Families Framework is responsive to the criteria spelled out in the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge in that it facilitates children's social and emotional development. Nevada has therefore elected to work with early childhood programs across the state to incorporate Strengthening Families' Five Protective Factors into a progression of program standards. Specific strategies to incorporate these standards will include the use of the ASQ-3 as a tool to ensure health and behavioral screening. Ensuring health and safety and promoting social and emotional development can be accomplished by intervening to:

**FACILITATING FRIENDSHIPS AND MUTUAL SUPPORT:** Strengthening Families offers many opportunities for parents to get to know one another, develop mutual support systems and take leadership. Strategies to accomplish this include sports teams, potlucks, classes, camping trips and field trips, advisory groups, board leadership and volunteer opportunities. Additionally, special outreach to fathers and extended family members is important to the success of this strategy.

**STRENGTHENING PARENTING:** The Strengthening Families framework offers many ways for parents to get support on parenting issues when they needed it. This may be through a class or a support group, opportunities to meet with teachers, family support workers or other staff,

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10 Halgunseth, L. C. (2009). *Family Engagement, Diverse Families, and Early Childhood Education Programs: An Integrated Review of the Literature*. Retrieved 2010 1, October , from National Association for the Education of Young Children: <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/research/FamEngage.pdf>



through home visits or from resources from a lending library. Most programs have classroom designs or technology that allows parents to observe their children easily. Both parents and staff describe the importance of the everyday opportunities at the centers for parents to understand their children's behavior and respond to it more effectively.

**RESPONDING TO FAMILY CRISES:** In addition to day-to-day contact between teachers and parents that help develop good relationships and support parents every day, the Strengthening Families framework offers extra support to families when they needed it through designated family support workers or other staff who have the time, training, and expertise to connect families to the support they needed. This is particularly important when families face illnesses, job loss, housing problems, and other issues, many of which are impacting Nevada's families today.

**LINKING FAMILIES TO SERVICES AND OPPORTUNITIES:** Strengthening Families offers parents links to job training, education, health providers and other essential services through their networks in the community. Additionally, this framework recommends that, if possible, an ELD program have a family support worker on staff that can help assess family needs and goals and connect families to services and supports. The framework also recommends having a mental health consultant onsite to help parents and staff work effectively with children who had been excluded from previous programs for challenging behavior, and to help de-stigmatize mental health services for children, parents, and staff.

**VALUING AND SUPPORTING PARENTS:** Because the relationship between parents and teachers is essential to the programs' ability to connect with parents, support, training, and supervision of teachers to help them build this relationship effectively is very important. Program leaders are involved in many day-to-day activities and are very accessible to staff and parents. Teaching staff, both male and female, are encouraged to take initiative in their relationships with families and address concerns when they arise, and know that they have back-up from supervisors and other staff within the program.

**FACILITATING CHILDREN'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Many programs that incorporate the Strengthening Families framework use "I Can Problem Solve,"

“Second Step” or some other curriculum focused on helping children articulate their feelings and get along with others. As a result, parents in many of programs have described how the curriculum influenced their perspectives on their children and their behavior toward the child when children brought home what they learned in the classroom. By promoting children’s health social and emotional development, children learn how to express themselves and advocate for their feelings and needs. This also enhances relationships between parents and their children and strengthens parenting.

**OBSERVING AND RESPONDING TO EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT:** All programs train and support staff to observe children carefully and respond at the first sign of any difficulty. Strengthening Families uses indicators such as frequent absences, missing payments, late pick-ups, or signs of parental stress as opportunities to proactively reach out to families and connect them with family support or other services. Special protocols for child abuse or neglect reporting allow programs to provide continuity and support for families that are the subject of reports. Parents at several programs have attested to the effectiveness of this strategy with personal stories of how the programs had helped them alter situations that were dangerous for children and still continue to be involved with the program. Most programs also develop ongoing relationships with staff at Child Protective Services to ensure that children were safe and parents got the services they needed.

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

The assurance that basic health and safety standards are being met by ELD programs is an essential step toward creating more high-quality learning opportunities. *Nevada's Promise* will build stronger alignment between the State Health Division, which is responsible for ensuring the basic health and safety standards of licensed family child care homes and centers, and statewide ECE professional development activities. Additionally, current licensing protocols will be reviewed and modified as appropriate in order to streamline the process for obtaining licenses, including the possibility of allowing local agencies to conduct licensing reviews and site visits to support the state system. The tables found in Section A of this proposal outline the existing and projected numbers and percentages of ECE providers who receive training and support in

meeting the health standards. The plan to strengthen data collection is found in Section E.

The importance of health promotion practices is part of Nevada's licensing and Tiered Silver State Stars model. The Environmental Rating Scales (ERS) which is used for assessment and QRIS star levels follows the latest health and safety practices from Caring for Our Children. Child care programs involved in Nevada's Silver State Stars are trained on health and safety practices such as personal care routines. Licensed child care providers are required to complete a minimum of two hours of training each year on topics related to nutrition, physical activity, and obesity prevention. Any individual working with infants or toddlers must complete training on SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and all child care staff are required to complete training requirements for recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect, CPR and signs and symptoms of illness/blood borne pathogens within 90 days of employment.

Nevada's office of CACFP (Child Adult Care Food Program) recently facilitated the convergence of a panel of health, nutrition, and physical activity experts to create Wellness Guidelines for Nevada's child care centers and family child care homes. These guidelines will be distributed to child care programs by the end of 2011. Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars model includes Health and Safety quality indicators that include having program menus evaluated by a nutritionist, supporting breastfeeding by offering a designated location and having a documented improvement plan based on a nutrition and physical activity self-assessment checklist (i.e. NAP-SACC or Let's Move child care checklists – Appendix B, p. 6). Several quality indicators address oral health and referring children in need of developmental or mental health services.

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

Childhood obesity is a health concern across the country and is related to physical activity as well as to nutrition. Unfortunately, national and Nevada studies indicate that many child care programs are poor to mediocre, and such programs may have long-term negative consequences for children in our state. Given the multi-dimensional causes of childhood obesity, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension's (UNCE) educational programs are composed of a group of efforts under the Childhood Obesity Prevention in Nevada (COPIN) umbrella. The prevalence of childhood obesity has dramatically increased nationwide. The underlying causes are many,

ranging from genetic propensity to socioeconomic, cultural and environmental influences resulting in unhealthful eating and physical activity practices. A person's relationship with food and physical activity begins in infancy and is molded during childhood. It goes beyond food selection, preferences and quantity. It goes to the very core of adult-child interactions based on either trust (potentially supportive) or control (potentially damaging).

No one program can achieve the overarching goal to reduce the incidence of childhood obesity; thus, the issue is addressed with a multi-pronged approach. The UNCE educational efforts focus on adults who directly feed children (e.g., parents or childcare providers) or those who work with these adults (health professionals). These programs facilitate adults in incorporating feeding strategies that will prevent childhood overweight. Other Nevada efforts include:

**Enough is Enough** is a program that demonstrates the appropriate portion sizes for young children to parents through a visual teaching tool. Tummy Talks, a children's storybook relating the concept of self-regulation of food intake to preschool children, was completed and pilot tested; 25,000 copies were printed.

**TV Moves Me** is a program that encourages parents to limit the time children watch television and increase the time spent engaged in physical activity. Field testing was conducted with 40 English-speaking low-income mothers of 55 preschoolers. Slightly over half were of Hispanic descent. Almost two-thirds reported that their preschooler watched more than the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommended daily limit of two hours. It took most parents between 4 1/2 to 5 minutes to read the entire book (including the parents' pages) about being active, the importance of exercise and fitness and viewing less TV.

**Nurturing Partners** concepts are taught in schools and homes. UNCE staff facilitates changes in knowledge, attitudes and practices of teens regarding nutrition, health and parenting issues. The lessons include making healthful food and nutrition choices, maternal health care, infant care skills, child development, personal development and financial and home management. Teens (ages 10 to 19) were selected because of the high birth rate in this population in Nevada. The staff works in alternative high schools to bring core program elements to parents or prospective parents. Weekly classes have been presented to more than 5,200 teens at 11 schools.

Home visitations continue to support the most vulnerable pregnant teens.

**Follow My Lead** teaches Pre-K standards to child caregivers. University of Nevada Cooperative Extension piloted the state's first child care workshop that explained the Pre-K Standards to caregivers and connected workshop content/activities for children with the standards, which describe outcomes for children and the need to be ready to enter kindergarten. Pre-Kindergarten Education Standards for Physical Development for infants and toddlers as well as preschool-aged children were incorporated into the curriculum.

In addition to these, federal initiatives are being included in local Head Start and child care programs. Almost all Head Start grantees have trained staff in the I Am Moving, I Am Learning curriculum. Child Care programs have been learning about First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move Child Care initiative as well.

**(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 or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program, and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA;*
- (2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up*
- (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.*

According to the 2010 US Census Bureau, there are 681,033 children in Nevada with pre-existing health conditions that pose unique challenges to their ability to succeed in school if left untreated or unmanaged. Approximately 39% of Nevada children did not have medical and dental preventive care visits in the last year. (Kaiser Family Foundation). In recognition of the special vulnerability of these children, Nevada has several initiatives and efforts underway that will be leveraged to meet its goals for increasing the number of children with high needs who are screened, referred, and enrolled in appropriate health care services as part of a developmentally appropriate schedule of well-child care. These are described below, and the specific performance measures related to Nevada's goals for increasing these numbers can be found in Table

C(3)(d).

eHIE: Nevada has just begun implementation of its Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC)-approved State Health IT Plan, which includes establishing the statewide electronic Health Information Exchange system (eHIE) to support the adoption of electronic health records and their meaningful use. Improving public health is a focus area, and, for Nevada, this means utilizing eHIE to improve the immunization rates of children, ages 12 to 36 months, to be at or relatively near national averages for the respective cohorts. eHIE can ensure that data is captured from all points of immunization access, and help to identify at risk children/populations. In addition, accurate, real-time data capture can help to reduce occurrences of over-immunization. During 2012, Nevada expects to convene a workgroup comprised of key stakeholders, who will assist with establishing clear goals and formulating the specific strategies and tactics for success. Other options for tracking screening data will be discussed and integrated as well.

EPSDT and PEDS: The Early Periodic Screenings Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) mandate in Medicaid requires states to conduct regularly scheduled screens of all Medicaid- eligible recipients under the age of 22 to identify physical and mental health problems. If a problem is detected and diagnosed, treatment must include any federally authorized Medicaid service, whether or not the service is covered under the state plan. If problems are suspected, an "interperiodic" screen is also required so the child need not wait for the next regularly scheduled checkup.

Parents universally report that their child's pediatrician is the first place they look to for help with behavioral health concerns (in addition to physical health issues). However, according to a workgroup convened in Nevada to address this issue, they are repeatedly frustrated by the physician's failure to diagnose and refer them for services. Early Periodic Screenings Diagnosis and Treatment in conjunction with PEDS (Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status) are tools to be implemented as part of a routine screening protocol for children from birth to age eight. This includes community-wide training on the importance of using EPSDTs for early education staff, mental health consultants, pediatricians and other primary care providers throughout the state. ECAC will work with the provider community to institute a communication

loop that ensures that information related to screening results is appropriately exchanged between early care staff and primary care providers, so that necessary referrals and follow-up occur in a seamless manner.

In conjunction with EPSDT, PEDS was selected based on the following criteria: rapid administration, acceptance by parents, age specificity, predictive validity, and immediate availability of results. It is expected that additional tools will be identified during the planning process that will engage provider and early care staff input, and those will be evaluated against this criteria as well.

The research on Medicaid, EPSDT, and young children that is relevant to the public health framework and prevention goals for this project has shown that:

- An estimated 35-40 percent of births are financed by Medicaid, with coverage continuing throughout the first year of life for infants. Virtually all of the infants whose births were financed by Medicaid will have automatic and continuous coverage through the first year.
- Approximately one-third of children ages 1 to 5 years are covered by Medicaid. This means that many early childhood health and developmental services will be financed by Medicaid.
- With Medicaid, poor children's access to health care is similar to that of non-poor, privately insured children. Moreover, child Medicaid beneficiaries use care in approximately the same pattern as their privately insured counterparts.
- Children are half of all Medicaid enrollees, but represent less than 20 percent of the total spending—primarily because they use less expensive primary and preventive services.

EPSDT holds an important key in triggering the child health benefit plan for Medicaid. In addition to training and promotion activities to increase provider administration of EPSDT, Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge will support implementation of a stronger screening and referral system. This will involve close coordination with Nevada's Medicaid office in DHHS to support outreach and enrollment efforts of Medicaid-eligible children and provide assistance

with tracking data related to performance and screening ratio.

The use of EPSDT in ELD Programs is widely acknowledged to promote child health, healthy child development, and healthy mental development. When a young child's health status is assessed through comprehensive well-child exams with EPSDT screens, providers have the opportunity to offer health education and anticipatory guidance to parents as an important component of these visits. Age-appropriate developmental screening is one component of a comprehensive EPSDT screening visit. The federal Medicaid rules state that:

“Screening for developmental [status]... is a part of every routine initial and periodic examination. Developmental assessment is also carried out by professionals to whom children are referred for structured tests and instruments after potential problems have been identified by the screening process....In younger children, [screeener must] assess at least the following elements: gross motor development, focusing on strength, balance, locomotion; fine motor development, focusing on eye-hand coordination; communication skills or language development, focusing on expression, comprehension, and speech articulation; self-help and self-care skills; social-emotional development, focusing on the ability to engage in social interaction with other children, adolescents, parents, and other adults; and cognitive skills, focusing on problem solving or reasoning.”

EPSDT also supports mental health screening. As part of the implementation plan for Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, physician and care provider training and technical assistance activities will promote the use of “interperiodic” screening visits to monitor suspected problems even when a routine EPSDT screen is not on the state schedule or whenever a condition is suspected. Parents, teachers, child care providers, and others may identify a problem that calls for an interperiodic screen. In addition, a pediatric primary care provider who suspects a developmental problem or identifies risk may ask the parent to return for a comprehensive interperiodic screening visit in order to monitor the child's condition. Providers will also conduct developmental screening alone in a separate “interperiodic” visit, to follow up on concerns of a parent, teacher, or health professional.

Pyramid Model: As described earlier in this application (see Section C (3), Nevada will use the



Pyramid Model from the Center for Social and Emotional Foundation for Early Learning to improve the capacity of its early childhood workforce to be responsive to the needs of the young children in their care by incorporating the Five Protective Factors of the model into publicly funded programs that serve children with high needs. State and local ECACs will coordinate a collaborative training and technical assistance program that educates early childhood educators about: 1) appropriate early education practices; 2) nurturing and responsive relationships; 3) high quality learning environments that target practices to support social and emotional development. In addition to these high quality practices in early childhood programs, some children will need targeted social emotional supports and assessment based intervention.

A comprehensive system based on the Pyramid Model will provide immediate response to early care and education programs requesting assistance with a child exhibiting a challenging behavior. Ongoing classroom observation, teacher training and mentoring, quality assessments and technical assistance will address classroom environments and teacher practices to intervene in the challenging behavior and improve the overall quality of the early care and education program. Early care and education programs will demonstrate improvement in practices and learning environment, measured by environmental rating scales and practice inventories. Staff at participating centers will improve skills to better support children with challenging behaviors; and decrease the number of children who are expelled from centers.

Home Visiting: The Nevada State Health Division Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program contracted with three agencies to implement evidence-based home visiting programs, enrolling families/children from two identified at-risk communities in its first year of implementation. These communities were identified in a statewide needs assessment where the following risk factor data was collected: poverty, unemployment pre-natal care, low birth weight, infant mortality, school readiness and achievement, domestic violence, child maltreatment, and crime.

The federally designated evidence-based home visiting models teach and promote:

- prenatal care
- well-child care following American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines

- proper nutrition and eating practices
- benefits of age and condition appropriate physical activity
- infant and child development and care
- appropriate parenting skills
- emotional well-being and safe and appropriate methods to handle stress
- breastfeeding
- use of appropriate community resources

Home visiting benchmark areas include:

1. Improve maternal and newborn health
2. Reduce child injuries, child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment and reduce emergency department visits
3. Improve school readiness and achievement
4. Reduce crime or domestic violence
5. Improve family economic self-sufficiency
6. Improve coordination and referrals for other community resources and supports

In DHHS, the Nevada State Health Division Bureau of Child Family and Community Wellness, which houses the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV), has a commitment to cultural and linguistic competence (CLC) for all staff and all programs it administers. This is accomplished through staff training and ongoing assurances by means of an active CLC committee. This same level of CLC commitment is expected by the Bureau's contractors, many of which carry out home visiting and family support activities for families of children with high needs, and is written into contracts and MOUs. The MIECHV Program is targeted at reducing infant and maternal mortality by improving prenatal, maternal, and newborn health, child health and development, parenting skills, school readiness, preventing juvenile delinquency, and bolstering family economic self-sufficiency.

| <b>Performance Measures for (C) (3) (d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual statewide targets.</b>  |  |                                      |                                      |                                      |                                      |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|   | Baseline and annual targets  |                                      |                                      |                                      |                                      |
|   | Baseline (Today, if known)<br>If unknown please use narrative to explain plan for defining baseline and setting and meeting annual targets | Target for end of calendar year 2012 | Target for end of calendar year 2013 | Target for end of calendar year 2014 | Target for end of calendar year 2015 |
| Number of Children with High Needs screened   | 98,909   | 98,307                               | 99,613                               | 100,797                              | 102,763                              |
| Number of Children with High Needs referred for services who received follow-up/treatment   | 82,216   | 81,716                               | 82,802                               | 83,786                               | 85,420                               |
| Number of Children with High Needs who participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well child care  | 98,909   | 98,307                               | 99,613                               | 100,797                              | 102,763                              |
| Of these participating children, the number or percentage of children who are up-to-date in a schedule of well child care   | Not available at this time   |                                      |                                      |                                      |                                      |
| <p>Total population of children ages 0 to 5 years in Nevada from Year 2010 to 2015 are from the NV State Demographer Population Projections found in <a href="http://www.NVdemography.org">www.NVdemography.org</a>. Ages 0 to 5 years were found by adding ages 0 to 4 years with children at 5 years of age. The percentage of Number of Children with High Needs screened of the total population in the baseline year 2011 is 43.16%. Using this percentage, the Number of Children with High Needs screened for future</p> |  |                                      |                                      |                                      |                                      |

years was calculated. Percentage of Children with High Needs referred for services who received follow-up/treatment for baseline year 2011 is 83.12%. Future children who receives follow-up/treatment is calculated by increasing the target percentage to 84%, 86%, 88%, and 90% for the following years. The Number of Children with High Needs screened decreases for the target year 2012 because the total number of children ages 0 to 5 years decreases. Ages 0 to 4 years decreases by about 2,000 while age 5 years increases by only 1,000.

Baseline data is based on the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Medicare Medicaid Services annual EPSDT Participation report. (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) Targets are based on the percentage of children with high needs as estimated by the number of low income children (National Center on Children in Poverty). By the end of 2015, this data should be better tracked by our Health Information Technology system, relative to our current status of integration.

#### (C)(4) ENGAGING AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES

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

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

There are a number of strategies outlined in *Nevada's Promise* that are focused on enhancing the capacity of families to support their child(ren)'s education and development. These include:

- Work with the many programs in Nevada tracking data internally for program effectiveness to use the national Five Protective Factors database to track data across the state measuring improvements in the lives of families over time.
- Incorporate use of the Five Protective Factors as a preventive and strength-based approach to working with families.
- Support training and technical assistance to providers in all service sectors (health, social-emotional/mental health, education, parenting education, and family supports) for implementing the Five Protective Factors and national standards for family-school partnerships.
- Support broad implementation of the National Standards for Family-School

Partnerships especially across the continuum of community and school based services for children prenatal to third grade (P-3).

These strategies and activities will be implemented rather quickly in the overall grant timeline, as part of Nevada's projects related Workforce Development, Silver State Stars QRIS, and the P-3 Initiative. Adoption of the Strengthening Families Model into early childhood programs has been demonstrated to diminish the likelihood of child abuse and neglect and build a family and a family environment that promotes optimal child and youth development. *Nevada's Promise* will implement program standards that establish appropriate expectations for children's behavior at every age and trains educators to help parents see their children and youth in a positive light and promote their healthy development. Programs will be expected to meet standards that address the social and emotional competence of children, using early identification and assistance for both parents and children to keep development on track and work to improve the ability of each child to interact positively with others, self-regulate their behavior and effectively communicate their feelings. Finally, programs will be trained and supported to offer concrete supports to vulnerable children and families in times of need to meet basic economic needs like food, shelter, clothing and health care. The focus of this reform agenda on integrating programs and resources across agencies and systems, and aligning expectations and standards, will strengthen the entire early childhood system's ability to respond quickly and appropriately to children and families if and when they encounter a crisis (such as domestic violence, mental illness or substance abuse), and provide adequate services and supports that provide stability, treatment and help for family members.

Additionally, the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) has established research based National Standards for Family-School Partnerships that will also be woven into Nevada's early childhood program standards. They include:

**Standard 1:** Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

**Standard 2:** Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way,

meaningful communication about student learning.

**Standard 3:** Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

**Standard 4:** Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**Standard 5:** Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

**Standard 6:** Collaborating with community—Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

**(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**

Currently among the MIECHV Program contractors, a complement of 12.5 FTEs exist who are highly trained to service their families/children. This training has been received both from within their respective home visiting models and from external sources. The number of trained home visitors will increase to approximately 17 FTEs by the end of the 2011 calendar year and grow by about 15% each year thereafter. This represents a well-trained cadre of educators who would benefit from additional Early Childhood Educator training.

Nevada has a number of vehicles that provide high quality training to ECE providers across the state. The NV Registry promotes training across the state and a recent review indicated 80 trainings have been provided since January 2011 on Family/community relationships. As part of the project, all training opportunities for ECE providers to access training on the Five Protective Factors, as well as on strategies for engaging families will be inventoried and promoted.

Additional training will be sponsored and integrated into regularly scheduled statewide training

events such as the NevAEYC annual Early Childhood Conference and the upcoming School Readiness Summit.

Family engagement is a prerequisite for helping family's achieve their goals. Key elements include:

- Listening to each family member
- Demonstrating respect and empathy for family members
- Developing an understanding of the family's past experiences, current situation, concerns, and strengths
- Responding to concrete needs quickly
- Establishing the purpose of involvement with the family
- Being aware of one's own biases and prejudices
- Validating the participatory role of the family
- Being consistent, reliable, and honest
- Engaging & involving fathers and paternal family members

**(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**

The Nevada State Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program pledged its ongoing commitment to the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge by allocating \$10,000 per year to further the objectives and outcomes of this continuing work. Additionally, a number of programs are employing strategies to engage families across the state. These include Early Head Start and Head Start, State Pre-Kindergarten, United Way, Family Resource Centers and State and local home visiting programs.

There are also a number of resources which can be leveraged to promote family support and engagement statewide. In addition to an array of successful local initiatives, both DHHS and

NDE house programs that have resources to promote family support and engagement. The State also has a statewide Parent Involvement Resource Council that works with PTAs across the state. The Nevada PTA provided a support letter included in Appendix I. These programs will collaborate to promote family support and engagement. Many providers, while employing family engagement strategies, have different standards they must meet. In the first year of this project, partners will come together to adopt a statewide approach that incorporates the PTA Standards and Strengthening Families' strategies for engaging families including specific strategies to engage fathers, grandparents and other care givers. Strengthening Families is an approach consistent with what many ECE providers including friends, family and neighbors are already doing. Nevada recognizes promoting family engagement can include parent cafés, pot lucks, parent support groups, sporting events and other strategies that families identify as effective ways to engage them.

During the first year of this project, the different family engagement strategies across the state will be analyzed. DHHS and NDE will work together to adopt a plan with a comprehensive P-3 approach that incorporates PTA National and Strengthening Families. They will provide statewide training and highlight lessons learned for working with families.

## SECTION D: A GREAT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION WORKFORCE

### **(D)(1) Development of Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.**

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

In 2007, Nevada published its Core Knowledge Areas (CKA) and Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals through a contract funded by CCDF quality dollars. These provide the basis for Nevada's statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework that will be developed to support fulfillment of *Nevada's Promise*. The CKA and Core Competencies were developed in response to research indicating that professional education for Early Care and Education (ECE) practitioners is essential to the quality of care and education



provided. Caregiver actions have also been shown to make a difference to the future learning capabilities and success of children<sup>11</sup>.

It is important to note that most of the competencies identified in this framework relate to developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) regarding the direct care and education of young children. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) defines DAP, as "...[the providing of] a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, aesthetic, intellectual, and language development of each child while being sensitive to the needs and preferences of families."

Knowledge of the Pre-K Standards is embedded within the Core Competencies. While the Pre-K standards act as a guide for *child outcomes*, the core competencies focus on the preferred *outcomes for the adults* who care for young children. It is believed that early childhood teachers who provide quality learning environments and experiences for young children will help those children meet the goals set forth in the Pre-K Standards. Because this document was designed to be a self-assessment tool, it can be used in a variety of ways. The competencies can be used to assess learning needs, develop education and training curriculum, and as a tool for supervision and mentoring support. Each CKA has a number of defined categories with a set of related competencies ranging from knowledge that a beginning professional would typically have to the more advanced knowledge possessed by individuals with advanced degrees. Each level of competency includes the knowledge and skills of the previous level and is designed to demonstrate a continuum of growth that occurs over time through formal education, training and experience. Check boxes are provided beside each competency so that this document can be utilized as a self-assessment, supervision, and professional development tool.

CKA are the *content areas* that define what caregivers should know and understand in order to provide quality experiences for children, regardless of the setting in which care and education

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11 Barnett, W.S., & Masse, L. (2003). Funding issues for early childhood education and care programs. In D. Cryer & R.M. Clifford (Eds.) **Early Childhood Education & Care in the USA** (pp. 137-165). Baltimore, MD: US Department of Education.

occurs. Distributing learning across all CKA helps professionals build a balanced approach to providing quality Early Care and Education. Core Competencies are the *observable skills* that reflect a caregiver's knowledge and understanding of the CKA. The competencies identify skills at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of professionalism related to providing quality Early Care and Education. Nevada's CORE KNOWLEDGE AREAS are:

1. Human Growth and Development
2. Positive Interactions and Guidance
3. Observation and Assessment
4. Environment and Curriculum
5. Health, Nutrition and Safety
6. Leadership and Professional Development
7. Family and Community Relationships
8. Management and Administration

Both the CKA and Core Competencies were informed by: *Nevada Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards, Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8 (NAEYC)*, and *NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation: Associate Degrees*. These resources were used to assure that Nevada's CKA and Core Competencies aligned with national and other state standards already in use. Several resources from the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) that compare CKA and Core Competencies across states were also utilized. Finally, core knowledge and competency documents from Kansas/Missouri, New Jersey and West Virginia served as models for the committee.

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

In Fall 2005, a small group of early childhood professionals representing a number of

agencies/organizations from across Nevada initially volunteered to assist with the development of Core Competencies for Nevada's ECE professionals. From there, more professionals in the field, along with representatives from higher education, were recruited to assist with the process. As a result, a committee of 20 statewide representatives was formed. Participation from all six Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions was actively sought in order to ensure alignment with the content of formal higher education coursework offered in the state.

Representatives from five of the six institutions participated on the committee, and the impact of their involvement is now evident in the coursework and curricula of the majority of NSHE institutions, which incorporates the CKA in their programs that result in licensing, credentialing and ECE degrees.

The CKA are also an important part of Nevada's training approval system and are reflected in all training that is approved by The Nevada Registry. Because approved training is categorized by CKA, caregivers and trainers can search for training by CKA on The Nevada Registry's website and use that information to distribute their learning and instruction across all eight areas. This helps create a unified approach to statewide professional development opportunities as well as affords trainers the opportunity to identify gaps and offer training in areas where there is limited availability to better meet the needs of professionals in the field.

The Nevada Registry has created a professional development plan, "*Cultivating Your Growth as a Professional: Creating a Professional Development Plan to Guide Your Career in Early Care and Education*" which, coupled with Nevada's Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals, is a guide designed to help increase knowledge, skills and expertise for working with children and their families over time by helping educators determine their areas of interest and strength, as well as areas where further growth and development may be needed. Because each person comes to early childhood environments with a unique combination of professional skills and expertise, experience and education, no single plan will work for everyone, nor will any two plans look the same. There are a number of different formats available to help early childhood educators assess, prioritize and clarify their professional development needs and strengths in order to align their work with Nevada's Core Competencies.

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

Representatives from all NSHE institutions were involved in designing the Career Ladder, core knowledge areas and core competencies. Nevada's relatively small population and limited number of higher education institutions are considered strengths in terms of maintaining a high level of engagement and participation among early childhood degree faculty and administrators statewide. They have the opportunity to meet and collaborate regularly, often with fiscal support from Nevada's Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office. The NevAEYC statewide conference provides an annual forum to address issues from across the state, and consensus on decisions and problem-solving is typically easy to establish.

All six higher education institutions in Nevada have aligned their coursework with the Core Knowledge Areas but not necessarily with the Core Competencies. However, while common course numbering aligned with core knowledge areas exists across institutions, specific core competencies must still be aligned. Faculty acknowledge the challenge involved in establishing commonly numbered coursework and course descriptions across institutions, but have committed to achieving this in 2012.

Higher education faculty will be convened by the Head Start Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office to develop consensus on alignment of those competencies with the currently aligned course numbers and core knowledge areas during the first half of 2012 and to develop a plan for completing this final level of alignment. Faculty from all six institutions will be involved in reviewing that plan to ensure that consensus exists and any potential issues are promptly identified and addressed. Many institutions submitted letters of support for this application and are strongly committed to aligning their current coursework with the competencies, taking it one step beyond the current alignment with core knowledge areas in support of Nevada's statewide framework.

**(D)(2) SUPPORTING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN IMPROVING THEIR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES.**

Nevada already has a strong infrastructure from which to expand in order to improve the effectiveness and retention of early childhood educators working with children with high needs so that child-related education, social and health outcomes are improved. One of the primary goals of *Nevada's Promise* related to developing a strong early childhood workforce is to align formal and informal professional development systems within the Silver State Stars in order to improve the competency for all providers and educators, including those not working toward attaining an early childhood degree.

There are three primary components at the heart of Nevada's early childhood workforce development plan that are accountable for supporting educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities: Nevada's Career Ladder, The Nevada Registry, and T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood<sup>®</sup> Nevada. These are described in more detail below.

Established in 2002, the Nevada Career Ladder serves to support the field of early childhood education as an established professional education system. The ladder is based on what national research shows about the importance of specialized training in ECE and the correlation between formal education and quality environments for children. The Career Ladder provides an opportunity to collect data on education and training levels of the early childhood workforce, and incorporates the eight CKAs to help assess training needs.

The Career Ladder helps professionals plan their training and education and identify their career development goals. This is represented by seven levels on the Career Ladder combining various types of formal (college) education, training and direct experience (up to 4,000 hours). (See Appendix J) The entry levels of the Career Ladder are somewhat informal and become increasingly more formal with a greater emphasis on formal education and training in ECE as a person advances along the continuum. By following this path, an individual knows exactly what he/she needs to accomplish before advancing to the next level.

Nevada's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework is supported by the CKA and Competency levels in conjunction with the Nevada Early Care and Education Professional Career Ladder. Together, these components are the foundation for the early childhood

professional development system and provide a roadmap for individual professional growth that becomes increasingly more specialized as higher levels of formal education are achieved.

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEVADA is funded by Nevada's Child Care and Development Fund quality set aside dollars, managed by the Office of Early Care and Education in the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, and administered by the Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC). T.E.A.C.H. stands for Teacher Education and Compensation Helps, and addresses the high turn-over rate of early childhood educators, lack of early childhood specialization, compensation and the professional image of early care providers in Nevada. T.E.A.C.H. provides scholarships for home care providers, facility directors, and facility staff. Scholarships provide 80% of the tuition, and stipends for books, travel, and bonuses.

The Nevada Registry originated in January 2004 as a career ladder and recognition system that grew to include a statewide system of training approval in October 2004. In cooperation, the Office of Early Care and Education and the Washoe County School District developed The Nevada Registry to provide a structure to the Core knowledge Areas and the Career Ladder adopted by the Nevada State Child Care Advisory Committee. The Nevada Registry offers an online calendar of training, a job board, Career Ladder placement, and community resources/information. Every licensed caregiver in Nevada must be a member of The Nevada Registry.

**(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework**

A well-trained early childhood education and care workforce is essential to fostering the best outcomes for children. Research has shown that better educated early childhood educators with specialized training deliver higher quality education and care. Making sure that child care professionals are highly qualified and have access to training and development can also assist in improving the standing of this sector within the community.

The high-level strategies built into *Nevada's Promise* for expanding access to and aligning professional development opportunities with our Workforce Knowledge and Competency

Framework are as follows:

- Additional levels will be added to the bottom three levels of the current career ladder to accommodate progress of Early Childhood Educators in informal settings such as family, friend and neighbor care.
- Informal training will be developed to assist Early Childhood Educators improve social emotional and instructional supports as measured by the CLASS.
- Early Childhood degree faculty will assist with the design of informal training linked to the CLASS to align it with college coursework for credit upon entry into degree programs.
- Online training linked to credit will be developed and promoted. Existing online training programs will be explored to determine appropriateness of fit and expense.
- The Nevada Department of Education will work with institutions of higher education to assess and align course content and teacher effectiveness measures to create a potential statewide P-3 (prenatal to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) teaching credential.

Mentoring and coaching will additionally be integrated as part of the system. At this time mentoring and coaching is done in pockets, but not consistently and is not a requirement of any credentials in the state. Student teaching is required as is practicum. However, no formal requirement exists for mentoring at all levels of the early childhood education professionals. A career ladder for “family, friends and relatives” and other non-formal educators will be integrated with the existing career ladder and Silver State Stars that is guided by CLASS scores and incorporates a mentoring and coaching component.

**(b) Implementing policies and incentives that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention**

Nevada faces a number of challenges in attracting, retaining and developing child care professionals for its ELD workforce, including: staff shortages, particularly in remote and

disadvantaged areas and Indigenous communities; relatively low pay and variable working conditions; a high proportion of staff without formal qualifications; and low status and standing. *Nevada's Promise* is aimed at increasing the retention and quality of the early childhood workforce over the next four years, with the ECAC working with DHHS, NDE and local programs to develop a blueprint to improve recruitment and retention, and open up pathways that reward and support the best workers and raise the level of qualifications.

To accomplish this, the ECAC will convene an Early Childhood Workforce Best Practice and Innovation Workgroup to explore best practice or innovative models to support workforce development. The goal of the workgroup will be to identify strategies to enhance the quality of Nevada's early childhood education and care workforce through investigation of best practices and innovative models that can be replicated and disseminated across the early childhood education and care sector. Strategies already under review include:

- Encouraging integration across the early childhood development sector
- Implementing innovative ways to deliver professional development and skill building for program staff
- Mentoring and coaching
- Building leadership capacity across the sector
- Developing partnerships within and across programs aimed at mutual exchange of knowledge and skills

Nevada will build on the strengths, resources, and incentives that it already has in place, including T.E.A.C.H. As mentioned earlier, T.E.A.C.H. is designed to address a lack of early childhood education, poor compensation, high turnover, and the need for increased professional recognition for child care providers in Nevada. T.E.A.C.H. provides scholarships to any family child care provider, center teacher, or center director working in a licensed facility. This scholarship is a partnership, sharing the responsibility of education, compensation, and commitment of increased professional development for Nevada's child care workforce. The



scholarship provides 80% of tuition, 80% of Books, \$50 per semester for travel, and \$250-400 bonus in conjunction with a 2% wage increase. Recipients of the scholarship commit to working with the sponsoring center for an additional year, following completion of the scholarship. Scholarship covers three semesters and is renewable each year.

In the summer of 2005, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood NEVADA began its pilot run of the scholarship program. Nevada's program began by offering associate level scholarships for those working towards a Teacher's Certificate, Director's Certificate or Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education. Currently, scholarships are available through all Nevada community colleges, colleges, and universities.

**(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention**

Per State Child Care Licensing regulations R112-06, participation in The Nevada Registry is now a requirement for all caregivers working in licensed child care settings. The Nevada Registry is in the process of phasing in mandatory registration on the Career Ladder. All personnel working in licensed facilities must be registered by December 31, 2012. Currently, only 20% of Early Childhood professionals registered with The Nevada Registry are placed on career ladder levels four or above (levels reached by higher education degree attainment).

**(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--**

*(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework*

During the first year of implementation of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge, all early childhood degree coursework will be aligned to the core competencies identified for each core knowledge area. Coursework is currently aligned to the core knowledge areas, but has not been aligned to the core competencies defined within each core knowledge area explicitly and consistent with course numbering and content. The core competencies will also be aligned with the CLASS and Child Development Associate (CDA) competencies.

Throughout the four years of implementation, additional support will be provided to early childhood educators working toward degrees through T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood ® Nevada (described in detail above-D (2) (b)). At this time, all of the seven institutions align early childhood coursework with core knowledge areas. They will be convened to align early childhood coursework with the core competencies defined in each core knowledge area.

*(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.*

Since T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Nevada began providing scholarships and the supports previously described, 384 early childhood educators have received scholarships. This grew from fiscal year 2007, when 70 educators participated, to fiscal year 2011, during which 259 early childhood educators participated. That means that the number of participants almost quadrupled during that five year span. By providing additional support through Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge funding, it is estimated that 1,420 early childhood educators may participate by 2015. This will be facilitated by developing credentials within the lower three levels of the Career Ladder that are linked to incremental increases in skills as indicated by the CLASS. The higher education work group will assist with developing and approving the content of training and credentials of trainers that would facilitate earning of college credits upon declaring a degree in early childhood. This will result in support at all levels in the continuum of both informal (approved by The Nevada Registry for child care training hours) and formal training (provided by an accredited institution of higher education).

| <b>Performance Measures for (D)(2)(d)(1): Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators receiving credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework</b>  |                  |                                    |                                    |                                    |                                    |
|---|------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|   | Baseline (Today) | Target - end of calendar year 2012 | Target - end of calendar year 2013 | Target - end of calendar year 2014 | Target - end of calendar year 2015 |
| Total number of "aligned" institutions and providers  | 6                | 6                                  | 6                                  | 6                                  | 6                                  |
| Total number of Early Childhood Educators credentialed by an "aligned" institution or provider  | 482              | 592                                | 728                                | 864                                | 1,008                              |
| <p>Baseline number of Early Childhood Educators credentialed by an "aligned" institution is based on the current number of EC educators placed on the Career Ladder in total. All providers regardless of career ladder level must take informal or formal training that is aligned with the Core Knowledge Areas.</p> <p>Targets are based on the deadline for mandatory registration on the Career Ladder of December 2013.</p> <p>Once data collection efforts are streamlined and degree programs are aligned with Core Competencies as well, these numbers may change.</p> |                  |                                    |                                    |                                    |                                    |

| <b>Performance Measures for (D) (2) (d) (2): Increasing number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.</b> |  |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)   | Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have moved up the progression of credentials, aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, in the prior year |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |
|  | Baseline (Today)   | Target- end of calendar year 2012 | Target- end of calendar year 2013 | Target- end of calendar year 2014 | Target- end of calendar year 2015 |
|  |  |                                   |                                   |                                   |                                   |

Nevada's Promise: Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application

|   | #   | %    | #   | %   | #   | %   | #   | %   | #   | %  |
|---|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| <p>Level 4</p> <p><u>4.1</u> Associate's degree in ECE or Associate's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits</p> <p><u>4.2</u> All of 4.1 and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p>   | 164 | 2.34 | 210 | 3   | 280 | 4   | 350 | 5   | 420 | 6  |
| <p>Level 5</p> <p><u>5.1</u> Bachelor's degree in ECE or Bachelor's degree in another field with a state teaching licensing containing an ECE endorsement or a Bachelor's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits</p> <p><u>5.2</u> All of 5.1 and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p> | 214 | 3.06 | 245 | 3.5 | 280 | 4   | 315 | 4.5 | 350 | 5  |
| <p>Level 6</p> <p><u>6.1</u> Master's degree in ECE or Master's degree in another field with a state teaching licensing containing an ECE endorsement or a Master's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits</p> <p><u>6.2</u> All of 6.1 and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p>       | 97  | 1.39 | 126 | 1.8 | 154 | 2.2 | 182 | 2.6 | 210 | 3  |
| <p>Level 7</p> <p><u>7.1</u> Doctorate in ECE or Doctorate in</p>   | 7   | 0.10 | 11  | .15 | 14  | .2  | 17  | .24 | 28  | .4 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p>another field with a state teaching licensing containing an ECE endorsement or Doctorate in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits</p> <p>7.2 All of 7.1 and 4,000 hrs. direct experience</p>  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| <p>An articulation agreement was signed and implemented between Great Basin College (GBC) in Elko and UNLV allowing graduates from GBC's early childhood associate degree program to matriculate all coursework in that degree toward a bachelor degree from UNLV. The upper division coursework through UNLV is all available online to facilitate early childhood teachers in this remote area of Nevada to complete early childhood 4-year degrees for the first time ever. This year, 20 rural students enrolled in the ECE/UNLV 2 + 2 Cohort Program. That cohort began in August of 2010, and is in their second year of the program. The students completed their AA in ECE through GBC. They are now completing their upper division classes through UNLV on-line. All of the students will receive a Bachelor's of Science in ECE. Seven of those students will become licensed to teach pre-k through 2nd grade. Sixteen students will graduate from UNLV in May of 2012. Four students will graduate from UNLV in December of 2012.</p> |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**SECTION E: MEASURING OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS**

**(E)(1) UNDERSTANDING THE STATUS OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AT KINDERGARTEN ENTRY**

*The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--*

**(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness**

Nevada will implement a common statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment no later than the 2014-15 school year, which will evaluate readiness in a manner that covers multiple dimensions of a child's abilities, beyond simply tracking literacy skills. The primary goals of the assessment are to inform State efforts to close the readiness gap and to inform instruction and services in the early grades of elementary school utilizing data related to the essential domains of school

readiness, including: a) language and literacy development, b) cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), c) approaches toward learning, d) physical well-being and motor development, including adaptive skills, and e) social and emotional development. The addition of this information to a Nevada's data system will enable us to look at data on student growth and development before children reach third grade, when they typically participate in their first statewide standardized tests.

Upon implementation, the common assessment will determine the level of mastery that a child has attained which is aligned with selected Kindergarten Common Core State Standards and will eventually serve as the Standard-Based Report Card. Nevada's plan will ensure that assessments evaluate the multiple domains of readiness, including social-emotional development, but are not the sole determining factor for kindergarten entry. *Nevada's Promise* does not interpret school readiness narrowly, and therefore supports a common assessment process and protocol that values accountability and system performance as the means to an end that provides children with the necessary preparation and support to enter kindergarten on an equal footing with their peers.

Nevada's approach to adopting a common kindergarten entry assessment tool and process will be based on a thorough review and evaluation of current kindergarten assessments being used. The three largest school districts in Nevada have already developed kindergarten assessments and standards-based report cards that align with English Language Arts (ELA) and Math Common Core Standards. These tools will be shared to help inform, develop and select a common assessment tool that measures all domains of readiness. In addition, the data collected through the kindergarten entry assessment project will be reviewed to determine the most appropriate statewide tool to be implemented.

**(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**

All seventeen school districts will be surveyed and invited to participate in a pilot project beginning Fall 2012 with selected assessment tool(s), in order to ensure that the measures are valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and meet the goals of assessment as intended. The addition of this information to the State's data system will enable Nevada to look at data on student growth and development before children reach third grade, when they

typically participate in their first statewide standardized tests.

Nevada will create performance measures for our early learning system that will relate to readiness scores, in addition to other indicators. During the pilot phase, we will establish baseline numbers, annual targets, and final goals for improving performance of high-need children on the State's kindergarten entry measure. In later phases of implementation, we will evaluate the use of performance contracting mechanisms to provide incentives to programs and localities that meet or exceed the established targets related to improving readiness among children with high needs. To facilitate this, the data will be disaggregated by race, gender, disability status, and English learner status. It is anticipated that these tools and the data captured will help programs and localities better understand how children are progressing developmentally, their level of ability, and in what areas they are struggling.

The measures of environmental quality and teacher interactions will provide information on whether pre-kindergarten or childcare programs are offering high-quality environments and to what extent educators are able to enrich language development by engaging English Learners in conversation and interesting activities. It is expected that, because the Kindergarten Entry Assessment process that Nevada implements will be based on valid, reliable, appropriate and multi-dimensional assessment tools, early childhood educators will be able to use the information they impart to make informed instructional and programmatic decisions that improve the outcomes and outlook for children with high needs.

**(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**

Statewide partners including the DHHS MIECHV program, the NDE longitudinal data system and the Nevada ECAC have committed financial resources to assure the timely development and implementation of a common statewide kindergarten entry assessment and corresponding statewide data collection and reporting system. As stated previously, this will occur no later than the beginning of the 2014-15 school year for children entering a publicly funded kindergarten program. To support timely implementation, a priority focus, along with appropriate planning and training activities, will be strategically incorporated into:

- Kindergarten Readiness Professional Development offerings,
- The NevAEYC annual Early Childhood Conference,
- An early childhood track at NDE's Statewide Mega Conference
- Striving Readers Summer Institute; and
- Established P-3 model sites within selected districts.

**(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**

The Council sees the goals of creating a coordinated early learning data system and developing a statewide kindergarten assessment tool as integral, and acknowledges the importance of gaining an earlier understanding about how children are progressing on a learning trajectory in order to improve the early learning environments that prepare them for school entry. The Nevada ECAC will use funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to study the feasibility of using one kindergarten entry assessment with a statewide data collection system linked to the Nevada Department of Education longitudinal data system. The eventual linking of Nevada's Early Learning System with NDE's longitudinal data system will be achieved either by directly integrating the two systems, or by building data bridges to translate and or communicate data directly to the NDE K-12 longitudinal data system. During the planning phase, the feasibility of these approaches will be studied to determine the most efficient, comprehensive and cost-effective approach that also maintains adherence to Federal, State and local privacy laws.

**(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant**

The budget for this project includes funding for NDE to build the early childhood data collection system into its longitudinal data collection system. All 17 school districts in Nevada currently assess children at kindergarten entry with some kind of tool that costs them money. The planning process for the kindergarten entry assessment will include developing consensus so that local school districts will fund their own use of the kindergarten assessment tool after the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge funding is no longer available. The NDE longitudinal data system



will have integrated the K-entry assessment into its design by the end of the project. NDE is also proposing for the next phase of state longitudinal data systems and will include data bridges and ease of entry for local schools and early childhood programs into the evolving system.

**(E)(2) BUILDING OR ENHANCING AN EARLY LEARNING DATA SYSTEM TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTION, PRACTICES, SERVICES, AND POLICIES.**

*The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--*

**(a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements**

The Nevada ECAC will fund the coordination and development of a comprehensive plan to implement an integrated statewide early childhood data collection system. The Council's key goal is to build a comprehensive, coordinated early childhood data collection and tracking system linked to the existing K-12 longitudinal data collection system, based on recommendations of the Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC). The ECDC has identified 10 fundamentals of coordinated state early care and education data systems, which include the data elements identified in the DHHS/ED definition in this application.

- A single, unduplicated unique state child identifier linked to the NDE longitudinal data tracking system;
- Child level demographic and program participation data including age, ethnicity, socio-economic status and participation in services such as early intervention for children with special needs;
- Child-level data on development from multiple sources including valid and reliable appropriate child assessment instruments, child observations and parent questions;
- Ability to link child-level data to K-12 and other key data systems to allow policymakers to track progress of children over time and understand relationship between programs that influence child development;

- Unique program site identifier with the ability to link with children and Early Childhood Educator data (may include unique identifier for classrooms within sites as well);
- Program site data on structure, quality and work environment including ECE workforce information (Examples of structural data include location; ages of children served; length and duration of the program(s) offered at the site; funding sources; and the availability of special services such as parent participation, mental health consultation or health services. Examples of program quality data include national accreditation information, child-adult classroom ratios, curricula and staff-child interaction measures. Examples of work environment characteristics include the availability of professional development opportunities for staff, wages and benefits, and turnover.);
- Unique ECE workforce identifier with ability to link with program sites and children;
- Individual ECE workforce demographics, including education, and professional development information (i.e., what The Nevada Registry already gathers data on);
- State governance body to manage data collection and use (i.e., Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council or identified future committee on data management); and
- Transparent privacy protection and security practices and policies.

The Council sees the goals of creating a coordinated early learning data system and developing a statewide kindergarten assessment tool as integral, and acknowledges the importance of gaining an earlier understanding how children progress on a learning trajectory in order to improve the early learning environments that prepare them for school entry. The planning process will include focus groups in all seventeen counties to determine their current data collection efforts, software currently used and the willingness to participate in the effort to collect data statewide.

This plan will be completed by Summer 2012, with the initial implementation steps scheduled to begin in Fall of 2012. Key policy questions and confirmation of data elements that will answer those questions will be addressed in the planning process. Anticipated first steps for implementation after the plan is developed include the following:

1. Confirmation and selection of software and vendor or whether system is developed by Nevada and housed within NDE or another partner's system.
2. Ensure system planned links to NDE longitudinal data system by being included in their system or building data bridges to translate and or communicate data directly to the NDE K-12 longitudinal data system.

This integrated data will be used by Nevada's policymakers and funders at state and local levels to inform policy and decision-making related to performance-driven public and private investment in programmatic efforts. By ensuring that data are accessible and stakeholders have the capacity to use data appropriately, coordinated early care and education (ECE) data systems will be used to promote data-driven decision-making in Nevada to *improve the quality of ECE programs and the workforce, increase access to high-quality ECE programs, and ultimately improve child outcomes.*

**(b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;**

Focus groups will be held across Nevada to attain public input and confirm policy questions, enabling determination of data elements to include as well as ease of entry. Existing data systems will be studied to determine ease of use and ability to combine all early childhood systems into one coordinated data collection system. Initially, bridges to transfer data or common methods of downloading such as simple excel spreadsheets may be necessary. The final plan will define how uniform data collection can be achieved while allowing ease of entry to the frontline service provider.

**(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;**

Common data structures, formats and definitions will be confirmed during the planning process in the first year. Comprehensive assessment data tracking will be incorporated. Interoperability will be paramount to implementation and thus will be addressed during the planning phase. NDE and DHHS will work with the Governor's Office to ensure development of voluntary, common standards for the key education data elements that align with the National Center for Education

Statistics. The final system design will either be one cohesive data collection system, or 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**

The data system will be designed for ease of use by ELD programs and early childhood educators for tracking development and learning skills of students enrolled in public and private programs. Ease of access and use of development and child outcome data by Early Childhood Educators and Programs will be a priority for Nevada's Early Learning Challenge. Local ELD programs, whether public or private will have access to development and outcome level data on their children for curriculum and child development planning purposes. It will also support the ability of licensed early childhood and development programs to design curricular approaches and lessons to include all children in lesson planning. This will help with removing the more subjective perspective, enhancing the providers ability to use current time data to plan daily activities.

**(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.**

Data use policies and procedures are well defined by both DHHS and NDE. Nevada's coordinated early childhood data collection system plan will adhere to all applicable local, state and federal laws as the plan is designed. The governance policy will:

- Include identification of elements to be collected and maintained;
- Provide for training on internal controls to system users;
- Establish who will have access to the data in the system and how that data may be used;
- Set appropriate internal controls to restrict access to only authorized users;
- Set criteria for determining legitimacy of data requests;
- Establish procedures to verify accuracy, completeness, and age of data elements maintained in the system and for determining the sensitivity of each inventoried

elements and the risk of harm of that data were improperly disclosed; and

- Establish procedures for disclosure review and auditing.

Additionally, a transparency policy will be developed that simultaneously informs the public, including families, early childhood educators and programs, of the existence of data systems housing personally identifiable information, explains the data elements within that system, enables parental (or legal guardian) consent to disclose personally identifiable information as appropriate, and describes how it will or may be used.

Nevada's longitudinal data system within NDE includes the 12 elements described in section 6401(e) (2) (D) of the America COMPETES Act in accordance with Indicator (b) (1) of Nevada's State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. Nevada does not allow identification of specific children by data system users through the unique student identifier code.

**PRIORITY 2: COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY –  
INCLUDING ALL EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMS IN THE TIERED QUALITY RATING AND  
IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM**

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.

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars QRIS is linked to the State licensing system for ELD programs. The one star level requires a child care program to have a current child care license. Great care was taken during the development of Nevada Tiered Silver State Stars QRIS model not to duplicate but to enhance Nevada's child care licensing requirements. Many state licensing requirements are minimal; therefore the implementation of the Tiered Silver State Stars model is moving Nevada toward higher quality care and professionalism. Additionally, the Nevada state child care licensing office within the BHCQC in the DHHS Health Division is working to institute graded licenses. The bureau chief agreed that joint license certificates could indicate both the graded license and the star rating when the statewide tiered Silver State Stars is implemented. Additionally, the bureau agreed to work with the Silver State Stars and other publicly monitored programs (such as Head Start and State Pre-Kindergarten) to eliminate duplication and increase effective monitoring practices. For example, the bureau has expressed willingness to eliminate some regularly scheduled inspections if Head Start grantees submit a letter from the Office of Head Start confirming compliance with all performance standards, since Head Start performance standards are far more stringent than licensing regulations.

At the time of this writing, Washoe County is the only jurisdiction in the State that has maintained its jurisdictional right to regulate child care facilities within the county. The remainder of the State, including Clark County, where the majority of the State's population resides is regulated by state child care licensing. Washoe County is the second largest population base in Nevada where the city of Reno is located. Washoe County Child Care Regulations require a license for any provider accepting fees for two or more children. Nevada State Child Care Licensing regulations require any individual caring for five or more children for a fee to have a child care license. Two visits per year are required by both State and county licensing jurisdictions. Family, friends or neighbors providing care for one or more child receiving subsidies must meet licensing requirements within the jurisdiction where care is provided as described in the Child Care Policy Manual governing Nevada's Child Care and Development Program (CCDF). During the first year of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge project, changing the State requirements to match those of Washoe County so that providers caring for two or more children for a fee would have to be licensed statewide will be explored.

In Nevada, all Head Start programs are regulated by child care licensing. Conversely, State Pre-Kindergarten programs, most of which are located in schools, are not required to be licensed.

Similarly to Head Start, State Pre-kindergarten programs are provided at no charge to families.

Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars is designed to maximize program participation by implementing effective policies and practices that will promote the participation of all ELD Program in the system. An extensive plan is described in section B of this proposal.

Representatives from State-funded preschool programs, Early Head Start, Head Start, and ELD Programs funded under section 619 of part B and C of IDEA, Title 1 of the ESEA and the State's CCDF programs have participated in the development of Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars and expressed support for full participation when Silver State Stars goes statewide. It is proposed that participation in Nevada's Silver State Stars will become a mandatory requirement for receiving child care subsidies or quality set aside funding (programs to be phased in over a four year time frame).

One of the main objectives for promoting participation is to reduce the barriers and increase the incentives for participation. This in turn is anticipated to increase access to high quality ELD Programs for Children with High Needs. Nevada's Silver State Stars will include programs such as Head Start, Early Head Start and State Pre-K programs by aligning Silver State Stars documentation with the comprehensive assessment system previously described.

It is proposed that during FY12 while the current Silver State Stars is in its final year of evaluation, the expanded Silver State Stars proposed herein to include the comprehensive assessment system will be revised in such a way as to allow public or private ELD programs to apply for contracts. Programs awarded these contracts would need to agree to participate in using and collecting and submitting data related to the assessment tools used. Technical assistance (TA) will be provided for using the assessment tools. TA would include coaching and specific training, including use of assessment tools. Successful contractors would propose how funding would be used to purchase equipment, pay and provide benefits for staff, use assessment data for continual program improvement, and serve children with high needs in their high quality environment at no or low cost to parents.

Licensed programs reaching the top star levels (four stars and five stars) and accepting a higher percentage of subsidy children would be eligible to receive a higher amount of funding per child to maintain this high quality care. Expenses related to providing nutritious meals and transportation will be allowed. Outreach will be done in communities where children with high needs reside to focus efforts on increasing access to high quality environments in their own communities, whether they are licensed or legally exempt from licensure (such as State Pre-K, Title I, or Part B 619 funded programs). Nevada's Tiered Silver State Stars model would be expanded to include family child care providers and family, friend, and neighbor care during the second year of this proposal.

Targeted communities, with high populations of children with high needs, would be supported by outreach and technical assistance necessary to develop four and five stars early childhood development programs during the second year of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (FY2013). Targeted centers would also be enrolled in the Nevada Accreditation Facilitation Project currently funded by Child Care and Development Quality dollars in order to obtain NAEYC accreditation. This project has supported both licensed child care programs and legally unlicensed state Pre-K programs in Clark County.



**PRIORITY 3: COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY –  
UNDERSTANDING THE STATUS OF CHILDREN’S LEARNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT AT KINDERGARTEN ENTRY**

To meet this priority, Nevada’s application has addressed the selection criterion (E) (1).

**PRIORITY 4: INVITATIONAL PRIORITY –SUSTAINING  
PROGRAM EFFECTS IN THE EARLY ELEMENTARY GRADES**

**(a) Enhancing the State’s current standards for kindergarten through grade 3 to align with the Early Learning and Development Standards across all Essential Domains of School Readiness**

In August 2011, the Nevada State Board of Education approved a revised Strategic Framework to guide planning for improvement of the State’s education system. The strategic priorities, goals, indicators, vision and mission constitute the framework, and a task force at NDE is currently in the process of completing the Department’s strategic plan by developing the action plans for implementation. The action plans will assure that the important work identified in the strategic priorities is carried out within and across the Offices in the Department. This framework is built upon the original *Nevada’s Promise* plan that includes four strategic priorities:

- 1) Implement standards and assessments that prepare students for success in postsecondary education and careers;
- 2) Provide valid and reliable data to support decision-making for student achievement;
- 3) Create and implement a comprehensive educator effectiveness system; and
- 4) Implement innovative programs and scale up evidence-based practices for school and district improvement.

The Offices of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement are currently identifying strategies for infusing the primary drivers of reform throughout their areas of influence within the context of this framework. These include: *capacity building*; *group work*; *instruction*; and *systemic* (versus fragmented) *solutions*. Nevada's plan related to ELD will continue to align with these strategies across all domains of school readiness, through:

- A. Increased local and state P-3 implementation;
- B. Striving Readers Birth-Grade 12 State Literacy Plan; and
- C. Common Core Alignment with Pre-K Standards and Kindergarten Entry Assessment.

This reform agenda also acknowledges the increasing paradigm shift and transformation to a Pre-K-12 education system that acknowledges a broader continuum of learning and develop in the realm of public education.

**State/Local P-3 Implementation:** P-3 is an intentional, integrated way of changing education for young children that refers to the continuum of learning that spans traditional boundaries of pre-school learning based programs and the early grades (K-3). The focus is on creating alignment both horizontally (across the age span) and vertically (within grades). This alignment facilitates reciprocity in sharing knowledge and working toward mutual outcomes. Pre-school and K-3 are each engaged with and learning from the other, elevating the ability of both to improve within each grade level as well as across grade levels and across the entire continuum from birth through the third grade.

Structurally, a P-3 system uses consistent assessments for children and learning environments (e.g., ELLCO and CLASS). Alignment of P-3 strategies across programs and initiatives provides additional support for all domains of school readiness. The three priority areas of P-3 include: 1) instructional quality in early literacy and math; 2) social-emotional development; and 3) family engagement. Essential components of the P-3 spectrum, and the key educational/developmental focus areas of each, are:

- Birth-3 (crucial period for brain development and social/emotional foundations);
- Pre-K (foundation for public education);
- Full-day K (universal transitions year);
- Grades 1-3 (Buttresses for lifelong learning; fighting “fade-out”).

Nevada is actively working toward increasing both state and local P-3 implementation, as has been engaged in several key training and planning sessions to support this effort. In Fall 2010, Nevada was selected to participate in the Harvard P-3 Institute, and sent a team which included representatives from NDE, DHHS, and Nevada's two largest school districts (Clark and Washoe Counties). Decision-makers with the authority to implement P-3 at a systems level made up the team, and included an area superintendent, early childhood directors, and a K-12 literacy director. In Spring 2011, the Washoe County P-3 Council (funded by the State Early Childhood Advisory Council in early 2011) hosted two featured sessions as well as a strategic planning breakfast at the NevAEYC. The sessions were conducted by P-3 experts from Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) and the State of Washington's Toppenish School District. The breakfast was facilitated by the Washoe County School District Deputy Superintendent and the Dean of the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Reno. Participants included kindergarten teachers, school district and early childhood administrators, university faculty, and early childhood community partners. The input from these planning and training sessions is now driving the work of the local Washoe County P-3 Council, which will serve as a model for the rest of Nevada's local jurisdictions.

Ongoing joint professional development activities are planned to support local and statewide P-3 implementation, including the institution of a 'P-3 track' at NevAEYC's annual Early Childhood Conference each year that features leaders and experts from the across the country. The Nevada ECAC will also partner with NDE to develop a similar track within the annual Education Mega Conference targeted to K-12 professionals as a primary strategy to shape the Pre-K-12 paradigm shift and prepare educators to successfully adapt to this level of systems change.

**(b) Ensuring that transition planning occurs for children moving from Early Learning**

**and Development Programs to elementary schools**

Given that horizontal and vertical alignment are central to Nevada's P-3 planning and implementation process, transitional planning will be a necessary element of the overall approach. Transitional planning will incorporate (vertical) alignment of curriculum, assessment, and teaching practices across grade levels 0-3, Pre-K, Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3 as well as (horizontal) alignment of transition and program quality improvement efforts across all early childhood settings such as Title I, State Pre-K, Head Start, and Child Care. Common language, tools and practices will be employed to support these transition efforts across the P-3 spectrum of early childhood and elementary education.

Additionally, Nevada is participating in the National Center State Collaborative (NCSC) General Supervisory Enhancement Grant (GSEG) for the development of an Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards (AA-AAS). NCSC is designing a comprehensive system of professional development that will support educators in the use of formative assessment tools and strategies, including appropriate interim interpretation of data for progress monitoring, as well as incorporate process improvements into management systems to ease administrative and documentation burdens for educators.

Nevada is also developing a statewide Community of Practice (CoP) for teachers and service providers from around the state. Participants include Early Childhood special and general educators, special educators for students with significant cognitive disabilities, resource room teachers, and general educators in Mathematics and English Language Arts, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists, Assistive Technology Specialists, and district administrators. Those involved in Nevada's CoP receive the most current training on the CCSS, the relationship between content and achievement standards, curriculum, assessment, and access to the general curriculum. Members will pilot model curricula as it is rolled out and help to refine and clarify materials and resources that are in development for future use in the field. It is worth noting that Nevada is one of the only states out of the 19 in its cohort that included early childhood representation on its CoP team.

**(c) Promoting health and family engagement, including in the early grades**

Two of the three priority areas of P-3 (social-emotional development and family engagement) directly promote a focus on health and family engagement. P-3 strategies include accountability to families and communities and will incorporate an approach that addresses the needs of the whole child. This focus on family engagement is strengthened by legislation (AB 224) that was passed in Nevada's 2011 Session. This new statute will create an "Office of Parental Involvement and Family Engagement" within NDE, with responsibility to:

- i. Review and evaluate the programs implemented by the school districts and public schools, including, without limitation, programs which are supported in part with money received from the Federal Government, for carrying out and increasing parental involvement and family engagement in the public schools. The review and evaluation must include an identification of current strategies and practices for effective parental involvement and family engagement.
- ii. Develop a list of practices which have been proven effective in increasing the involvement of parents and the engagement of families in the education of their children, including, without limitation, practices that increase the ability of school districts and public schools to effectively reengage parents and families and provide those parents and families with the skills and resources necessary to support the academic achievement of their children.
- iii. Work in cooperation with the Statewide Council for the Coordination of the Regional Training Programs to establish a statewide training program concerning parental involvement and family engagement required pursuant to NRS 391.520.
- iv. Provide information to the school districts and public schools on the availability of competitive grants for programs which offer: (1) Professional development for educational personnel on practices to reengage disengaged parents and families in the education of their children; (2) Training for parents and families in skills of leadership and volunteerism; (3) Family literacy training; (4) Home visitation programs to encourage the involvement of parents and the engagement of families in the education of their children; and (5) Other innovative programs that are designed to increase the

involvement of parents and the engagement of families in the academic achievement of their children.

- v. Provide support to those school districts which have established an advisory council on parental involvement and family engagement pursuant to section 4 of this act and encourage those school districts which have not established such an advisory council to consider creating an advisory council for the school district.
- vi. Build the capacity of public schools to work in collaboration with parents to establish policies for the involvement of parents and the engagement of families, including, without limitation, policies that focus on partnerships between public schools and the parents and families of children enrolled in public schools and the empowerment of parents and families in support of the education of their children.
- vii. Work in cooperation with the Commission on Professional Standards in Education in developing the regulations required by NRS and monitoring the implementation of those regulations.
- viii. Establish, in collaboration with the State Board, guidelines to assist parents and families in helping their children achieve the standards of content and performance adopted by the State Board.
- ix. Collaborate with the Nevada State Parent Information and Resource Center, the Parent Training and Information Centers, the Nevada Parent Teacher Association, the Advisory Council and the teachers who are trained to serve as liaisons to parents and legal guardians of pupils enrolled in public schools to plan and implement a statewide summit on parental involvement and family engagement, which must be held at least biennially.
- x. Assist each school district and the public schools within the school district with incorporating strategies and practices for effective parental involvement and family engagement into the plans to improve the achievement of pupils prepared by the school districts.

- xi. Work in partnership with the state Advisory Council on Parental Involvement.

Nevada's commitment to this legislation is underscored by an appropriation \$77,126 to NDE in FY12 and \$101,594 in FY13 to allow for the staffing of this Office, as well as provide additional support for a State Advisory Council on Parental Involvement.

**(d) Increasing the percentage of children who are able to read and do mathematics at grade level by the end of the third grade**

Nevada is in the process of implementing the Common Core standards for ELA and Math as a part of its involvement in the Smarter Balance Consortium, and is also in the early stages of aligning the newly revised Pre-K Standards with the Common Core math and ELA standards. Children participating in Nevada's Pre-K program have increased literacy scores in expressive and receptive vocabulary as measured by the PPVT and EOWPVT as supported by over 10 years of data. This will further be supported by the recent Striving Readers grant award (described below) and the P-3 initiative discussed above.

Improving literacy by third grade is a primary goal of the Nevada Striving Readers program and the State Literacy Plan. Leaders in Nevada's early childhood literacy programs will facilitate the emerging literacy development of children from birth through grade 3 by providing instruction that is appropriate for the development of young children and focused on progression through the stages of research-based developmental domains. Coordination of instructional efforts between preschools and elementary schools, ongoing monitoring of student progress, and support for families of young children will be provided. This foundational support is critical to students' future success and to improve literacy for a strong Nevada as cited in the State Literacy Plan. These efforts include:

- Collaborate with early childhood organizations to ensure that all early childhood programs have consistent, research-based early literacy information.
- Facilitate the use of research-based instructional materials and assessments that are aligned with the Nevada Early Learning Standards and CCSS.
- Coordinate Pre-K through Grade 3 efforts across the State to support early literacy efforts.

- Bridge funding between state, district and other publicly and privately funded efforts to reach private early childhood education programs and parents.
- Provide professional development and other supports to align literacy curriculum Pre-K through Grade 3.
- Offer training and information for home visitors and professionals working with prenatal and infant health care systems about strategies for families to use to support their children's language skills and early literacy development.
- Facilitate transition strategies to support understanding of diverse early education environments, including classroom visitations, and joint training for community and public school teachers.
- Align the Nevada Pre-K Standards with CCSS for children in all early childhood settings.

**(e) Leveraging existing Federal, State, and local resources, including but not limited to funds received under Title I and Title II of ESEA, as amended, and IDEA**

Nevada has a number of cross-system partnerships that have successfully leveraged additional support for related early childhood and P-3 efforts, such as Pre-K Standards and professional development. These include:

- Head Start State Collaboration,
- Child Care Development Quality Improvement Funds,
- Title I,
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Program, and
- Homeless Education Funds.

These partnerships align the goals and outcomes of multiple programs regardless of funding source, which helps to provide additional sustainability and fosters more sophisticated alliances and opens up further opportunities for collaboration. The P-3 inspired project described below is an excellent example of this kind of leveraging - a local-state partnership that has successfully braided a variety of funding sources, including Title I, Title II, IDEA, and others, to achieve the



shared objectives of multiple organizations.

Washoe County ECAC : The pilot in Washoe County involves a focused inquiry looking at P-3 education that involves principals, teachers, ECE providers in neighborhood, etc., in a joint study of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and classroom practices using common tools. The project is based on the HGSE's model of P-3, and leverages the following resources:

1. **Teacher/Teaching Quality:** Professional development will be planned by community professionals—University of Nevada-Reno, Pre-K Standards, etc.; partnerships are in place with UNR that include teacher preparation programs such as new integrated Elementary + ECE programs; incorporate pre-service teachers into PLCs; and will develop common language dictionary.
2. **Instructional Tools & Practices:** Strategies leverage other programs and initiatives in place, such as: Striving Reader Comprehensive Literacy program, Pre-K portfolio assessment system; Framework for Common Core and Pre-K Standards alignment; and the use of emergent curriculum.
3. **Engaged Families and Communities:** Existing resources and tools used to promote family engagement include: *Parent University*, an on-line system for parent training and education bridging pre-K and K-3; cross-teacher training in engaging parents in children's education; parent engagement working together- parents and teachers as partners; shared responsibility between teachers and families; engaging in setting goals together; virtual Pre-K and K; home visits; family resource centers; involving family advocates to support families at the school.

## PRIORITY 5: INVITATIONAL PRIORITY – ENCOURAGING PRIVATE-SECTOR SUPPORT

*The Departments are particularly interested in applications that describe how the private sector will provide financial and other resources to support the State and its Participating State Agencies or Participating Programs in the implementation of the State Plan.*

The private sector has played a critical role in Nevada in helping plan ways that businesses and other stakeholders can support early learning systems. This was most recently demonstrated on

February 10, 2010, when a collaboration between United Way of Southern Nevada, the UNLV Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy, the Agassi Foundation for Education and the State of Nevada Head Start State Collaboration and Early Childhood Systems Office, with support from The Lincy Foundation, hosted the Nevada Business Summit on Early Childhood Investment. The summit met to discuss effective ways to invest in early childhood education and to further engage community leaders in creating solutions that would provide long term support and investments in early education and care programs. The summit speakers connected issues of employment opportunities, job readiness and economic trends with the need to invest in early childhood programs to enhance Nevada's growth and competitiveness in the United States and global economy.

Attendees had the opportunity to discuss local and national issues and provide feedback on effective strategies to further engage and inform the business and community leaders to promote quality early childhood programs in Nevada. Almost 150 participants took part in planning to promote private-sector support. Recommendations included:

1. Develop a unified message/vision for quality early childhood education in Nevada.
  - a. The message must be clear and concise, including not only the issue background, but also specifically what we need to do as a state to provide quality early childhood programs for all residents.
  - b. Increase communication and community awareness of existing quality programs and initiatives that are privately and publicly funded.
  - c. Utilize business expertise to develop and communicate the messaging.
2. Improve/enhance data collection systems and assessment tools used statewide in early childhood programs to be linked to a centralized depository of information.
  - a. Data and tracking outcomes will be essential to making the case for quality early childhood programs and demonstrating the cost benefits and long-term impacts of strong early investments in Nevada.

- b. Both national and local data (as currently available) should be utilized to move forward immediately and prioritize the implementation of strategies that will yield long-term positive outcomes.
3. Develop and implement a comprehensive social marketing campaign (based alignment of the message/vision) to promote nationally recognized standards of excellence in quality early childhood education and care programs.
  - a. Support state- funded resources such as 2-1-1 to provide data, resources, and specific action/initiatives for businesses, policymakers, parents, and advocates.
  - b. Engage multimedia partners and business leaders to deliver the message.
  - c. Engage professional associations such as local chambers of commerce, with messages that are tailored for the business community and provide specific action steps.
4. Coordinate and align groups that support quality early care and education to work in collaboration and move forward one agenda.
  - a. Support business leaders to engage with existing local and statewide collaborations, such as United Way of Southern Nevada's Commitment to Education Council and/or the State of Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council to ensure coordination of purpose, outcomes and funding.
5. Utilize business leaders serving on local and state Councils to coordinate, inform, and align public policy advocacy campaign messaging and engage policymakers at the local, state and federal levels.
  - a. Use unified message/vision, and social marketing campaign strategies to educate policymakers at the local, state and federal levels.
  - b. Support business leaders and community advocates to effectively interact with policymakers at all levels and deliver a comprehensive message.
  - c. Identify and prioritize local, state and federal policy changes required to initiate broad

based quality early childhood programs throughout the state. (i.e.: Review an expansion of Quality Rating Improvement System pilot, increase of child care subsidies and scholarships, improvement of teacher qualifications and requirements, and professional development training requirements.)

6. Provide education and support to implement individualized business strategies that promote quality early childhood. Examples include:

a. Provide information to employees regarding:

- i. Child Care Resource and Referral Services
- ii. Parenting and/or Child Care Seminars
- iii. Family Resource Library and Information Center
- iv. Distribution of Local Child Care Resource & Referral Newsletter to Employees

b. Implement or enhancing Flex-Time and Leave Policies:

- i. Flexible Scheduling, Compressed Time
- ii. Job Sharing, Part-time Options
- iii. Leave Policies

c. Provide--- financial support to employees through:

- i. Dependent Care Spending Account
- ii. Flexible Benefit Plans
- iii. Child Care Vouchers

d. Employer sponsored services such as:

- i. On-Site or Near-Site Employer Centers

ii. Partnering with Other Employers

iii. Family Child Care Network

iv. Back-up, Sick Child or Odd-Hour Care

v. Before/After School Programs, Summer Camps and Holiday Care

Much progress has been made on implementing these recommendations, in the past 18 months. In addition, key leaders who helped develop the recommendations have provided letters of support for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application. One such stakeholder, who is partnering with ECAC on behalf of the private sector, is United Way of Southern Nevada. United Way collaborates with volunteers, stakeholders and community leaders to implement key strategies designed to develop community-based solutions to our most pressing education, health and human service issues. United Way serves the Southern Nevada catchment area, which includes the greatest number of children in our state. They also are a major investor in services that support the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, as evidenced by the following.

- United Way is engaged in public policy advocacy to ensure our state increases their reporting on measureable outcomes and to lend our support to systemic change for the common good of all.
- United Way's focus on early childhood investments which are all private dollars produces high public returns, especially for children and families living in low income and depressed neighborhoods. The education initiative provides a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of children from birth to six years in age to ensure they enter school ready to learn, in good health and with the emotional and social foundation to succeed in their academic journey.
- In education, our United Way of Southern Nevada's (UWSN) seven goals for the targeted population of children ages 3 to 5 living below or within the 2011 Poverty Guidelines are met by providing: (1) tuition assistance for increased access to curriculum-based pre-kindergarten programs; (2) technical assistance, computers, technology and training to

Child Development Centers to develop business and marketing strategies and quality improvement plans; (3) professional development training and teacher certification scholarships for child care workers to obtain their Child Development Associates certification; (4) creating center-based Success By 6 Family Engagement Resource Centers to provide training and volunteer opportunities to families and staff; (5) providing social media education and awareness campaigns through ongoing community events and forums for health referrals and services; (6) partnering with local universities and research foundations to provide third party validation of captured data, measurements and reported results; and (7) building a longitudinal study in partnership with the Clark County School District (CCSD) to track the long-term success of students in their social and academic achievements.

**Since 2007 - 2011, United Way of Southern Nevada has provided a total of \$4,500,000 million private dollars from campaign designations, corporate gifts and foundation grants to support the local school readiness education initiatives.**

2007 = \$ 500,000

2008 = \$ 500,000

2009 = \$ 500,000

2010 = \$1,500,000

2011 = \$1,500,000

2010 Nevada Kid's Count Data documented an increase in the number of children and families living in poverty from 15% in 2008 to 18% in 2009. The current 13.3% rate of unemployment has greatly impacted the need for additional social services. As public funds have decreased and community needs increased, United Way identified the need for communitywide access to quality care and educational programs, low cost or no cost medical services and increased linkage of children and families to a medical home. These families are the "working poor" and are often employed fulltime on wages ranging from \$7 – 12 dollars per hour, without health benefits and fluctuating work hours; which are all the components that lead to unpredictable

income levels. Many families have lost their state funded child care subsidy due to an increase in under-employment and unemployment. The increased health, safety and well-being of young children living in poverty and toxic environments can be enhanced as they attend literacy-rich and nurturing educational preschool programs. There is a clearly identified need to support the scholarships for infants and toddlers to attend the same Center with their preschool siblings to keep the family intact and engaged.

The Tuition Assistance Preschool Scholarships (TAPS) is a vital and pivotal component that will track the return on investment by developing the educational capacity of high-risk children. Children will have the opportunity to attend high quality pre-kindergarten programs on a regular and long-term basis. United Way's long-term goal is to build the foundation for families and children that will lead to on-time graduation rates in Nevada.

All students from United Way's partner Child Development Centers are assigned a unique identifier by the Clark County School District for research purposes and to track student success each year, specifically the third grade Criterion Reference Test scores. Centers receive technical support and training to implement the Child Observation Record designed by High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, support for curriculum development and lesson planning, computers, professional development workshops, literacy enrichment arts in education programs and classroom mentors.

Families that have been impacted by unemployment and underemployment are no longer eligible for state funded child care subsidy and can apply for United Way's privately funded preschool scholarship program. Families participating in the scholarship programs sign a contract and are responsible to contribute 100 hours annually in family engagement training, activities and volunteerism. Annually, families provide a 50% match of \$2,990.00 dollars to United Way's \$2,990.00 dollars for each child to attend a fulltime program, all based on state subsidy reimbursement rate for 3- 5 year olds.

**During 2007 – 2011, United Way provided further support to ensure the well-being of the child and family is developed by investing an additional \$2,300,000 private dollars** into five health components that United Way community partners deliver and track: (1) referrals to clinics

and communitywide events to improve and maintain on-time age appropriate immunization; (2) education and access for families to locate a medical home; (3) increased enrollment in state-funded Nevada Check Up for uninsured children; (4) monthly health education and activities provided to families at partner Success By 6 Family Engagement Resource Centers; and (5) funding and training for health care providers and Center staff to increase use of the state registry WebIZ to track immunization records and to eliminate the costly and unnecessary duplication of shots. Each of these efforts aligns with and supports the approach in the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge approach.

All families will have expanded center-based opportunities to access immunizations, health and safety education, links to community resources, dental education, screenings, teeth sealants and referrals. Family engagement and training will also include childhood obesity prevention training and education, programs and activities that support increased physical activity and proper nutrition.

**One fulltime scholarship can provide 2,500 hours of early care and education for parents working fulltime or seeking employment (2,500 hours = 10 hours daily for 50 weeks).** Depending on individual family needs, partial scholarships help eliminate service gaps as the family seeks additional assistance through childcare subsidy funds, when available.

United Way's communitywide engagement and public policy advocacy is led by business leaders and community volunteers. The community leaders remain fully focused on alignment of comprehensive and innovative education and health initiatives to ensure all programs are cost effective with measureable short-term and long-term outcomes. United Way is focused on increased and measureable school readiness plans. Nevada lags the national average with just one in four children attending preschool, compared with nearly half of all children nationally, according to the American Community Survey. By leveraging community resources to build capacity in public/private education systems and providing increased communication and support to all students and families through family engagement opportunities, graduation rates will improve.



Over the last five years, United Way has established the protocol and programs with 45 Child Development Centers to meet the needs of families living within the 2011 Poverty Guidelines to have access to quality early care and education programs. The sustainability of the programs are pre-established and built into a four (4) year transition plan that includes: completion of teacher proficiency training and certification, stabilization of student enrollment, leveraging of operational funds, implementation of family engagement strategies and workforce development. Program success is demonstrated and measured by system generated reports and Growth Models at all levels which include the child, teacher, center and community partners. These reports are available year-round and for year-to-year comparison of trends. Results are measured yearly and utilized for program enhancements. Program measurements are focused on documenting significant gains in the child's developmentally appropriate acquisition of academic, social and emotional skills.

#### Building Capacity of Childcare Development Centers

Building capacity in high quality childcare centers is dependent upon teacher training, child assessment, individualized school readiness plans, curriculum development and mentoring.

United Way of Southern Nevada (UWSN) interventions that demonstrate support and alignment with the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge:

- Provide pre-school tuition scholarships
- Expand the number of UWSN partner childcare centers
- Support professional development of child care providers
- Provide technical assistance for staff to develop child-centered school readiness plans
- Collect school readiness data through child assessments to build developmentally appropriate lesson plans
- Develop mentoring programs for teachers and parents to be fully engaged in their child's academic journey

In 2007, United Way and Clark County School District partnered to establish the first community-wide public/private funded longitudinal study to track students from the partner Child Development Centers into the public school system.

During the 2011-2012 school year, the first group of students that attended United Way's partner CDC's will be entering 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. In Nevada, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is the first time a standardized test such as the Criterion Reference Test (CRT) is administered at the end of the school year. School readiness results are tracked with the families and UWSN will be working with CCSD to validate student performance on the standardized third grade Criterion Reference Test results which will provide additional guidance and structure to the project.

United Way of Southern Nevada continues to work with NDE, DHHS and with elected officials and the business community to support public policy that will improve the national educational ranking status of Nevada. United Way supports the statewide alignment of education standards, establishment of a school readiness plan in partnership with the Board of Education and increased opportunities to match federal and state dollars invested into early care and education with private dollars for maximum leverage and positive impact on children in Nevada.

In addition to preschool tuition assistance for children, United Way provides full scholarships for child care providers to earn a Child Development Associates (CDA) certificate. The training requirements include 120 hours of curriculum training and 480 classroom practicum for a total of 600 hours. During the last four years, 90 child care providers and directors have participated in the High/Scope Preschool Classroom Curriculum sponsored by United Way and 50 participants have received their CDA or renewed their CDA to continue working in the child care center. The balance of the 40 participants is support staff and directors and they earned 12 CEU's.

All professional development training on child assessment, program quality assessments, curriculum and arts in education is fully tied to Core Principals and the Nevada PK Content Standards for career development. All United Way funded training is listed on The Nevada Registry for approval and mapped to the Core Principals and PK Content Standards, which supports the proposal approach described herein.

The long-term benefits of providing professional development training to child care providers are: (1) establishing a career path in education and (2) increasing their marketable skills through workforce development. The students and families also benefit by interacting with providers that are focused on providing a well-rounded social, emotional and academic experience for the child in partnership with families. By increasing the quality of the preschool environments and curriculum, child care providers are better qualified to work with children and families on developmentally appropriate learning activities. As a result of these programs, children are better prepared for school and ready to learn.

Two United Way preschool program components are receiving national support and review including positive feedback from Brookings Institute scholars.

- United Way's partnership with Early Head Start supports the preschool siblings to receive home-based instruction and also participate in the center-based programs.
- United Way's collaboration of twenty-two faith based, private and corporate owned partner Child Development Centers all participate in the Southern Nevada Wolf Trap Early Learning through the Arts. The arts in education collaboration is the only project outside of Head Start Centers to partner classroom teachers and performing artists to develop curriculum together. The development of language and literacy lessons can be measured across all learning domains through the child observations and assessments.

Progress is monitored continually as data is collected, teachers are trained and focus groups are conducted with staff, parents and volunteer leaders. Feedback and reports are shared monthly with the United Way Board of Directors and our funders. Success is measured quantitatively and qualitatively through audits, workshops, reports and staff meetings to ensure the performance standards are clear, vision is shared and goals are achieved. Comparison growth reports are available by child, teacher, classroom and center on a daily basis and data collection is compiled during three time periods. Baseline data is collected during the first two months, followed by four months of growth documentation and the final data collection period is three months. The three time periods provides the teaching and support staff time to build their skills, develop curriculum, change modifiable issues, track the child's attainment of school readiness skills as well as develop the child's social and emotional growth. Family reports available in English and

Spanish are provided to families twice during the year. The reports highlight and compare the child's growth over the entire year. Families can also journal into the system to share their observations and anecdotes. An added benefit is that deployed military family members have daily access to the photos and anecdotes of their child and feel part of their child's life although they are not home. Grandparents and other family members can also have access to the child's anecdotes as the family permits.

Project success is measured by the Center's comprehensive use of all training, tools and resources in lesson planning, professional development and a demonstrated increase in the teacher's abilities to create and implement literacy-rich, developmentally appropriate curriculum in active learning environments. Results and outputs achieved during Years 1 - 4 for the Commitment to Education initiative(s) include:

- Approximately 668 full time tuition scholarships have been awarded to children providing a minimum of 1,670,000 hours spent in a high-quality early education and care environment at United Way's 65 trained partner Child Development Centers.
- Over 2,900 students ages 3–5 received instruction and care by trained professionals, and school readiness data was collected on all students.
- Each year, approximately 200 students enroll in Clark County School District and receive a unique identifier to track their grade level progress. In 2012, the first class of kindergarten students will be in third grade and United Way will design research to compare the students from our partner preschools with their peers to further establish the positive impact of school readiness programs and family engagement strategies.
- 58,500 professional development training and field hours were completed by 240 teachers, of which, 90 teachers completed 600 hours per teacher required to earn their Child Development Associates (CDA) or CEU credits.
- Financial assistance for the 50 Child Development Associate (CDA) licensing fees ensured CDA certified teachers are retained in the classroom.

- Yearly data files for four years have been downloaded directly to CCSD and UNLV's Center for Business and Economic Research to establish the basis for a local longitudinal study to track the long-term success of the students in their academic and social achievements.
- During the last 4 years, over 2,900 students have had baseline data collected that has been instrumental in developing individual lesson plans and literacy-based curricula.
- Approximately 800 students have enrolled in CCSD and received a unique United Way identification number for tracking purposes. The 2,104 student gap is attributed, in part, to children too young to meet the kindergarten age criteria and still attending CDCs.

United Way of Southern Nevada has entered into a five year partnership with the Clark County School District, the largest in Nevada. Preschool data of all students attending United Way's partner Child Development Centers is available to track each child's K – 12 academic journeys. United Way will continue to lead a community-wide effort to implement evidence-based and nationally recognized standards for students and families to achieve educational success and successfully transition from school systems into the workforce. Students and families will gain access to community resources to meet their basic needs. These collaborative efforts around educational achievement will embrace and invest in human capital gains. The Council's focus is to ensure students are consistently performing at or above grade level and achieving improved standardized test scores. The Nevada ECAC business representative, Vice President of City National Bank, Larry Charlton, also serves on UWSN's Commitment to Education Council. ECAC will continue to engage all partners, including the private sector in implementing the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge project as part of *Nevada's Promise*.

**BUDGET PART I: SUMMARY**

| <b>Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category</b>   |                             |                             |                             |                             |                      |
|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))</b>  |                             |                             |                             |                             |                      |
| <b>Budget Categories</b>   | <b>Grant Year 1<br/>(a)</b> | <b>Grant Year 2<br/>(b)</b> | <b>Grant Year 3<br/>(c)</b> | <b>Grant Year 4<br/>(d)</b> | <b>Total<br/>(e)</b> |
| 1. Personnel   | 461,930                     | 462,930                     | 463,930                     | 464,930                     | <b>1,853,720</b>     |
| 2. Fringe Benefits   | 149,101                     | 149,401                     | 149,701                     | 150,001                     | <b>598,204</b>       |
| 3. Travel  | 51,000                      | 51,000                      | 51,000                      | 51,000                      | <b>204,000</b>       |
| 4. Equipment   | 85,000                      | 0                           | 0                           | 0                           | <b>85,000</b>        |
| 5. Supplies  | 12,000                      | 12,000                      | 12,000                      | 12,000                      | <b>48,000</b>        |
| 6. Contractual   | 303,900                     | 1,228,800                   | 2,075,700                   | 1,665,300                   | <b>5,273,700</b>     |
| 7. Training Stipends   | 360,000                     | 1,938,000                   | 1,938,000                   | 1,962,000                   | <b>6,198,000</b>     |
| 8. Other   | 85,814                      | 40,814                      | 40,814                      | 40,814                      | <b>208,256</b>       |
| <b>9. Total Direct Costs<br/>(add lines 1-8)</b>   | <b>1,508,745</b>            | <b>3,882,945</b>            | <b>4,731,145</b>            | <b>4,346,045</b>            | <b>14,468,880</b>    |
| 10. Indirect Costs*  | 113,667                     | 84,563                      | 84,769                      | 84,974                      | <b>367,973</b>       |
| 11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners | 0                           | 6,937,167                   | 10,405,749                  | 17,342,917                  | <b>34,685,833</b>    |
| 12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance  | 100,000                     | 100,000                     | 100,000                     | 100,000                     | 0                    |
| <b>13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)</b>  | <b>1,722,412</b>            | <b>11,004,675</b>           | <b>15,321,663</b>           | <b>21,873,936</b>           | <b>49,522,686</b>    |
| 14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan  | 6,636,265                   | 6,070,065                   | 9,258,940                   | 9,258,940                   | <b>31,224,210</b>    |
| <b>15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)</b>  | <b>8,358,677</b>            | <b>17,074,740</b>           | <b>24,580,603</b>           | <b>31,132,876</b>           | <b>81,146,896</b>    |

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

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

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

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through contracts, interagency agreements, MOUs or any other subawards allowable under State procurement law. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

**Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency**

(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))

| <b>Agency Name</b>  | <b>Grant Year 1<br/>(a)</b> | <b>Grant Year 2<br/>(b)</b> | <b>Grant Year 3<br/>(c)</b> | <b>Grant Year 4<br/>(d)</b> | <b>Total (e)</b>  |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Nevada<br/>Department of<br/>Health and<br/>Human Services</b> | 5,295,535                   | 14,224,902                  | 18,390,384                  | 24,941,152                  | <b>62,851,973</b> |
| <b>Nevada<br/>Department of<br/>Education</b>                     | 3,063,142                   | 2,849,838                   | 6,190,219                   | 6,191,724                   | <b>18,294,923</b> |
| <b>Total Statewide<br/>Budget</b>                                 | <b>8,358,677</b>            | <b>17,074,740</b>           | <b>24,580,603</b>           | <b>31,132,876</b>           | <b>81,146,896</b> |

| <b>Budget Table I-3: Budget Summary by Project</b>  |                         |                         |                         |                         |                   |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))</b> |                         |                         |                         |                         |                   |
| <b>Project</b>                                      | <b>Grant Year 1 (a)</b> | <b>Grant Year 2 (b)</b> | <b>Grant Year 3 (c)</b> | <b>Grant Year 4 (d)</b> | <b>Total (e)</b>  |
| <b>K-entry Assessment</b>                           | 205,000                 | 2,353,716               | 2,550,575               | 3,244,291               | <b>8,353,582</b>  |
| <b>P-3</b>  | 2,260,065               | 2,260,065               | 2,260,065               | 2,260,065               | <b>9,040,260</b>  |
| <b>Unified Data System</b>                          | 741,263                 | 1,062,063               | 1,469,463               | 1,280,763               | <b>4,553,552</b>  |
| <b>QRIS</b>   | 237,353                 | 6,480,804               | 12,941,402              | 19,184,854              | <b>38,844,413</b> |
| <b>Workforce Development</b>                        | 3,788,847               | 3,850,647               | 3,850,647               | 3,874,647               | <b>15,364,788</b> |
| <b>Statewide Leadership</b>                         | 440,618                 | 411,514                 | 411,720                 | 411,925                 | <b>1,675,777</b>  |
| <b>Training and Technical Assistance</b>            | 685,531                 | 655,931                 | 1,096,731               | 876,331                 | <b>3,314,524</b>  |
| <b>Total Statewide Budget</b>                       | <b>8,358,677</b>        | <b>17,074,740</b>       | <b>24,580,603</b>       | <b>31,132,876</b>       | <b>81,146,896</b> |

Describe, in the text box below, the overall structure of the State's budget for implementing the State Plan, including

- A list of each Participating State Agency, together with a description of its budgetary and project responsibilities;
- A list of projects and a description of how these projects taken together will result in full implementation of the State Plan;
- For each project:
  - The designation of the selection criterion or competitive preference priority the project addresses;
  - An explanation of how the project will be organized and managed in order to ensure the implementation of the High-Quality Plans described in the selection criteria or competitive preference priorities; and
- Any information pertinent to understanding the proposed budget for each project.

**BUDGET PART I - NARRATIVE**



There are two state agencies responsible for implementing Nevada's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge: the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE). DHHS will serve as the Lead Agency, responsible for the majority of this project including the distribution of the largest portion of federal funding requested, which will be competitively awarded to local LEAs, Early Childhood Councils, and Early Childhood and Development Programs for providing high quality care to children with high needs. Almost 40% of the budget for implementing *Nevada's Promise* comes from existing sources within each department. This level of state commitment during some of the worst budget shortages in the history of the state, combined with the capacity building activities designed to result in lasting reforms to Nevada's early childhood comprehensive system, assures sustainability of that reform. Direct support of state and local efforts to improve early care and education environments for children with high needs in communities most hard hit by the economic downturn will result in higher quality care and better prepare children for school. This will be demonstrated by data tracked using the comprehensive assessment system described throughout this proposal.

NDE will participate in implementation of Nevada's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge as described in the attached MOU (see Appendix E). Together, the two State departments determined seven projects on which to collaborate in order to meet the goals iterated throughout this proposal. They are:

1. **Kindergarten Entry Assessment** – During the first year, facilitated planning and engagement of localities will be conducted to achieve consensus in selecting a common kindergarten entry assessment tool. This will be incorporated into the corresponding statewide data collection system to measure status of children's skills, knowledge and development upon school entry will be determined. The selected tool will not be used to screen children out of eligibility for kindergarten based on low scores, but to track where children are on a continuum of learning and development upon entry into kindergarten. Long term tracking of this data will allow state leadership and decision makers to see how reforms implemented as part of this project have impacted children's readiness for school over the period of four years of funding from this grant and beyond. Funding for this project will be used for developing the database, purchasing (or licensing use) of the

selected kindergarten entry assessment tool, and provide intensive education for kindergarten teachers and school administrators using the tool.

This project addresses selection criteria focused investment area (E) (1) and Priority 3, understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry. It also supports Priority 5, encouraging private sector support, by providing private sector partners with aggregated kindergarten entry assessment data, which can be used to inform selection of targeted communities as well as investment in efforts to improve early learning and development programs.

2. **Unified Data System** – In the first year of the grant, strategic planning will be conducted that includes a feasibility plan for building and implementing a unified data system for early childhood that accommodates cross-system information sharing and allows tracking of progress on performance measures for each child served by *Nevada's Promise*.

Common data elements that will be derived from the shared use of screening and assessment instruments will be defined during the first year of the grant as well. Planning will address how privacy laws and regulations will be maintained for each participating entity. NDE will include early childhood data into its longitudinal data tracking system. During the second year, the data system will be built and tested. During the third year, data in areas where children with high needs comprise the highest percentage of the population will be collected and aggregated. During the fourth year, data collection and tracking will be conducted statewide. Funds for this project support the building of the data system itself including estimated cost of contracts to build local and state level linkages to the statewide longitudinal database housed in NDE.

This project supports criteria (A)(3) Aligning and coordinating work across the State, (C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems and (E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies. It also supports Priority 5, encouraging private sector support, by providing private sector partners with aggregated data on early childhood, which can be used to inform selection of targeted communities as well as investment in efforts to improve early learning and development programs.

3. **Silver State Stars** – Nevada's tiered QRIS will center around the comprehensive assessment system described in this proposal including the Environmental Rating Scales (ECERS-R, ITERS-R, etc.), the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3), and either a list of formative assessment tools from which early childhood educators and programs can choose, or possibly the selection of one common assessment tracking the same domains and skills as the one kindergarten entry assessment. The decision regarding formative assessment will be made during the first year of the grant. Over the four years of this project, all publicly funded programs will adopt the comprehensive assessment system tools, enabling both public and private Early Learning and Development programs to participate in and be rated according to Nevada's Silver State Stars. Funding for this project primarily supports performance contracts with local early learning and development programs to improve the quality of their programs, as measure by tools described within Nevada's comprehensive assessment system, to children with high needs at no or low cost.

This project supports criteria in all of section B, promoting development of high quality, accountable programs by (B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, (B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System , (B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs, (B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs, and (B)(5) Validating the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. This project also supports all criteria in section C, promoting early learning and development outcomes for children by: (C)(1) promoting use of Nevada's statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards for infants through pre-kindergarteners linked to the K-12 standards; and (C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems. Silver State Stars promotes (C) (3) Identifying and addressing health, behavioral, and developmental needs and (C) (4) Engaging and supporting families by including these criteria in the star rating system.

Finally, Nevada's QRIS, Silver State Stars addresses Competitive Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the QRIS by committing to comprehensive

standards, based on use of common tools that can be used by private and public programs. Local contracts will be open to for profit, non-profit and publicly funded early learning and development programs that demonstrate how they will meet the requirements as measured by tools within Nevada's comprehensive assessment system.

4. **Workforce Development** – A high quality system of early childhood care and education relies on a highly qualified workforce. DHHS will fund professional development activities leading to credentials for professionals working with children in a multitude of Early Learning and Development Programs. Funding will be used to support teachers in attaining degrees, building on already significant investments from programs such as Child Care and Development funds.

This project supports both criteria in section D: A Great Early Childhood Workforce by (D) (1) expanding the use of and strengthening linkages between college coursework and not-for-credit training to Nevada's already existing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials, which Nevada already has in place; and (D) (2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in gaining the knowledge and skills needed to help children get ready for school.

5. **P-3** – Through continuing education opportunities and state conferences, NDE will use Striving Readers and Race to the Top funds to support a continuum of training to strengthen the instructional skills of early childhood educators working with children from birth through third grade, particularly in the areas of literacy and language, math and science, and social emotional skills. Common assessment tools will be used across programs serving these age groups and data will be tracked to determine effectiveness of these efforts over the period of the grant. Funding for this project supports two staff for NDE to support and promote local school districts in developing P-3 approaches to supporting children's learning to close the achievement gap.

This project supports criteria in focused investment area C by promoting all criteria described therein and promoting linkages between early childhood programs and kindergarten through third grade schools. It also addresses Invitational Priority 4: Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades.

6. **Training and Technical Assistance** – DHHS and NDE will work to develop training and technical assistance focused on using the tools in Nevada’s comprehensive assessment system and improving the quality of early learning and development programs to improve Silver State Star ratings, especially in communities with high populations of children with high needs. Funding for this project supports NDE staff to provide training and technical assistance to local school districts implementing a P-3 approach, and regional or state contracts to provide training and technical assistance related to use of the comprehensive assessment tools and increasing Silver State Star ratings of early learning and development programs.
  
7. **Statewide Leadership** – DHHS and NDE will employ staff to work together to provide leadership for Nevada’s Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge and the projects described herein. DHHS will create two new positions: one to provide leadership and one to manage the contracts related to implementing the project. No funding for staff is requested by NDE as they have appointed the position currently managing the State Pre-kindergarten program to serve as lead management staff for their Race to the Top related projects. Funding for participation in the required training and technical assistance related to Race to the Top is also included in this project (\$400,000), as are indirect costs incurred by NDE and operating expenses and supplies for DHHS related to it.

**BUDGET PART II**

**Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-1**

(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))

| <b>Budget Category</b> | <b>Grant Year<br/>1 (a)</b> | <b>Grant Year<br/>2 (b)</b> | <b>Grant Year<br/>3 (c)</b> | <b>Grant Year<br/>4 (d)</b> | <b>Total (e)</b> |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Personnel           | 150,318                     | 150,318                     | 150,318                     | 150,318                     | <b>601,272</b>   |
| 2. Fringe Benefits     | 55,617                      | 55,617                      | 55,617                      | 55,617                      | <b>222,468</b>   |
| 3. Travel              | 21,000                      | 21,000                      | 21,000                      | 21,000                      | <b>84,000</b>    |
| 4. Equipment           | 0                           | 0                           | 0                           | 0                           | <b>0</b>         |
| 5. Supplies            | 7,000                       | 7,000                       | 7,000                       | 7,000                       | <b>28,000</b>    |

*Nevada's Promise: Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application*

|  |                  |                   |                   |                   |                   |
|--|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 6. Contractual   | 220,400          | 1,200,800         | 2,047,700         | 1,637,300         | <b>5,106,200</b>  |
| 7. Training Stipends   | 330,000          | 1,908,000         | 1,908,000         | 1,932,000         | <b>6,078,000</b>  |
| 8. Other   | 5,000            | 5,000             | 5,000             | 5,000             | <b>20,000</b>     |
| 9. Total Direct Costs<br>(add lines 1-8)   | <b>789,335</b>   | <b>3,347,735</b>  | <b>4,194,635</b>  | <b>3,808,235</b>  | <b>12,139,940</b> |
| 10. Indirect Costs*  | 0                | 0                 | 0                 | 0                 | <b>0</b>          |
| 11. Funds to be<br>distributed to localities,<br>Early Learning<br>Intermediary<br>Organizations,<br>Participating Programs,<br>and other partners | 0                | 6,937,167         | 10,405,749        | 17,342,917        | <b>34,685,833</b> |
| 12. Funds set aside for<br>participation in grantee<br>technical assistance  | 100,000          | 100,000           | 100,000           | 100,000           | 0                 |
| <b>13. Total Grant Funds<br/>Requested (add lines 9-<br/>12)</b>   | <b>889,335</b>   | <b>10,384,902</b> | <b>14,700,384</b> | <b>21,251,152</b> | <b>46,825,773</b> |
| 14. Funds from other<br>sources used to support<br>the State Plan  | 4,406,200        | 3,840,000         | 3,690,000         | 3,690,000         | <b>15,626,200</b> |
| <b>15. Total Statewide<br/>Budget (add lines 13-<br/>14)</b>   | <b>5,295,535</b> | <b>14,224,902</b> | <b>18,390,384</b> | <b>24,941,152</b> | <b>62,851,973</b> |

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

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

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

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through contracts, interagency agreements, MOUs or any other subawards allowable under State procurement law. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

| <b>DHHS (Agency 1) Budget Table II-2</b>            |                             |                             |                             |                             |                   |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))</b> |                             |                             |                             |                             |                   |
| <b>Project</b>                                      | <b>Grant Year 1<br/>(a)</b> | <b>Grant Year 2<br/>(b)</b> | <b>Grant Year 3<br/>(c)</b> | <b>Grant Year 4<br/>(d)</b> | <b>Total (e)</b>  |
| <b>K-entry Assessment</b>                           | 160,000                     | 2,353,716                   | 2,550,575                   | 3,244,291                   | <b>8,308,582</b>  |
| <b>P-3</b>  | 0                           | 0                           | 0                           | 0                           | <b>0</b>          |
| <b>Unified Data System</b>                          | 404,549                     | 864,549                     | 1,270,649                   | 1,080,649                   | <b>3,620,396</b>  |
| <b>QRIS</b>   | 237,353                     | 6,480,804                   | 9,602,527                   | 15,845,979                  | <b>32,166,663</b> |
| <b>Workforce Development</b>                        | 3,788,847                   | 3,850,647                   | 3,850,647                   | 3,874,647                   | <b>15,364,788</b> |
| <b>Statewide Leadership</b>                         | 234,386                     | 234,386                     | 234,386                     | 234,386                     | <b>937,544</b>    |
| <b>Training and Technical Assistance</b>            | 470,400                     | 440,800                     | 881,600                     | 661,200                     | <b>2,454,000</b>  |
| <b>Total Statewide Budget</b>                       | <b>5,295,535</b>            | <b>14,224,902</b>           | <b>18,390,384</b>           | <b>24,941,152</b>           | <b>62,851,973</b> |

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount this Participating State Agency plans to spend for each Project in the State Plan. If this Participating State Agency has no role in a particular Project, leave that row blank.

Column (e): Show the total expenditure, across all grant years, for the Project.

The Total Statewide Budget for this table should match Line 15 for Budget Table II-1.

*The State must complete Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, and a narrative for each Participating State Agency with budgetary responsibilities. Therefore, the State should replicate the Budget Part II tables and narrative for each Participating State Agency, and include them in this section as follows:*

- *Participating State Agency 1: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.*
- *Participating State Agency 2: Budget Table II-1, Budget Table II-2, narrative.*

#### **BUDGET NARRATIVE FOR DHHS (LEAD AGENCY)**

##### **Personnel – total requested: \$601,272**

The DHHS Director's Office requests funding for two staff members to manage the project. The Executive Director (1.0 FTE) will provide overall management of the project including oversight of the grant, personnel management, and coordination with other state and local agencies and stakeholders. The Project Manager (1.0 FTE) will manage local, state and regional contracts related to the initiatives major projects utilizing performance contracting as a key strategy, including the early childhood data system. Salaries are based on equivalent positions within the department and are estimated as follows: \$79,114 for leadership position included in leadership project budget, and \$71,204 included in the unified data systems project to manage contracts and data. These positions are funded with no salary increases for the four years.  $\$79,114 + \$71,204 = \$150,318 \times 4 \text{ years} = \$601,272$ .

##### **Fringe – total requested: \$222,468**

Fringe for both positions requested by DHHS is calculated at 37%.  $\$150,318 \times 37\% = \$55,617 \times 4 \text{ years} = \$222,468$ .

##### **Travel – total requested: \$84,000**

The request for funding of travel is estimated based on statewide and federal travel costs for managing other federal programs. It allows for at least two trips per year to the rural areas, two trips per year to Las Vegas, and at least one trip per staff member per year of the grant period to attend meetings in Washington, D.C.  $\$21,000 \times 4 \text{ years} = \$84,000$

##### **Equipment – total requested: \$0**



**Supplies – total requested: \$28,000**

Supplies are defined as \$5,000 or less per unit. DHHS will provide facility space for grant-funded meetings, computers, software, accessory supplies for workstations, and general office supplies for new grant-funded positions. Printing and mailing costs related distributing printed project materials statewide area also included. Budget estimates costs at  $\$7,000 \times 4 = \$28,000$ .

**Contractual – total agency request: \$5,106,200**

This budget line item includes contracts over years two, three and four to develop and implement Nevada's unified early childhood data system (Year 1 planning:  $\$0 + \text{Year 2: } \$760,000 + \text{Year 3: } \$1,166,100 + \text{Year 4: } \$976,100 = \$2,902,200$ ). Planning for the first year is already allocated for in Nevada's Early Childhood Advisory Council's ARRA funding. Years two through four are estimate based on building and testing the system and funding local programs ability to link to the statewide early childhood data system. Also included are estimates for state or regional contracts for training and technical assistance related to using assessment tools and increasing Silver State Star ratings (Year 1:  $\$220,400 + \text{Year 2: } \$440,800 + \text{Year 3: } \$881,600 + \text{Year 4: } \$661,200 = \$2,204,000$ ). [ $\$2,902,200 + \$2,204,000 = \$5,106,200$ ]

**Training Stipends – total agency request: \$6,078,000**

Training stipends will support the kindergarten entry assessment project and the workforce development project. Training stipends for kindergarten entry assessment support already credentialed teachers will fund training specific to becoming a valid and reliable user of the kindergarten entry assessment tool. Stipends for workforce development will provide scholarships for early childhood educators to attain state approved and higher education credentials. No training stipends are budgeted for the first year of the kindergarten entry assessment since that is a planning year. The kindergarten entry assessment planning process will be funded by the Nevada ECAC's ARRA allocation. Years two through four estimate \$1.5 million per year for training every kindergarten teacher in the state to become a valid and reliable user of the selected k-entry assessment instrument. ( $\$1,500,000 \times 3 = \$4,500,000$ ). Training stipends for workforce development are estimated as follows: Year 1:  $\$330,000$ ; Year 2:  $\$408,000$ ; Year 3:  $\$408,000$ ; and Year 4:  $\$432,000 = \$1,578,000$ )

[ $\$4,500,000 + \$1,578,000 = \$6,078,000$ ]

**Other – total agency request: \$20,000**

This line item includes estimated costs for office space, utilities, phone and maintenance at \$5,000 per year ( $\$5,000 \times 4 = \$20,000$ )

**Total Direct Costs: \$12,139,940**

**Total Indirect Costs: \$0**

The DHHS Director's office does not charge indirect costs for managing federal grants.

**Funds to be distributed to localities: \$34,685,833**

These funds will be distributed through a competitive process to local education agencies in need of building capacity related to data tracking and linking to the NDE database for kindergarten entry assessment and to programs serving children with high needs and seeking to increase Silver State Star ratings to reach the top two tiers. No funding will be provided during the first year since planning will be taking place. Increasing funding for local education agencies is estimated to grow each year of implementation as follows. Year 2: \$693,716 + Year 3: \$1,040,575 + Year 4: \$1,734,291 = \$3,468,582). Budget estimates for Silver State Stars competitive awards do not include anything for year one as well, while evaluation of the current pilot wraps up and planning the formative assessment tools and data collection system is finalized during the first year of the project. Years two through four are estimated as follows. Year 1: \$6,243,451 + Year 2: \$9,365,174 + Year 3: \$15,608,626. = \$31,217,251 [ $\$3,468,582 + \$31,217,251 = \$34,685,833$ ]

**Total Funds Requested by DHHS: \$47,225,773**

**Total funds from other funding sources: \$15,626,200**

Early Childhood Advisory Council, Child Care and Development (CCDF), Maternal Infant Child Home Visiting (MICHV), Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems, and Nevada Early Intervention funding all support the DHHS Race to the Top projects. ECAC funds are supporting kindergarten entry assessment and the early childhood data systems development. CCDF is supporting QRIS and workforce development. MICHV is supporting kindergarten entry assessment. ECCS is supporting training and technical assistance, and the Part C Office is supporting workforce development. See table (A) (4)-1 for detail.

**TOTAL Race to the Top Agency Budget: \$62,851,973**

| <b>Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-1</b>  |                         |                         |                         |                         |                   |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))</b>  |                         |                         |                         |                         |                   |
| <b>Budget Category</b>   | <b>Grant Year 1 (a)</b> | <b>Grant Year 2 (b)</b> | <b>Grant Year 3 (c)</b> | <b>Grant Year 4 (d)</b> | <b>Total (e)</b>  |
| 1. Personnel   | 311,612                 | 312,612                 | 313,612                 | 314,612                 | <b>1,252,448</b>  |
| 2. Fringe Benefits   | 93,484                  | 93,784                  | 94,084                  | 94,384                  | <b>375,736</b>    |
| 3. Travel  | 30,000                  | 30,000                  | 30,000                  | 30,000                  | <b>120,000</b>    |
| 4. Equipment   | 85,000                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | <b>85,000</b>     |
| 5. Supplies  | 5,000                   | 5,000                   | 5,000                   | 5,000                   | <b>20,000</b>     |
| 6. Contractual   | 83,500                  | 28,000                  | 28,000                  | 28,000                  | <b>167,500</b>    |
| 7. Training Stipends   | 30,000                  | 30,000                  | 30,000                  | 30,000                  | <b>120,000</b>    |
| 8. Other   | 80,814                  | 35,814                  | 35,814                  | 35,814                  | <b>188,256</b>    |
| <b>9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)</b>   | <b>719,410</b>          | <b>535,210</b>          | <b>536,510</b>          | <b>537,810</b>          | <b>2,328,940</b>  |
| 10. Indirect Costs*  | 113,667                 | 84,563                  | 84,769                  | 84,974                  | <b>367,973</b>    |
| 11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                 |
| 12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                 |
| <b>13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)</b>  | <b>833,077</b>          | <b>619,773</b>          | <b>621,279</b>          | <b>622,784</b>          | <b>2,696,913</b>  |
| 14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan  | 2,230,065               | 2,230,065               | 5,568,940               | 5,568,940               | <b>15,598,010</b> |

|   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)</b> | <b>3,063,142</b> | <b>2,849,838</b> | <b>6,190,219</b> | <b>6,191,724</b> | <b>18,294,923</b> |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|

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

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

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

Line 10: If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.

Line 11: Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through contracts, interagency agreements, MOUs or any other subawards allowable under State procurement law. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

Line 12: The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.

Line 13: This is the total funding requested under this grant.

**Participating State Agency-Level Budget Table II-2**

(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))

| <b>Project</b>               | <b>Grant Year 1 (a)</b> | <b>Grant Year 2 (b)</b> | <b>Grant Year 3 (c)</b> | <b>Grant Year 4 (d)</b> | <b>Total (e)</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>K-entry Assessment</b>    | 45,000                  | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | <b>45,000</b>    |
| <b>P-3</b>                   | 2,260,065               | 2,260,065               | 2,260,065               | 2,260,065               | <b>9,040,260</b> |
| <b>Unified Data System</b>   | 336,714                 | 197,514                 | 198,814                 | 200,114                 | <b>933,156</b>   |
| <b>QRIS</b>                  | 0                       | 0                       | 3,338,875               | 3,338,875               | <b>6,677,750</b> |
| <b>Workforce Development</b> | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | 0                       | <b>0</b>         |

|  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Statewide Leadership</b>              | 206,232          | 177,128          | 177,334          | 177,539          | <b>738,233</b>    |
| <b>Training and Technical Assistance</b> | 215,131          | 215,131          | 215,131          | 215,131          | <b>860,524</b>    |
| <b>Total Statewide Budget</b>            | <b>3,063,142</b> | <b>2,849,838</b> | <b>6,190,219</b> | <b>6,191,724</b> | <b>18,294,923</b> |

Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount this Participating State Agency plans to spend for each Project in the State Plan. If this Participating State Agency has no role in a particular Project, leave that row blank.

Column (e): Show the total expenditure, across all grant years, for the Project.

The Total Statewide Budget for this table should match Line 15 for Budget Table II-1.

**BUDGET NARRATIVE FOR NDE (AGENCY 2)**

**Personnel – total requested: \$1,252,448**

NDE is requesting four FTEs to support and manage project activities. One position will manage the early childhood portion of the NDE longitudinal data system. Two positions will provide training and technical assistance related to tools in the comprehensive assessment system. One position would oversee the P-3 initiative including conference planning. Salaries are based on equivalent positions within the department and are estimated as follows. The early childhood data system manager would earn \$98,000 in year one with an annual increase projected at \$1,000 per year as follows: Year 1: \$98,000 + Year 2: \$99,000 + Year 3: \$100,000 + Year 4: \$101,000 = \$398,000 for the four years. The other three staff members are projected to earn \$71,204 per year with no salary increases. \$79,114 + \$71,204 X 3 people = \$213,612 X 4 years = \$854,448.

[\$398,000 + \$854,448 = \$1,252,448]

**Fringe – total requested: \$375,736**

Fringe for the four positions requested by NDE is calculated at 30% X \$1,252,448 in total salaries = \$375,736.

**Travel – total requested: \$120,000**

The request for funding of travel is estimated based on statewide and federal travel costs. It allows for trips to the rural areas, Las Vegas, and at least one trip per staff member per year of the grant period to attend meetings in Washington, D.C.  $\$30,000 \times 4 \text{ years} = \$120,000$

**Equipment – total requested: \$85,000**

Hardware will be purchased for the early childhood data tracking system that will link to NDE's longitudinal database.

**Supplies – total requested: \$20,000**

Supplies are defined as \$5,000 or less per unit. DHHS will provide facility space for grant-funded meetings, computers, software, accessory supplies for workstations, and general office supplies for new grant-funded positions. Printing and mailing costs related distributing printed project materials statewide area also included. Budget estimates costs at  $\$5,000 \times 4 = \$28,000$ .

**Contractual – total agency request: \$167,500**

During the first year, NDE anticipates a need to contract with outside sources for purchasing software development and application licenses for \$83,500. Each year thereafter NDE estimates it to cost \$28,000 per year to maintain the data system elements.  $\$83,000 + \$28,000(X3) = \$167,500$

**Training Stipends – total agency request: \$120,000**

Budget line item for training stipends the P-3 initiative based on an average cost of \$30,000 per year for training and certification events ( $\$30,000 \times 4 = \$120,000$ ).

**Other – total agency request: \$188,256**

This line item includes an estimated one time cost of \$45,000 for NDE to include kindergarten entry assessment tools into their battery of assessments. Also included is an annual estimate of other miscellaneous costs related to maintaining the early childhood data system at a cost of \$35,814 per year.  $\$45,000 + \$34,814(X4) = \$188,256$

**Total Direct Costs: \$2,328,940**

**Total Indirect Costs: \$367,973**

NDE has an agreed upon indirect rate of 15.8% with the federal Department of Education.

$$\$2,328,940 \times 15.8\% = \$367,973$$

**Funds to be distributed to localities: \$0**

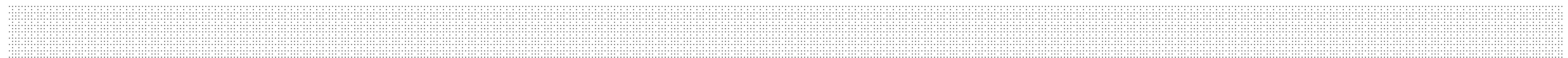
All local funds will be distributed by DHHS.

**Total Funds Requested by NDE: \$2,696,913**

**Total funds from other funding sources: \$15,598,010**

NDE has committed the early childhood portion of Striving Readers (15% allocation for serving 0-5 year olds) to alignment with Nevada's Race to the Top standards and assessment tools, as well as training and technical assistance. State Pre-K funding will be aligned during the next biennial cycle of awards in fiscal years 2014 and 2015. See table (A) (4)-1 detail.

**TOTAL Race to the Top Agency Budget: \$18,294,923**



**GLOSSARY**

**State of Nevada - Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge**

**Glossary**

AA-AAS = Alternate Assessment based on Alternate Achievement Standards

AB = Assembly Bill

ACS = American Community Survey

ACSI = Association of Christian Schools International

AEPS = Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System

AEYC = Association for the Education of Young Children

AFCARS = Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System

AGEP = Age (selected ages 0-5 which allowed for breakdown by each year), and POVPIP-  
Person poverty status recode (included 0-200% poverty level)

ANCOVA = Analysis of Covariance

ARC = Nevada Annual Report of Accountability (also known as Nevada Annual Report Card)

ARRA = American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

ASQ-3 = Age and Stages Questionnaire

ASQ: SE = Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social Emotional--An easy-to-use screening tool with an exclusive focus on children's social and emotional behavior - it's cost-effective, parent-completed, photocopyable, and culturally sensitive. Field-tested by professionals with thousands of families and enriched by their feedback, this research-validated screening system helps home visitors, educators, caregivers, and service providers assess children's social-emotional development at 6, 12, 18, 24, 30, 36, 48, and 60 months. With the results, professionals can quickly recognize young children at risk for social or emotional difficulties, identify behaviors of concern to caregivers, and identify any need for further assessment.

<http://www.brookespublishing.com/store/books/squires-asqse/and Stages Questionnaire – Social Emotional>

CACFP = Child Adult Care Food Program

CALF = COW Adult Learning Facility

CBCAP = Community Based Child Abuse Prevention



CCDF = Child Care and Development Fund

CCHC = Child Care Health Consultant

CCR&R = Child Care Resource & Referral

CCSD = Clark, or Carson City, or Churchill School District

CCSS = Common Core State Standards

CDA = Child Development Associate

CFR = Code of Federal Regulations

CKA = Core Knowledge Areas

CLASS = Classroom Assessment Scoring System

The CLASS™ observation tool is a measure of the effectiveness of teacher-child interactions in the classroom. Teacher-child interactions fall into three domains: Emotional Support, Instructional Support, and Organizational Support. Research has demonstrated that students in classrooms with higher CLASS™ scores make greater academic and social gains than those in classrooms with lower CLASS™ scores. The tool is valid across age-levels.

<http://www.teachstone.org/about-the-class/>

CLC = Cultural and Linguistic Competence

COP = Community(ies) of Practice

COW = Classroom on Wheels

CSEFEL = Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning

DAP = Developmentally Appropriate Practice

DAYC = Development Assessment of Young Children

DBDM = Data-Based Decision-Making

DHHS = Department of Health and Human Services

DUNS = Date Universal Number System

ECAC = Early Childhood Advisory Council

ECCS = Early Comprehensive Childhood Systems

ECDC = Early Childhood Date Collaborative

ECE = Early Childhood Education

ECERS-R = Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised--ECERS is one of four environmental rating scales. It is a tool designed to assess and improve quality of group programs for children of preschool through kindergarten age, 2½ through 5.

<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/>

ECSE = Early Childhood Special Education

ED = U.S. Department of Education

EDGAR = Education Department General Administrative Regulations

Educator = Refers to both teacher and principal, or any person performing tasks required in the process of educating.

ELA = English Language Arts

ELL = English Language Learners – synonymous with the term limited English proficient, as defined in section 9101 of the ESEA.

ELLCO = Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation

Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO) Pre-K Tool

The ELLCO Toolkit provides a means to identify the practices and environmental supports that nourish children's early literacy and language development in early childhood and early elementary classrooms. <http://www.brookespublishing.com>

ELO = Early Learning Outcomes

EOWPVT = Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test

ERS = Environmental Rating Scale--There are four environmental rating scales, each designed for a different segment of the early childhood field. Each one of the scales has items to evaluate: Physical Environment; Basic Care; Curriculum; Interaction; Schedule and Program Structure; and Parent and Staff Education. The scales are suitable for use in evaluating inclusive and culturally diverse programs. The scales have proven reliability and validity.

<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/>

ESEA = Elementary and Secondary Education Act

FAQ = Frequently Asked Questions

FFN = Family, Friend and Neighbor

Formative Assessment = Assessment questions, tools, and processes that are embedded in instruction, and are used by teachers and students to provide timely feedback for purposes of adjusting instruction to improve learning.

FTE = Full time Equivalent

GBC = Great Basin College

GSEG = General Supervisory Enhancement Grant

HCCN = Healthy Child Care Nevada

HGSE = Harvard Graduate School of Education

HHS = U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

High-Need Students = Students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special

assistance and support, such as students who:

- are living in poverty;
- attend high-minority schools;
- are far below grade level;
- have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma;
- are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time;
- are homeless;
- are in foster care;
- have been incarcerated;
- have disabilities; or
- are English Language Learners.

IDEA = Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IDEA is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities.

Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B. <http://idea.ed.gov/>

IFSP = Individual Family Service Plan --An interagency document developed for a child ages zero to three with special needs and his/her family. The IFSP is a single coordinated plan developed by the team, which includes parents and all providers who work with the child/family. The plan includes strengths, needs, outcomes/goals and services to be provided. <http://idea.ed.gov/>

ITERS-R = Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale-Revised

ITERS is one of four environmental rating scales. It is a tool designed to assess and improve quality of group programs for children from birth to 2½ years of age. <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/>

MIECHV = Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting

MOA = Memorandum of Agreement

MOE = Maintenance of Effort

MOU = Memorandum of Understanding

NAA = National After-School Association

NAC = National Accreditation Commission

NAEYC = National Association for the Education of Young Children--The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children from birth through age 8. NAEYC is committed to becoming an increasingly high performing and inclusive organization. Founded in 1926, NAEYC is the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children with nearly 100,000 members, a national network of over 300 local, state, and regional Affiliates, and a growing global alliance of like-minded organizations. <http://www.naeyc.org/>

NAFCC = National Association for Family Child Care

NAP-SACC = Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care

NCANDS = National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System

NCCIC = National Child Care Information Center

NCCP = National Center for Children in Poverty

NCCS = Nevada Child Care System

NCES = National Center for Education Statistics

NCSC = National Center State Collaborative

NDE = Nevada Department of Education

NECPA = National Early Childhood Program Accreditation

NEIS = Nevada Early Intervention Services

NERA = Nevada Educational Reform Act

Nevada's Promise = Every class will be led by an effective teacher, every school will be led by an effective principal, and every student will graduate.

NevAEYC = Nevada Association for the Education of Young Children

NICRP = Nevada Institute of Children's Research and Policy

NRS = Nevada Revised Statute

NSBE = Nevada State Board of Education

NSHE = Nevada System of Higher Education

NVPEP = Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents

OMB = Office of Management and Budget

OSEP = Office of Special Education Programs

P-3 = A continuum of curriculum centered around literacy, reading, math, science and social emotional supports, enveloped in family engagement practices from birth to third grade in local communities. This continuum includes: common teacher training on curriculum for those educating children birth to third grade; principal and superintendent support; smooth transitions between community based early childhood education programs and kindergarten; and supportive welcoming relationships with families.

PCAN = Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect

PIRC = Parent Information & Resource Center

POVPIP = Person Poverty Status

PPVT = Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test

Pre-K = Pre-Kindergarten

PTA = Parent Teacher Association

PUMS = Public Use Microdata Sample

SILVER STATE STARS = Quality Rating and Improvement System

RPDP = Regional Professional Development Programs – formed in 1999 by the Nevada Legislature to offer professional development to teachers and administrators, focusing on deepening content knowledge, effective use of best educational practices, and increasing student achievement.

RTTT = Race to the Top

SAIN = System of Accountability Information in Nevada – the data system designed to provide teachers and principals with accountability reporting, instructional change in the classroom, and data to measure teacher and principal effectiveness evaluations.

SIDS = Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

SLDS = Statewide Longitudinal Data System

SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium = A multiple state consortium formed to develop high learning achievement and successes in the educational community.

Student Growth = The change in student achievement for an individual student between two or more points in time. Nevada may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms.

TACSEI = Technical Assistance Center of Social Emotional Intervention--TACSEI takes the research that shows which practices improve the social-emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities and creates free products and resources to help decision-makers, caregivers, and service providers apply these best practices in the work they do every day. The goal of the TACSEI/Nevada Partnership is to plan, implement and sustain a professional development system to enhance the knowledge and skills of the early childhood work force in meeting the social emotional needs of young children, particularly those with or at risk for delays or disabilities in inclusive and natural environments.

TANF = Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

TEACH = Teacher Education And Compensation Helps--The program is designed to address a lack of early childhood education, poor compensation, high turnover, and the need for increased professional recognition for child care providers in Nevada. T.E.A.C.H. provides scholarships to any Family Child Care Provider, Center Teacher, or Center Director working in a licensed facility. This scholarship is a partnership, sharing the responsibility of Education, Compensation, and Commitment of increased professional development for Nevada's child care workforce. The scholarship provides 80% of tuition, 80% of Books, \$50 per semester for travel, and \$250-400 bonus in conjunction with a 2% wage increase. Recipients of the scholarship commit to working with the sponsoring center for an additional year, following completion of the scholarship. Scholarship covers three semesters and is renewable each year. <http://nevaeyc.org/teach/index.asp>

TSG = Teaching Strategies Gold

UNLV = University of Nevada Las Vegas

UNR = University of Nevada Reno

WCSD = Washoe County School District