

**Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge
Application for Initial Funding
CFDA Number: 84.412**



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**APPLICATION FOR INITIAL FUNDING UNDER
RACE TO THE TOP – EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE**

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Dear Colleague:

On May 25, 2011, we announced a new \$500 million State-level grant competition, the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC), and invited the public to offer input on ED.gov Blog. We received 199 responses about the competition. Six weeks later we posted the competition's draft Executive Summary, and the public submitted 349 opinions, suggestions, and comments. That discussion has launched a vigorous national dialogue about how best to reform early learning and development programs and make sure that children enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life.

Today, the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services are releasing the RTT-ELC final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria, along with the application.

This competition represents an unprecedented opportunity for States to focus deeply on their birth through five early learning and development systems and build a more unified approach to supporting young children and their families — one that increases access and quality and helps ensure that children enter kindergarten with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions they need to be successful. The RTT-ELC competition will provide incentives and supports to States that commit to and deliver high-quality early learning and development programs statewide and improve outcomes for children.

Through the RTT-ELC competition our agencies do not seek to institute another early learning and development program. Nor do we aim to maintain the status quo. Instead, we seek to challenge States to build a coordinated system of early learning and development that ensures that many more children from low-income families and disadvantaged children, from birth to age five, have access to dramatically improved early learning and development programs and are able to start kindergarten with a strong foundation for future learning.

The priorities and selection criteria aim to establish a comprehensive approach that better coordinates, implements, and evaluates high-quality early learning and development programs with a focus on giving families the information and support they need to encourage their child's development and learning and to select the best program for their child. Just as the first two rounds of Race to the Top were organized around four assurances, this competition is organized around five key areas of reform:

- Successful State Systems
- High-Quality, Accountable Programs
- Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children
- A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and
- Measuring Outcomes and Progress

We are heartened by and grateful for your participation thus far, and hope to continue having transparent and candid dialogues about early learning. Such national conversations inform our

policies and your agenda, help align all stakeholders around the best interests of children, and ultimately, ensure that our youth are ready to compete in the global economy of the 21st century.

Sincerely,

/s/

Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education

/s/

Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary of Health and
Human Services

I. INTRODUCTION

“If we raise expectations for every child, and give them the best possible chance at an education, from the day they are born until the last job they take ... By the end of the decade, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world.” (President Obama, State of Union Address, January 25, 2011)

A critical focus of the Obama Administration is supporting America’s youngest learners and helping ensure that children, especially young children with high needs, such as those who are low-income, English learners, and children with disabilities or developmental delays, enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life. A robust body of research demonstrates that high-quality early learning and development programs and services can improve young children’s health, social emotional and cognitive outcomes, enhance school readiness, and help close the wide school readiness gap^{1 2} that exists between children with high needs and their peers at the time they enter kindergarten.^{3 4}

To address this school readiness gap, the Administration has identified, as high priorities, strengthening the quality of early learning and development programs and increasing access to high-quality early learning programs for all children, including those with high needs. This commitment to early education is reflected in the RTT-ELC competition that we are announcing in the Notice Inviting Applications (the notice).

On May 25, 2011, Secretaries Duncan and Sebelius announced the RTT-ELC, a new \$500 million State-level grant competition to be held in 2011 and authorized under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), as amended by section 1832(b) of the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011. The Departments are administering this competition jointly. At its core, RTT-ELC demonstrates a strong commitment by the Administration to stimulate a national effort to make sure all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Through the RTT-ELC, the Administration seeks to help close the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers by supporting State efforts to build strong systems of early learning and development that provide increased access to high-quality programs for the children who need it most. This competition represents an unprecedented opportunity for States to focus deeply on their early learning and development

¹ Camilli, G., Vargas, S., Ryan, S., & Barnett, W. S. (2010). Meta-analysis of the effects of early education interventions on cognitive and social development. Teachers College Record, 112(3), 579-620.

² Reynolds, A.J., Temple, J.A., Ou, S., Arteaga, I.A., & White, B.A.B. (2011). School-based early childhood education and age-28 well-being: effects by timing, dosage, and subgroups. Science, Retrieved from <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/early/2011/06/08/science.1203618.abstract> doi: 10.1126/science.1203618

³ Princiotta, D., Flanagan, K. D., and Germino Hausken, E. (2006). Fifth Grade: Findings From The Fifth-Grade Follow-up of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99 (ECLS-K). (NCES 2006-038) U.S. Department of Education.

⁴ Halle, T., Forry, N., Hair, E., Perper, K., Wandner, L., Wessel, J., & Vick, J. (2009). Disparities in Early Learning and Development: Lessons from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Birth Cohort (ECLS-B). Washington, DC: Child Trends.

systems for children from birth through age five. It is an opportunity to build a more unified approach to supporting young children and their families--an approach that increases access to high-quality early learning and development programs and services, and helps ensure that children enter kindergarten with the skills, knowledge, and dispositions toward learning they need to be successful.

The RTT-ELC competition does not create new early learning and development programs, nor is it a vehicle for maintenance of the status quo. Rather, the RTT-ELC program will support States that demonstrate their commitment to integrating and aligning resources and policies across all of the State agencies that administer public funds related to early learning and development. It will further provide incentives to the States that commit to and implement high-quality early learning and development programs statewide.

As explained more fully in the notice, given the tight timeline for obligating funds and in order to provide States maximum time to prepare their applications for this competition, notice-and-comment rulemaking is being waived for this competition. Specifically, we are waiving rulemaking for the priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for this new competition under section 437(d)(1) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). However, we have solicited public participation in two important ways as we developed an approach to conducting and implementing this competition. First, we invited the public to provide general input on the program from May 25 through June 30 on the ED.gov Blog. In response to this invitation, we received a total of 199 responses, which we considered in our development of the notice. From July 1 to July 11, we posted on ED's Web site a draft Executive Summary of the competition, which included draft competition priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria, and we invited public input on each of these elements of the competition. During this period, we received 349 responses reflecting the viewpoints of a variety of individuals and early childhood, health, and education organizations. These we also considered in our development of the notice.

Current State early learning and development systems

Many early learning and development programs and services co-exist within States, including Head Start/Early Head Start programs, the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) program (pursuant to the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.)), State-funded preschool, programs authorized under section 619 of part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and part C of IDEA, and other State and locally supported programs. Each of these programs has its own funding stream and accompanying requirements, standards, expectations, policies, and procedures. Each also has its own unique strengths and makes unique contributions to young children and their families. For States, the challenges to be addressed by RTT-ELC are to sustain and build on the strengths of these programs, acknowledge and appreciate their differences, reduce inefficiency, improve quality, and ultimately deliver a coordinated set of services and experiences that support young children's success in school and beyond.

The RTT-ELC vision for State early learning and development systems

Through the RTT-ELC competition, we intend to fund applications that demonstrate a State's commitment and capacity to building a statewide system that raises the quality of early learning and development programs so that all children receive the support they need to enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Just as career and college readiness were at the heart of ED's Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2 competitions, a commitment to building school readiness for children entering kindergarten is at the heart of this competition.

As was the case with Race to the Top Phase 1 and Phase 2, the bar to receive an RTT-ELC grant will be high. And just as those first two phases of Race to the Top were organized around State commitments to four specific reform assurances articulated in the ARRA, RTT-ELC is organized around five key areas of reform. These five key areas represent the foundation of an effective early learning and development reform agenda that is focused on school readiness and ongoing academic success. They are central to this competition's priorities, requirements, and selection criteria, and are as follows:

- (A) Successful State Systems;
- (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs;
- (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children;
- (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and
- (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.

The first two of these, (A) and (B), are core areas of focus for this competition. As such, they are referred to throughout the notice as "Core Areas," and applicants are required to respond to all selection criteria under these Core Areas. The reform areas in (C), (D), and (E) are areas where applicants will direct targeted attention to specific activities that are relevant to their State's context. In the notice, we refer to these areas as "Focused Investment Areas," and applicants are required to address each Focused Investment Area but not all of the selection criteria under them. A discussion of the five key areas of reform follows.

A. Successful State Systems

Successful State early learning and development systems are built on broad-based stakeholder participation and effective governance structures. They are guided by clearly articulated goals and strategies designed to deliver a coordinated set of programs, policies, and services that are responsive to the needs of children and families and effectively prepare young children for school success. The RTT-ELC competition will support States that demonstrate a commitment to creating and implementing a successful statewide early learning and development system and that effectively organize and align that system to provide the diversity of services and supports needed by children and families. Such a system can provide continuity and consistent levels of quality across delivery mechanisms and levels of care and education. Thus, under the priorities established for this competition, States must propose and implement

ambitious plans for successful State systems of early learning and development that will have broad impact and can--

- Improve program quality and outcomes for young children;
- Increase the number of children with high needs attending high-quality early learning and development programs; and
- Help close the achievement gap between children with high needs and their peers by supporting efforts to increase kindergarten readiness.

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

The RTT-ELC competition will support States that develop a common set of program standards used statewide. This will help align programs such as Head Start, CCDF, IDEA, and Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA), and State-funded preschool to create a more unified statewide system of early learning and development. In addition, each State grantee must design and implement a tiered quality rating and improvement system that is based on consistent and demanding statewide program standards and that establishes meaningful program ratings. RTT-ELC promotes broad participation in the State's tiered quality rating and improvement system across a range of programs, active program improvement, and the publication of program ratings so that families can make informed decisions about which programs can best serve the needs of their children.

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

The RTT-ELC competition is based on the premise that effective programs and services for young children must be built on a set of early learning and development standards that define what children should know and be able to do at different stages of development. These standards provide guidelines, articulate developmental milestones, and set expectations for the healthy growth and development of young children. This competition rewards States that will implement high-quality early learning and development standards and comprehensive systems of assessments aligned with these standards. The implementation of these standards and assessments will ensure that early childhood educators have the information they need to understand and support young children's growth and development across a broad range of domains so that significantly more young children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

Improving early learning and development outcomes also requires that children are healthy and supported by their families. Services that address health and family supports are thus critical, and health and family engagement are key elements in high-quality early learning and development programs. RTT-ELC is designed to support States that focus on increasing access to quality programs and services that promote health and engage families in the care and education of their young children.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

In early learning and development settings, nothing matters more to children's success than the adults caring for and teaching them, and the RTT-ELC competition acknowledges the

importance of a strong early childhood workforce. Ensuring that children are ready for success in kindergarten depends on well-trained adults who have acquired the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively support the learning and development of every child. Thus, the competition will reward States that work closely with postsecondary institutions and other parties to define a set of workforce competencies that are tied to the State's early learning and development standards. Further, the competition encourages States to increase retention and improve educator quality by supporting their workforce with professional development, career advancement opportunities, differentiated compensation, and incentives to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Collecting, organizing, and understanding evidence of young children's progress across a range of domains is essential to ensuring that early learning and development programs are of high quality and that they meet the needs of every child. States are therefore encouraged to implement comprehensive data systems and to use the data to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies. In addition, through both a selection criterion and a competitive preference priority, States will be rewarded for implementing kindergarten entry assessments statewide that provide information across all domains of early learning and development, inform efforts to close the school readiness gap, and inform instruction in the early elementary school grades.

By organizing this program around the five key reform areas described in this section, the RTT-ELC competition will help lead the way for States to challenge and rethink the status quo. Not every State will receive an RTT-ELC award through this competition, but every State can use this competition as an opportunity to commit to comprehensively strengthening its early learning and development system and ensuring that more children, including those with high needs, have access to high-quality early learning and development programs and services.

II. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Background Information

Before you begin work on your RTT-ELC application, it may be helpful to understand the parts of the application. Each of these is described below.

- Requirements:
 - *Eligibility requirements* specify what applicants must have in place in order to compete for a grant. Staff from the Education Department (“ED”) and the Department of Health and Human Services (“HHS”) will make the eligibility determination.
 - *Application requirements* list the elements that must be included in a complete application.
 - *Program requirements* specify what applicants must do if they win a grant (*e.g.*, reporting, participating in technical assistance activities, publishing findings).
- *Definitions* set forth the meaning of critical terms in the notice; defined terms are indicated by initial capitalization.
- Priorities:
 - An *absolute priority* is a priority that all applicants must address fully in order to win; these will be assessed by peer reviewers as either “yes” or “no.” If an applicant does not meet the competition’s absolute priority, it will not be awarded a grant.
 - A *competitive preference priority* is one that earns the applicant extra, or “competitive preference,” points.
 - An *invitational priority* is one that will not be scored, but is of interest to the Secretaries. If an applicant addresses an invitational priority, then the applicant may apply funds from the grant, if awarded, to work associated with this priority.
- *Selection criteria* are the focal point of the application and the peer review. Applicants write narrative responses to these criteria, and reviewers judge their responses. Selection criteria in this competition may be supplemented by—
 - *Evidence*, including data tables and additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers; and
 - *Performance measures*, or data-driven indicators that States complete to define the outcomes they expect to deliver under the grant.
- Finally, *scoring rubrics* list the maximum number of points that can be earned for each selection criterion and competitive priority; in addition, they include other instructions that reviewers will follow when judging applications. All rubrics that will be provided to reviewers are included in this application, for the applicant’s information.

About the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Application

The RTT-ELC application asks you to address a variety of areas. There are two *Core Areas* that you must address: (A) Successful State Systems and (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs. In addition, there are three *Focused Investment Areas* that address: (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress. Within these three *Focused Investment Areas*, you must select and address--

- Two or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area: (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; and
- One or more selection criteria within each of the Focused Investment Areas: (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.

In addition, the application includes one absolute priority, two competitive preference priorities, and two invitational priorities.

Page Length Recommendations

Within the application, you will notice that there is a recommended page length for your response to each selection criterion; these are indicated in the application narrative box associated with each selection criterion. While you are not required to abide by these page limits, reviewers generally prefer brevity.

We recommend that you limit your total page count (that is, the narrative responses to all selection criteria in section VI) to no more than 150 pages of State-authored text, and that you limit your appendices to no more than an additional 150 pages. For all responses, we request that the following standards be used:

- A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Number each page.
- Set the line spacing for the narratives to 1.5 spacing, and use a 12 point Times New Roman font.

We strongly request that you follow the recommended page limits, although the Secretaries will consider applications of greater length.

Writing Application Responses

The application provides space for you to address the selection criteria and priorities.

Selection Criteria

Each selection criterion may have multiple parts: the narrative, evidence (often including data tables), and performance measures. Not all selection criteria contain all of these pieces.

- **Narrative:** All selection criteria include a narrative section. This is where you write your response to the criterion. Please type your narrative in the text box provided in this application.
- **Evidence:** Some selection criteria ask you to provide specific evidence; this is indicated in the application. You may provide additional evidence for any criterion if you think it

will help reviewers evaluate your application. Keep in mind that too much additional information could have the effect of distracting the reviewers from what is critical.

You must provide the evidence as part of your narrative response to the selection criterion, or include it as an attachment in the Appendix. If you put it in an Appendix, you must provide a clear reference to the Appendix within your narrative.

- **Tables:** Many selection criteria ask you to provide specific evidence in data tables; these tables are included in the application immediately following the narrative. The tables provide you with a framework for presenting information and provide reviewers with a consistent way to look at this information. You must complete the tables as part of your response. Feel free to provide additional data, in the form of graphs, tables, or diagrams, if it will help reviewers understand critical facts about your State. You may use the narrative to explain and describe the significance of the data as it relates to your State Plan.
- **Performance measures:** Several selection criteria ask applicants to provide performance measures, generally including baseline data and annual targets for key outcomes the State will deliver over the term of the grant. Tables for the requested performance measures are included in the application immediately following the narrative and data tables (if any). In addition, you may provide additional performance measures, baseline data, and targets for any criteria you choose. Peer reviewers will consider, as part of their evaluation of a State's application, the extent to which the State has set "ambitious yet achievable" annual targets; the State will be held accountable for achieving these targets, should it win a grant.

Note: If your State does not have data that are requested in the data tables or in the baseline performance measures, indicate "not available" in the table. Use your narrative to provide any additional explanation that may be necessary to make your point.

Appendix

Your application will include an Appendix. The Appendix must begin with a complete Table of Contents that provides reviewers with easy access to any attachment they are looking for. Each attachment in the Appendix must be described in the narrative associated with the relevant selection criterion, together with a rationale for how its inclusion supports the State Plan. Please also include in the narrative a cross-reference to the attachment's location in the Appendix.

Competition Priorities

The RTT-ELC competition also includes absolute, competitive, and invitational priorities. You must address the absolute priority throughout the application; you do not write a separate response to this priority. The absolute priority must be met in order for an applicant to receive funding.

A State that chooses to address a competitive preference priority may earn extra points under that priority. Follow the instructions associated with each competitive priority that you choose to address. A State may address either one or both competitive preference priorities.

Invitational priorities extend the scope or reach of the application; applicants are invited to address these and apply funds from this grant to them, but do not earn additional points for doing so.

The competition priorities can be found in section VII of the application. Responding to the competitive and invitational priorities is optional.

Competition Description and Scoring Rubric

For information on the competition review and selection process, see (a) the section entitled, Review and Selection Process, in the notice; and (b) section XIV, Scoring Rubrics in the application (Appendix B in the notice). In addition, point values have been included throughout the application.

Technical Assistance Planning Workshops

To assist States in preparing your applications and to respond to your questions, ED and HHS intend to host a Webinar for potential applicants on September 1, 2011. In this session, the Departments will provide applicants with an orientation to the application.

The Departments also plan to host a Technical Assistance Planning Workshop for potential applicants on September 13, 2011 in Washington, DC. To minimize travel burdens and maximize the number of potential applicants who can participate, this workshop will be conducted via video teleconference – a live, two-way link between the headquarters and the Departments' regional offices across the country. The purpose of the workshop will be to review the application requirements, selection criteria, and competition priorities in depth, and to answer your questions about the program. Participation in the workshop is strongly encouraged, either in Washington DC or at one of the regional offices. For those who cannot attend, a video recording and transcript of the conference will be available on the RTT-ELC Web site. The Departments may host additional conference calls and/or Webinars to answer applicant questions, if needed. Registration information and additional details for the technical assistance events will be available on the Race RTT-ELC Web site, so check it frequently:
www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge.

Frequently Asked Questions: The Departments will also prepare answers to frequently asked questions on a rolling basis, in order to assist States as they complete their applications. These questions and answers will be posted on the RTT-ELC Web site at
www.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge.

III. DEFINITIONS

Note: All definitions below are taken from the notice.

Children with High Needs means children from birth through kindergarten entry who are from Low-Income families or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, including children who have disabilities or developmental delays; who are English learners; who reside on “Indian lands” as that term is defined by section 8013(6) of the ESEA; who are migrant, homeless, or in foster care; and other children as identified by the State.

Common Education Data Standards (CEDS) means voluntary, common standards for a key set of education data elements (*e.g.*, demographics, program participation, transition, course information) at the early learning, K-12, and postsecondary levels developed through a national collaborative effort being led by the National Center for Education Statistics. CEDS focus on standard definitions, code sets, and technical specifications of a subset of key data elements and are designed to increase data interoperability, portability, and comparability across Early Learning and Development Programs and agencies, States, local educational agencies, and postsecondary institutions.

Comprehensive Assessment System means a coordinated and comprehensive system of multiple assessments, each of which is valid and reliable for its specified purpose and for the population with which it will be used, that organizes information about the process and context of young children’s learning and development in order to help Early Childhood Educators make informed instructional and programmatic decisions and that conforms to the recommendations of the National Research Council reports on early childhood.

A Comprehensive Assessment System includes, at a minimum--

- (a) Screening Measures;
- (b) Formative Assessments;
- (c) Measures of Environmental Quality; and
- (d) Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions.

Data System Oversight Requirements means policies for ensuring the quality, privacy, and integrity of data contained in a data system, including--

(a) A data governance policy that identifies the elements that are collected and maintained; provides for training on internal controls to system users; establishes who will have access to the data in the system and how the data may be used; sets appropriate internal controls to restrict access to only authorized users; sets criteria for determining the legitimacy of data requests; establishes processes that verify the accuracy, completeness, and age of the data elements maintained in the system; sets procedures for determining the sensitivity of each inventoried element and the risk of harm if those data were improperly disclosed; and establishes procedures for disclosure review and auditing; and

(b) A transparency policy that informs the public, including families, Early Childhood Educators, and programs, of the existence of data systems that house personally identifiable information, explains what data elements are included in such a system, enables parental consent to disclose personally identifiable information as appropriate, and describes allowable and potential uses of the data.

Early Childhood Educator means any professional working in an Early Learning and Development Program, including but not limited to center-based and family child care providers; infant

and toddler specialists; early intervention specialists and early childhood special educators; home visitors; related services providers; administrators such as directors, supervisors, and other early learning and development leaders; Head Start teachers; Early Head Start teachers; preschool and other teachers; teacher assistants; family service staff; and health coordinators.

Early Learning and Development Program means any (a) State-licensed or State-regulated program or provider, regardless of setting or funding source, that provides early care and education for children from birth to kindergarten entry, including, but not limited to, any program operated by a child care center or in a family child care home; (b) preschool program funded by the Federal Government or State or local educational agencies (including any IDEA-funded program); (c) Early Head Start and Head Start program; and (d) a non-relative child care provider who is not otherwise regulated by the State and who regularly cares for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting. A State should include in this definition other programs that may deliver early learning and development services in a child's home, such as the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting; Early Head Start; and part C of IDEA⁵.

Early Learning and Development Standards means a set of expectations, guidelines, or developmental milestones that--

- (a) Describe what all children from birth to kindergarten entry should know and be able to do and their disposition toward learning;
- (b) Are appropriate for each age group (*e.g.*, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers); for English learners; and for children with disabilities or developmental delays;
- (c) Cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness; and
- (d) Are universally designed and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate.

Early Learning Intermediary Organization means a national, statewide, regional, or community-based organization that represents one or more networks of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State and that has influence or authority over them. Such Early Learning Intermediary Organizations include, but are not limited to, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies; State Head Start Associations; Family Child Care Associations; State affiliates of the National Association for the Education of Young Children; State affiliates of the Council for Exceptional Children's Division of Early Childhood; statewide or regional union affiliates that represent Early Childhood Educators; affiliates of the National Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Association; the National Tribal, American Indian, and Alaskan Native Head Start Association; and the National Indian Child Care Association.

Essential Data Elements means the critical child, program, and workforce data elements of a coordinated early learning data system, including--

- (a) A unique statewide child identifier or another highly accurate, proven method to link data on that child, including Kindergarten Entry Assessment data, to and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the coordinated early learning data system (if applicable);
- (b) A unique statewide Early Childhood Educator identifier;

⁵ Note: Such home-based programs and services will most likely not participate in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System unless the State has developed a set of Tiered Program Standards specifically for home-based programs and services.

- (c) A unique program site identifier;
- (d) Child and family demographic information;
- (e) Early Childhood Educator demographic information, including data on educational attainment and State credential or licenses held, as well as professional development information;
- (f) Program-level data on the program's structure, quality, child suspension and expulsion rates, staff retention, staff compensation, work environment, and all applicable data reported as part of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
- (g) Child-level program participation and attendance data.

Essential Domains of School Readiness means the domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development), approaches toward learning, physical well-being and motor development (including adaptive skills), and social and emotional development.

Formative Assessment (also known as a classroom-based or ongoing assessment) means assessment questions, tools, and processes--

- (a) That are--
 - (1) Specifically designed to monitor children's progress in meeting the Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (2) Valid and reliable for their intended purposes and their target populations;
 - (3) Linked directly to the curriculum; and
- (b) The results of which are used to guide and improve instructional practices.

High-Quality Plan means any plan developed by the State to address a selection criterion or priority in the notice that is feasible and has a high probability of successful implementation and at a minimum includes--

- (a) The key goals;
- (b) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up over time to eventually achieve statewide implementation;
- (c) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;
- (d) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;
- (e) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan;
- (f) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;

- (g) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable;
- (h) How the State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and
- (i) How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs, as well as the unique needs of special populations of Children with High Needs.

Kindergarten Entry Assessment means an assessment that--

- (a) Is administered to children during the first few months of their admission into kindergarten;
- (b) Covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- (c) Is used in conformance with the recommendations of the National Research Council⁶ reports on early childhood; and
- (d) Is valid and reliable for its intended purposes and for the target populations and aligned to the Early Learning and Development Standards. Results of the assessment should be used to inform efforts to close the school readiness gap at kindergarten entry and to inform instruction in the early elementary school grades. This assessment should not be used to prevent children's entry into kindergarten.

Lead Agency means the State-level agency designated by the Governor for the administration of the RTT-ELC grant; this agency is the fiscal agent for the grant. The Lead Agency must be one of the Participating State Agencies.

Low-Income means having an income of up to 200 percent of the Federal poverty rate.

Measures of Environmental Quality means valid and reliable indicators of the overall quality of the early learning environment.

Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions means the measures obtained through valid and reliable processes for observing how teachers and caregivers interact with children, where such processes are designed to promote child learning and to identify strengths and areas for improvement for early learning professionals.

Participating State Agency means a State agency that administers public funds related to early learning and development and is participating in the State Plan. The following State agencies are required Participating State Agencies: the agencies that administer or supervise the administration of CCDF, the section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA programs, State-funded preschool, home visiting, Title I of ESEA, the Head Start State Collaboration Grant, and the Title V Maternal and Child Care Block Grant, as well as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, the State's Child Care Licensing Agency, and the State Education Agency. Other State agencies, such as the agencies that administer or supervise the administration of Child Welfare, Mental Health, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, the Child and Adult Care Food

⁶ National Research Council. (2008). Early Childhood Assessment: Why, What, and How. Committee on Developmental Outcomes and Assessments for Young Children, C.E. Snow and S.B. Van Hemel, Editors. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Board on Testing and Assessment, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12446

Program, and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) may be Participating State Agencies if they elect to participate in the State Plan.

Participating Program means an Early Learning and Development Program that elects to carry out activities described in the State Plan.

Program Standards means the standards that serve as the basis for a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and define differentiated levels of quality for Early Learning and Development Programs. Program Standards are expressed, at a minimum, by the extent to which--

- (a) Early Learning and Development Standards are implemented through evidence-based activities, interventions, or curricula that are appropriate for each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers;
- (b) Comprehensive Assessment Systems are used routinely and appropriately to improve instruction and enhance program quality by providing robust and coherent evidence of--
 - (1) Children's learning and development outcomes; and
 - (2) program performance;
- (c) A qualified workforce improves young children's health, social, emotional, and educational outcomes;
- (d) Strategies are successfully used to engage families in supporting their children's development and learning. These strategies may include, but are not limited to, parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and adult and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development;
- (e) Health promotion practices include health and safety requirements; developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow up; and the promotion of physical activity, healthy eating habits, oral health and behavioral health, and health literacy among parents; and
- (f) Effective data practices include gathering Essential Data Elements and entering them into the State's Statewide Longitudinal Data System or other early learning data system, using these data to guide instruction and program improvement, and making this information readily available to families.

Screening Measures means age and developmentally appropriate, valid, and reliable instruments that are used to identify children who may need follow-up services to address developmental, learning, or health needs in, at a minimum, the areas of physical health, behavioral health, oral health, child development, vision, and hearing.

State means any of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

State Plan means the plan submitted as part of the State's RTT-ELC application.

Statewide Longitudinal Data System means the State's longitudinal education data system that collects and maintains detailed, high-quality, student- and staff-level data that are linked across entities and that over time provide a complete academic and performance history for each student. The Statewide Longitudinal Data System is typically housed within the State educational agency but includes or can be connected to early childhood, postsecondary, and labor data.

Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System means the system through which the State uses a set of progressively higher Program Standards to evaluate the quality of an Early Learning and Development Program and to support program improvement. A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System consists of four components: (a) tiered Program Standards with multiple rating categories that clearly and meaningfully differentiate program quality levels; (b) monitoring to evaluate program quality based on the Program Standards; (c) supports to help programs meet progressively higher standards (*e.g.*, through training, technical assistance, financial support); and (d) program quality ratings that are publically available; and includes a process for validating the system.

Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework means a set of expectations that describes what Early Childhood Educators (including those working with children with disabilities and English learners) should know and be able to do. The Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, at a minimum, (a) is evidence-based; (b) incorporates knowledge and application of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards, the Comprehensive Assessment Systems, child development, health, and culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with families; (c) includes knowledge of early mathematics and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and literacy development in young children; (d) incorporates effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement; (e) includes effective behavior management strategies that promote positive social emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors; and (f) incorporates feedback from experts at the State's postsecondary institutions and other early learning and development experts and Early Childhood Educators.

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

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Office of Governor Mary Fallin	Applicant's Mailing Address: 2300 N. Lincoln Blvd, Suite 212 Oklahoma City, OK 73105
Employer Identification Number: 73-6017987	Organizational DUNS: 809929649
Lead Agency: Oklahoma State Department of Education Contact Name: : Superintendent Janet Barresi <i>(Single point of contact for communication)</i>	Lead Agency Contact Phone: (405) 521-3341 Lead Agency Contact Email Address: jcb@sde.ok.gov
<p>Required Applicant Signatures <i>(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.):</i></p> <p>To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct.</p> <p>I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:</p>	
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): The Honorable Mary Fallin	Telephone: (405) 521- 2342
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date:
Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): State Superintendent Janet Barresi	Agency Name: Oklahoma State Department of Education
Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Howard Hendrick, Director	Agency Name: Oklahoma Department of Human Services
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:

Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Commissioner Terry Cline, Ph.D., Commissioner and Secretary of Health and Human Services	Agency Name: Oklahoma State Department of Health
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Dave Lopez	Agency Name: Oklahoma Department of Commerce
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name):	Agency Name:
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:

State Attorney General Certification

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General Certification

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

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

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):	
Signature:	Date:

V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

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

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

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

List of Participating State Agencies:

The applicant should list below all Participating State Agencies that administer public funds related to early learning and development, including at a minimum: the agencies that administer or supervise the administration of CCDF, the section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA programs, State-funded preschool, home visiting, Title I of ESEA, the Head Start State Collaboration Grant, and the Title V Maternal and Child Care Block Grant, as well as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care, the State's Child Care Licensing Agency, and the State Education Agency.

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.

Participating State Agency Name (* for Lead Agency)	MOU Location in Application	Funds/Program(s) administered by the Participating State Agency
*Oklahoma State Department of Education	Appendix 6	State Education Agency; Section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA programs; State-funded preschool; Title I of ESEA
Oklahoma Department of Human Services	Appendix 6	TANF CCDF; State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care; State's Child Care Licensing Agency
Oklahoma State Department of Health	Appendix 6	Home visiting; Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant
Oklahoma Department of Commerce	Appendix 6	Head Start State Collaboration Grant

(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

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria are the focal point of the application and peer review. A panel of peer reviewers will evaluate the applications based on the extent to which the selection criteria are addressed.

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

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

A. Successful State Systems

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

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

- (a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;
- (b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;
- (c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and
- (d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

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

Evidence for (A)(1):

- The completed background data tables providing the State's baseline data for--
 - The number and percentage of children from Low-Income families in the State, by age (see Table (A)(1)-1);
 - The number and percentage of Children with High Needs from special populations in the State (see Table (A)(1)-2); and
 - The number of Children with High Needs in the State who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs, by age (see Table (A)(1)-3).

- Data currently available, if any, on the status of children at kindergarten entry (across Essential Domains of School Readiness, if available), including data on the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers.
- Data currently available, if any, on program quality across different types of Early Learning and Development Programs.
- The completed table that shows the number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years (2007-2011) (see Table (A)(1)-4).
- The completed table that shows the number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years (2007-2011) (see Table (A)(1)-5).
- The completed table that describes the current status of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards for each of the Essential Domains of School Readiness, by age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers (see Table (A)(1)-6).
- The completed table that describes the elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-7).
- The completed table that describes the elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-8).
- The completed table that describes the elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State by different types of Early Learning and Development Programs or systems (see Table (A)(1)-9).
- The completed table that describes all early learning and development workforce credentials currently available in the State, including whether credentials are aligned with a State Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have each type of credential (see Table (A)(1)-10).
- The completed table that describes the current status of postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators (see Table (A)(1)-11).
- The completed table that describes the current status of the State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment (see Table (A)(1)-12).
- The completed table that describes all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State (see Table (A)(1)-13).

(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

Oklahoma has a well-earned reputation for its investment in high-quality early learning programs. **(See Tables (A)(1)-1 through (A)(1)-4)** Its preschool program meets high quality standards, and serves a higher percentage of 4-year-olds than any other state's; it has the nation's oldest

quality rating and improvement system, and a child care regulatory framework rated by The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) in its 2011 report *We Can Do Better* as the best in the nation (with the second best rating for oversight and regulation, behind only the Department of Defense (DoD)); home visitation programs that serve over 6,000 families with an annual investment of more than \$33 million in federal, state, local, and private funds; and strong Head Start and Early Head Start programs, including three Educare Centers in the state. Oklahoma's commitment to state, local, and philanthropic investment in early childhood is strong, and puts it in an outstanding position to successfully leverage federal resources to improve child outcomes.

Total state funding increased by \$49 million – 13.6% -- from FY 2007 through FY 2011, despite a drop-off during FY 2010 and FY 2011 that reflected an overall reduction in the state budget due to difficult economic times. All programs in state government faced reductions; early childhood programs were not singled out or cut disproportionately. Oklahoma has strong public-private partnerships that support early childhood investments, and local philanthropy provided assistance in offsetting state funding cuts. In the economic downturn the number of children who live in poverty has increased, thus creating higher demand for services and resources from publicly funded programs the rate of children, under the age of five, living in poverty rose between FY 2007 until FY 2010. There was a 4.6% increase in the number of children living in poverty during this time frame.

In Oklahoma 21% of children live below the poverty level, with significant poverty in both urban and rural areas. Children with High Needs can be served through Head Start, child care, Pre-K, and Tribal Child Care. Only families who require care outside the home are served in child care programs. Through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF), funding is sufficient to cover all the children in Oklahoma that meet eligibility requirements.

However, Oklahoma's commitment to providing early care and education programs continues in spite of difficult economic conditions. A growing network of business professionals was formed in 2010 to help create an awareness of the importance of establishing quality early childhood programs and encourage continued investments in Oklahoma's youngest children and their families. This group, coined the OK-CEO (Oklahoma Champions for Early Opportunities),

is a network that is sponsored in collaboration with the Potts Family Foundation, the Oklahoma Business Roundtable and Smart Start Oklahoma.

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

Oklahoma provides a wide range of voluntary early learning and development programs to ensure that its children are ready to succeed when they enter school. Many of these programs have experienced increasing enrollments since 2007, and efforts to expand capacity have continued as demand has increased. Once again, private philanthropy and local partnerships have driven the state to a high level of participation by Children with High Needs.

The programs that serve Children with High Needs include the Oklahoma Pre-K program, Head Start/Early Head Start, child care, home visiting, the State Pilot Early Childhood Program, Educare, Parents as Teachers, and IDEA Part B and Part C.

(i) Oklahoma Pre-K Program (Pre-K): The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) was a pioneer in developing voluntary state-wide Pre-K programs and continues to enroll more 4-year-olds in state Pre-K than any other state. The Pre-K program was created as a pilot in 1980 and in 1998, Oklahoma became the second state in the US to offer Pre-K to all 4-year-olds. Funding for the program is incorporated into the state's formula funds for school districts so that funds are targeted to districts with the greatest economic and financial need. Incentives are provided to Districts who offer the program to receive more state aid. Oklahoma is one of just five states funding Pre-K through the state aid formula with unrestricted eligibility and no cap on total funding.⁷ The program has been identified as a cost-effective alternative to the high-intensity programs that have shown impressive student gains but reach small numbers of students.⁸

In 2009-10, Oklahoma served 37,256 4-year-olds in Pre-K, about 71% of the population. Enrollment has grown by nearly 30% since 2002. The state spent \$4,477 per student in 2009-10 which is above the national average. In 2010, 98% of school districts offered half- or full-day

⁷ Boylan, Ellen and White, Shad. (2010). *Formula for Success: Adding High Quality Pre-K to State School Funding Formulas*. Washington: The Pew Center on the States. Education Reform Series.

⁸ Bartik, Timothy J., Gormley, William, and Adelstein, Shirley. (2011). *Earnings Benefits of Tulsa's Pre-K Program for Different Incomes*. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Working Paper 11-176.

Pre-K, though many had more demand than available space. Many districts expand their Pre-K capacity by collaborating with private child care providers and/or Head Start grantees. More than 5,500 students participated in one of these collaborations in 2009-10. While not all of the children served by the program are Children with High Needs, the Oklahoma State Department of Education estimates that from January 2007 to the present the number of Children with High Needs enrolled in Pre-K increased by 9.6%, from 15,999 to 17,542.

(ii) Head Start/Early Head Start: Head Start/Early Head Start services are provided across the state in a wide range of settings. In 2010, there were 20,649 children and 203 pregnant women enrolled in Oklahoma Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS) programs. As in all states, the vast majority of these children (18,239) were ages 3 and over. Oklahoma's Head Start programs make creative use of funds and resources to maximize services in a period of flat or declining resources. In 2009-2010, Oklahoma invested \$110 million of grant funds in Head Start/Early Head Start programs operated by local community-based organizations, schools, and Indian tribes. Continuing state budget shortfalls have resulted in a 16% reduction in state funds from 2005 to \$2.5 million in 2010. Oklahoma has made significant progress in expanding EHS services with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) grants. In total, 12 grantees created 862 additional slots for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Of the 12, 6 were new grantees. As a result of this investment, EHS is now available in an additional 14 counties. Collaboration also has been an important element in maximizing Head Start services. Oklahoma has an extensive network of Pre-K collaborations with community providers, particularly Head Start providers. These collaborations allow Head Start programs to offer the public school four-year-old curriculum, taught by an early childhood certified teacher who holds a bachelor degree yet maintain compliance with the Head Start regulations.

(iii) Child Care: The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) operates the state's child care licensing, Quality Rating and Improvement System (Reaching for the Stars) and the state child care subsidy program. Investment in the child care subsidy has changed for grown from SFY2007 to 2011 from \$174,054,377 to \$180,757,347 (projected). The subsidy investment by the state has grown considerably since the quality rating system was initiated in 1998, when it was \$46,693,860 (FY 1998).

Subsidy in Oklahoma is funded through a combination of funding sources including the

CCDF block grant, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), state funds, and TANF contributions. The child care subsidy in Oklahoma serves low income children and children in OKDHS child welfare custody or child welfare prevention programs. Oklahoma provides subsidized care for 47,739 children ages 0-4. From January 2007 to present, the number of Children with High Needs enrolled in child care decreased by 6,073 children, or 11%.

In June 2011, OKDHS licensed 4,376 facilities with total capacity of 136,816 children. Forty percent of these facilities were centers, providing 83% of the state's licensed care capacity.

(iv) The Oklahoma State Pilot Early Childhood Program (SPP) demonstrates Oklahoma's ability and willingness to use state and private resources to create a network of high-quality early learning and development programs. It offers a holistic approach to early care that couples high teacher qualifications and ongoing professional development with a concern for families' needs and economic success in their communities. Funding from the State Pilot Program provides classroom supports to enhance quality, including salary supplements for degreed teachers and additional staff to lower adult-child ratios. The program also supports construction projects, and the provision of training and supports to early childhood educators. Services are offered through a diverse network of public schools, tribal care, non-profit providers, for-profit child care centers, Head Start agencies, Educare, and child care programs for teen mothers and technical institute students. During FY 2011, 1,965 children were served by enhanced funding available through the SPP. This represents an increase of 172% from January 2007 when only 720 children were served.

The program currently is funded by \$10 million in state funds appropriated through the State Department of Education and \$15 million in matching private funds. Funding has grown slightly over the five years of the program in spite of economic and budgetary distress.

(v) Home visiting: The Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) provides leadership for the state's two largest home visiting programs: Children First and Start Right. These home visitation programs serve nearly 5,000 families with an annual investment of more than \$14 million in federal, state, and local funds. The two programs include:

- Children First, Oklahoma's Nurse-Family Partnership program, offers home visiting services to low-income, pregnant women expecting their first child and may continue until the child's second birthday. A woman must enroll prior to the 29th week of

pregnancy. The household income cannot be greater than 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. Services are delivered by Registered Nurses through county health departments. During State FY 2011, services were provided in 69 of Oklahoma's 77 counties, serving just over 3,600 families. Start Right, which utilizes the Healthy Families America model, provides services to first-time mothers after the 29th week of pregnancy, pregnant women expecting the birth of a subsequent child and/or parents who have a child less than one year of age and may continue until the child's sixth birthday. The Kempe Family Stress Checklist is used to determine if the family has risk factors for child maltreatment and would benefit from the program. During State FY 2011, this program provided services to 1,220 families in approximately 40 counties.

Oklahoma's commitment to increasing home visitation programs continued in 2010, when Oklahoma applied for and received a Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant. The grant will increase home visitation resources in the state's two highest-needs counties, Kay and Garfield Counties, with plans to serve up to 250 additional families by expanding all home visiting programs: Children First, Start Right, and Oklahoma Parents as Teachers.

Oklahoma was recently awarded one of the few Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Expansion Grants, for \$9.43 million. This grant will fund four additional counties --including Tulsa and Oklahoma Counties, the state's two most populated counties. It will also provide for an improved data collection system, marketing, and an independent evaluation. All states are required to report on specific benchmarks and constructs including school readiness indicators.

From 2007 to the present, the estimated number of Children with High Needs in Oklahoma served by home visiting programs decreased by 924 (17%).

(vi) *The Oklahoma Parents as Teachers program (OPAT)* was initiated by the State Department of Education in 1992. The Department contracts with approximately 100 school districts for services. Following the Parents as Teachers model, OPAT home visitors serve approximately 3,600 families annually. The program is free and voluntary for all families with children birth through 36 months. Services offered include parent group meetings, developmental screening, and referrals to health and community services, and the program

establishes an early partnership between families and schools. While not all of the children served by the program are Children with High Needs, the Department of Education estimates that from January 2007 to the present the estimated number of Children with High Needs enrolled in OPAT decreased by 464 (12%).

(vii) IDEA Part B and Part C: These programs are administered through the OSDE. OSDE contracts with the Oklahoma State Department of Health to deliver SoonerStart (Part C) services to families, and directly employ regional staff to ensure program compliance. Local school districts are responsible for providing services to children 3-5 who are eligible for Part B services, and 4 year olds participate in Pre-K programs. From 2007 to 2011, enrollment in these programs increased by 400 children (6%).

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

Oklahoma has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to creating and supporting legislation and state policies to implement early childhood programs. Overall its policies have placed a high emphasis on quality across all program settings.

(i) State Pre-K

During the 1990's grass roots level support gained momentum to garner legislative support for establishing Pre-K programs and quality rating and improvement systems in child care programs. Funding for the voluntary Oklahoma Pre-K program is established in the school funding formula and has been provided universally to 4-year-olds in 98% of school districts. Oklahoma leads the country in the percentage of four year olds enrolled in Pre-K⁹, and the number of classrooms and full-day programs continue to grow.

(ii) Child Care

As noted above, the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) in its 2011 report *We Can Do Better*¹⁰ rated Oklahoma as first in the nation for child care center regulations and second in the nation overall for oversight and regulation behind the Department of Defense (DoD).

A recent independent study ranked Oklahoma's subsidy program third among the 50

⁹ National Institute of Early Education Research. (2011). *The State of Preschool 2010: The State of Preschool Yearbook*. Washington.

¹⁰ National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. (2011). *We Can Do Better*.

states for effective assistance to families. Oklahoma ranked in the top 10 in 2009 in four of the seven categories studied, including income eligibility, enhanced payment for higher quality care, certification period, and lack of a waiting list. Oklahoma's payment rate for providers and co-payment levels were also in the top half of states. This showed that Oklahoma reaches a higher proportion of eligible children than other states. Subsidies supported 13% of low-income children in Oklahoma, compared to 9% in a representative sample of states.¹¹

Oklahoma's subsidy program encourages use of quality care through an aggressive tiered reimbursement system. Since 1998 OKDHS has operated a Statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) called "Reaching for the Stars," which is designed using both quality criteria and tiered reimbursement. Oklahoma's 67% premium for the highest quality of care is well above the 19% average of states that use tiered reimbursement. As a result, children in subsidy enjoy a higher level of care than the population as a whole. In March 2011, subsidy children represented just 8% of capacity at the two lowest star levels and 38% at the highest two. The density of subsidy children is highest (43%) at the top star level, which includes only nationally accredited providers.

Oklahoma was the first state in the nation to successfully implement an electronic payment system for child care services, facilitating accuracy in the administration of federal funds and reduction in fraud and abuse of the child care subsidy payment. Providers receive payment quickly and more accurately than the previous paper system. Since 1997 the cost savings to tax payers has been \$3 million annually. This project has been recognized nationally and through a recent international recognition by Forbes for "Best Outsourcing Project" through the partnership with ACS (Affiliated Computer Systems, Inc.).

The Oklahoma Child Care Facilities Licensing Act (10 O.S., § 401-410), enacted in 1963, authorizes the Oklahoma Department of Human Services to administer the child care licensing program. This responsibility includes developing minimum requirements for child care facilities, revising existing requirements, and implementing policies and procedures for the licensing program. The foundation of quality child care is a strong licensing program. Working closely with the Child Care Advisory Committee, Oklahoma Child Care Services (OCCS) works with

¹¹ Community Action Project. (In press). *Better Benefits for Oklahoma Families*.

providers to ensure licensing requirements are met that safeguard the health and safety of children while in care. OCCS staff work closely together both locally and statewide to ensure compliance with licensing requirements and star criteria.

(iii) Infants and toddlers

The Oklahoma State Pilot Program, referenced in (A)(1)(b) above, was created in 2006 to implement high-quality infant and toddler care for at-risk children and families in a range of settings. Enabling legislation (70 Oklahoma Statutes §10-105.4) requires the program be offered in at least one rural and one urban area and that private funds match state funds on a two-to-one basis. The SPP offers services equivalent to Early Head Start. SPP funds are used either to enhance existing classrooms or to add new classrooms, all in existing facilities.

The Parent Education Program is authorized in Section 10-105.3 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes. This authorization supports the Oklahoma Parents as Teachers program, described above in (A)(1)(b).

(iv) Screening and referral services

The Child Guidance Program provides center based screening, assessment, parenting and treatment services to all families regardless of income on a sliding fee scale. Services to families below 185% of FPL may receive services at no cost. The Oklahoma Child Care Warmline and the Oklahoma Child Care Consultation network are administered through the Child Guidance Program, and these services are supported through the CCDF, and targeted to child care providers who receive subsidy payments.

(iv) Special Education

The OSDE is designated in state statute as the lead agency for the provision of services authorized under IDEA Part B and Part C services. Part B services are provided through local school districts. Oklahoma's SoonerStart program provides services to families with children birth to three who are identified with developmental delays and/or congenital conditions that have a probability of resulting in a delay. The OSDE assures that services are in compliance with state and federal law, and the OSDH is contracted to provide assessment, evaluation and intervention services with children referred to the program. SoonerStart is designated in state statute (70 Oklahoma Statutes sections 13-121-13-129 (2001), as amended) as a collaborative model, with state agency leadership identified in the OSDE, OSDH, OKDHS, and the Oklahoma

Commission on Children and Youth (OCCY).

(v) Interagency coordination

Oklahoma has enacted legislation and state practices to support interagency planning efforts to improve the coordination of the early childhood system. In 2003 the "Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act" was created to form Oklahoma's public-private school readiness initiative (HB 1094). The Act authorized the formation of two entities, the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Board (OPSR) and a supporting foundation, the OPSR Foundation (OPSRF). The Partnership board branded the initiative as Smart Start Oklahoma. Smart Start Oklahoma is supported through state, federal and private funds and has a statewide presence in eighteen local communities. At both the state and local community level, Smart Start convenes early childhood stakeholders to develop coordination and collaboration of services for Oklahoma's youngest citizens and their families. In 2010, OPSR was legislatively named as Oklahoma's State Early Childhood Advisory Council (HB 3126).

The Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant is administered through the OSDH and provides funding for a Coordinator. The ECCS Coordinator provides technical assistance and support to the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) and consultation to the OCCS at OKDHS.

Oklahoma also makes special efforts to coordinate its home visiting programs through the Home Visitation Leadership Advisory Coalition. The coalition meets bi-monthly to identify and address common issues, coordinate services at the management level, and create joint materials for training and reporting.

In 2008, the Oklahoma State Board of Health, concerned about the state's low ranking on important health status indicators, convened a strategic planning retreat to chart a course of improvement. An Oklahoma Health Improvement Planning (OHIP) team emerged as an outgrowth of this effort which included key workgroups targeted on three flagship initiatives: 1) children's health improvement; 2) obesity reduction; and 3) tobacco use prevention. The team developed an Oklahoma Health Improvement Plan in 2009 which included recommendations related to 1) public finance; 2) workforce development; 3) access to care; and 4) health system effectiveness.

(vi) Educare: Educare provides high quality early childhood programs for some of

Oklahoma's neediest children. Currently, Oklahoma leads the nation in the number of Educare programs in the country with three Educare programs, two in Tulsa and one in Oklahoma City. An additional center in Tulsa is being developed. Each Educare program serves 150-200 children a year. Oklahoma participates in a national Educare evaluation effort to inform policy on quality practices. The data show that Educare classrooms score high on measures of global classroom quality, higher environmental quality than other large-scale studies, and children from low income families receive scores within the normal range on measures of vocabulary at kindergarten entry.

(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

i. Early Learning and Development Standards

Oklahoma has Early Learning Guidelines that represent a unified standard by which children's development can be better understood and monitored, and by which Early Learning and Development Programs can more successfully support and prepare children for kindergarten. Table (A)(1)-6) reflects this commitment through the establishment of guidelines in all essential domains of school readiness across all age groups. (**Appendices 1, 2 and 3**) Oklahoma is in the process of implementing new K-12 standards, which will be fully in place by 2014, and the Early Learning Guidelines will be updated to ensure continued alignment.

ii. Comprehensive Assessment Systems

While Oklahoma has in place some early learning assessment practices, it is missing key elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System. Implementation of a comprehensive assessment system is one of Oklahoma's greatest priorities for this application. (Table (A)(1)-7)

iii. Health promotion practices and family engagement strategies

Most Early Learning and Development programs in the state provide some elements of health promotion and parent engagement practices (Table (A)(1)-8) and (A)(1)-9)), with home visitation programs exhibiting stronger integration of these elements. Home visitation programs are designed to engage families as an active participant in their child's health and development. Services are individualized to meet each family's unique needs, and families are expected to

actively engage in program planning. Home visitation services, including SoonerStart, focus on supporting and educating parents as their child's first and best teacher.

iv. The development of early childhood educators

Oklahoma has developed a career ladder and core competencies for early childhood providers. See Table (A)(1)-10) and (A)(1)-11. The core competencies are used in the Oklahoma Training Approval System. Each approved class has identified the core competency that will be addressed. Training on the competencies and how to design engaging training have been provided to all educators registered at the University of Oklahoma Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD), and to Oklahoma Child Care Services staff. Overviews of the competencies have been provided to partner organizations. A brochure has been developed and distributed to child care directors to provide guidance using the core competencies to identify professional development needs of their staff.

While the career ladder and core competencies have been developed and distributed, data is not available for the state to have a sense of the number of providers at each level, or to know how the competency framework is being used in practice. Oklahoma is in the process of conducting a needs assessment through the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness to gain better information in this area.

v. Kindergarten entry assessments

Oklahoma currently assesses literacy skills in kindergarten students but does not administer a kindergarten entry assessment that covers the additional essential domains. (A)(1-12).

vi. Effective data practices

Early childhood programs in Oklahoma are managed across several state agencies, each having separate data systems that were developed and are managed separately. Individual agency data systems typically have the ability to track services for individual children, have some capacity to track training and credentials by providers, and are able to connect children to individual program sites. At this time, however, Oklahoma lacks the infrastructure for cross-agency data connection, but it proposes in this grant to create that infrastructure.

In sum, Oklahoma has in place many of the key building blocks of a successful early learning system. While it has some gaps, it is committed to addressing those gaps, and will use

the Early Learning Challenge to help advance its work in these areas.

	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	27,393	56%
Toddlers ages 1 through 2	57,320	54%
Preschoolers ages 3 to kindergarten entry	80,281	52%
Total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families	164,994	53%

Source: Own calculation based on U.S. Census Bureau, *American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)*, 2005-2009 5-year..

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 delays¹³ (1)	7,221	2.3%
Are English learners¹⁴ (2)	9,265	2.9%
Reside on "Indian Lands" (3)	164,146	52%

¹² Low-Income is defined as having an income of up to 200% of the Federal poverty rate.

¹³ For purposes of this application, children with disabilities or developmental delays are defined as children birth through kindergarten entry that have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

¹⁴ For purposes of this application, children who are English learners are children birth through kindergarten entry who have home languages other than English.

Table (A)(1)-2: Special populations of Children with High Needs		
<i>The State should use these data to guide its thinking about where specific activities may be required to address special populations' unique needs. The State will describe such activities throughout its application.</i>		
Special populations: Children who . . .	Number of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who...	Percentage of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who...
Are migrant¹⁵ (4)	156	.06%
Are homeless¹⁶ (5)	1,485	.48%
Are in foster care (6)	2,601	.83%
Other as identified by the State Describe:		
<p>(1) Disabilities – Children ages 0-4 with IEP or IFSP as reported by State Department of Education</p> <p>(2) English language – For 2009. From U.S. Bureau of the Census <i>American Community Survey</i> 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample. Percentage of children is percentage of all children under age 6 whose household language is other than English.</p> <p>(3) Indian Lands – For 2009. From U.S. Bureau of the Census <i>American Community Survey</i>. Because of its unique Native American heritage, two-thirds of Oklahoma qualifies as Indian Lands per the special federal tax treatment.</p> <p>(4) Migrant – Estimated for 0-4 year olds based on 12-month count of eligible migrant children ages 3 through 5 (not Kindergarten). <i>State Department of Education</i>.</p> <p>(5) Homeless – Estimated for 0-4 year olds from Children less than 6 years for the 2009-2010 school year. <i>State Department of Education</i>.</p> <p>(6) Foster Care – Counts obtained from Child Welfare Office at Department of Human Services.</p>		

¹⁵ For purposes of this application, children who are migrant are children birth through kindergarten entry who meet the definition of “migratory child” in ESEA section 1309(2).

¹⁶ The term “homeless children” has the meaning given the term “homeless children and youths” in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (425 U.S.C. 11434a(2)).

Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age				
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>				
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age			
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Universal prekindergarten offered at school district option</i> <i>Data Source and Year: Estimation based on K-12 Data System Wave, enrollment for free/reduced lunch, school year 2010-2011</i>	0	0	17,542	17,542(e)
Early Head Start and Head Start¹⁷ <i>Data Source and Year: Data year is 2009-2010 school year. Source: Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies, Head Start Fact Sheet, updated 5/11 from Program Information Report, Office of Head Start, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health & Human Services. (1)</i>	733	1,677	18,239	20,649
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 <i>Data Source and Year: Part B (ages 3-K) is FFY 2010-11 child count, OK State Department of Education. Part C (ages 0-2) is 2009-10 from Section 618 reporting by OK State Department of Education.</i>	571	2,509	4,141	7,221

¹⁷ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age				
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>				
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age			
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA <i>Data Source and Year: School fiscal year 2009-2010. Data reported as age 0-2 and 3-5 (not Kindergarten). Source: State Department of Education</i>	389		25,116	25,281
Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program <i>Data Source and Year: State fiscal year ending 6/30/11. All children served, including TANF. Source: OK Department of Human Services.</i>	4,084	17,531	26,124	47,739
Other <i>Specify: Tribal CCDF Programs</i> <i>Data Source and Year: Federal fiscal year 2010. Source: HHS Region VI. Ages are estimated by multiplying total children served by all Oklahoma tribes by the regional age breakdown of children served for all tribal providers in HHS Region VI.</i>	302	2,750	2,875	6,381
Other <i>Specify: State Pilot Early Childhood Program</i> <i>Data Source and Year: Data at end of school year 2010-11. Ages 0-2 estimated by program staff</i>	285	581	1,099	1,965

Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age				
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>				
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age			
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
Other <i>Specify: Children First home visiting program</i> <i>Data Source and Year: Children First Data for SFY 2011. Mildred Ramsey.</i>	931	997	0	1,928
Other <i>Specify: Oklahoma Parents as Teachers home visiting program</i> <i>Data Source and Year: Oklahoma Parents as Teachers data base (2010)</i>	2,403	1,057	0	3,460
Other <i>Specify: Office of Child Abuse Prevention home visiting program</i> <i>Data Source and Year: OSDH, Family Support and Prevention, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, Annual Report SFY 2009</i>	441	158	97	696
(1) 2010-2011 school year will show more 0-3 enrollment due to continuing increased EHS enrollment with ARRA funds. Data excludes Migrant Head Start, which is offered in Oklahoma by a Texas grantee.				

Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development					
Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start and Head Start ¹⁸ (1)	2,905,620	2,905,620	2,685,070	2,452,533	2,191,700
State-funded preschool (2) <i>Specify: Universal prekindergarten offered at school district option. See below for local share of costs</i>	125,517,859	139,735,130	147,185,345	167,245,396	178,078,500 (e)
State contributions to IDEA Part C	16,168,072	16,260,919	16,260,919	14,957,150	13,761,000
State contributions for special education and related services for children with disabilities, ages 3 through kindergarten entry	2,871,865	3,733,841	4,725,544	5,011,528	5,677,651
Total State contributions to CCDF ¹⁹	19,776,767	20,664,455	21,337,961	22,358,284	22,119,301
State match to CCDF <i>Exceeded/Met/Not Met (if exceeded, indicate amount by which match was exceeded)</i>	Met	Met	Met	Met	Met
TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs ²⁰	75,052,933	66,416,806	74,128,609	55,533,556	54,804,911
Other <i>Specify: State Pilot Early Childhood Program</i>	5,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	9,177,285	10,000,000

¹⁸ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

¹⁹ Total State contributions to CCDF must include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), State Match, and any State contributions exceeding State MOE or Match.

²⁰ Include TANF transfers to CCDF as well as direct TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs.

Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development					
Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Other <i>Specify:</i> Children First home visiting program	11,733,974	12,094,465	11,674,963	9,396,280	8,530,750
Other <i>Specify:</i> Oklahoma Parents as Teachers home visiting program	2,045,709	2,045,709	2,045,709	2,045,709	1,585,471
Other <i>Specify:</i> Office of Child Abuse Prevention home visiting program	3,336,482	3,336,482	3,336,482	3,086,246	2,854,778
Other State contributions <i>Specify:</i> Local and private funding for prekindergarten (2)	76,705,358	89,641,404	101,897,546	73,353,244	85,995,000(e)
<i>Specify:</i> Private match funding for State Pilot Early Childhood Program	14,080,298	14,080,298	14,080,298	15,000,000	15,000,000
<i>Specify:</i> Tribal share of tribal CCDF funding	1,220,000	1,220,000	1,220,000	1,319,350	2,183,207
<i>Specify:</i> Smart Start programs (4)	1,731,202	1,991,174	2,185,269	3,669,822	4,297,130
Total State contributions:	358,146,139	384,126,303	412,763,715	384,606,383	407,079,399

State fiscal year ends June 30. Except where noted below, data are from a 2011 study by Oklahoma Policy Institute on behalf of Smart Start Oklahoma.

(1) Head Start: State funds are available only to non-tribal Head Start and/or Early Head Start grantees. Funds flow directly from the Community Action agency to the Head Start program operating in the same service area, even if the Head Start or Early Head Start grantee is not a Community Action Agency. Source: Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies, *Head Start Fact Sheet*, updated 5/11 from Program Information Report, Office of Head Start, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health & Human Services. Excludes Migrant Head Start, which is offered in Oklahoma by a Texas grantee.

(2) Prekindergarten funding for FY2011 is not available until December 2011.

(3) Includes Smart Start Oklahoma state, private and communities' cash match. 2007-2009 numbers do not include community cash match.

Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State					
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years²¹				
	2007	2008	2009²²	2010¹⁷	2011¹⁷
State-funded preschool <i>(annual census count; e.g., October 1 count)</i> <i>Specify: Estimation based on K-12 Data System, Wave, Free/Reduced Lunch enrollment (1)</i>	15,999(e)	16,124(e)	14,494	19,524	17,542 (e)
Early Head Start and Head Start²³ <i>(2)</i> <i>(funded enrollment)</i>	19,819	19,771	19,745	20,649	20,612(e)
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 (3) <i>(annual December 1 count)</i>	6,821	6,746	6,451	7,001	7,221
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA <i>(total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report)</i>	21,896	22,196	22,993	25,505	26,072(e)
Programs receiving CCDF funds <i>(average monthly served)</i>	53,812	52,050	50,702	51,772	47,739
Other State contributions <i>Specify: Tribal CCDF Programs (4)</i>	6,168	7,023	7,094	6,381	6,844(e)
Other State contributions <i>Specify: State Pilot Early Childhood Program (5)</i>	720	1,204	1,391	1,779	1,965
Other State contributions <i>Specify: Children First home visiting</i>	4,809	4,836	4,590	4,073	3,616

²¹ Include all Children with High Needs served with both Federal dollars and State supplemental dollars.

²² 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.

²³ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State					
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years²¹				
	2007	2008	2009²²	2010¹⁷	2011¹⁷
program (6)					
Other State contributions <i>Specify: Oklahoma Parents as Teachers home visiting program (7)</i>	3,728	3,735	3,336	3,460	3,264(e)
Other State contributions <i>Specify: Office of Child Abuse Prevention home visiting program (8)</i>	632	882	882	776	901(e)
(e) = an estimation based on predictive statistical analysis					
(1) Enrollment counts for 2007 and 2008 are estimations based on historical hand tallies from Department of Human Services.					
(2) Head Start/Early Head Start - Source: Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies, <i>Head Start Fact Sheet</i> , updated 5/11 from Program Information Report, Office of Head Start, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health & Human Services. Excludes Migrant Head Start, which is offered in Oklahoma by a Texas grantee.					
(3) IDEA Part B - As of October 1 of each school year.					
(4) Tribal CCDF - Source: HHS Region VI. 2011 estimates based on statistical estimation analysis. Tribal CCDF operate under the federal fiscal year.					
(5) State Pilot - Source: Annual program reports to State Department of Education, except 2011, which is last day of school year 2010-11.					
(6) Children First – Annual families served. Source: Program annual reports. 2007-2010 are “current participants” or “families served” per C1 annual reports. 2011 are “current participants” or “families served” per C1 data system. Enrollment data does not match the children served in Table A(1)(3) because total enrollment includes women who are pregnant.					
(7) Parents as Teachers – Estimated counts based on enrollment data provided by Erin Nation, Director of Early Childhood Education, State Department of Education.					
(8) Office of Child Abuse Prevention – 2008 count is estimated by personnel. OSDH, Family Support and Prevention, Office of Child Abuse Prevention Annual Report SFY 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010. Enrollment data does not match the children served in Table A(1)(3) because total enrollment includes children through age six and women who are pregnant..					

Table (A)(1)-6 : Current status of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards			
<i>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</i>			
Essential Domains of School Readiness	Age Groups		
	Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers
Language and literacy development	X	X	X
Cognition and general knowledge (including early math and early scientific development)	X	X	X
Approaches toward learning	X	X	X
Physical well-being and motor development	X	X	X
Social and emotional development	X	X	X
Based on Oklahoma's Early Learning Guidelines.			

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.</i>					
Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
State-funded preschool (1) <i>Specify: Universal prekindergarten offered at school district option</i>					
Early Head Start and Head Start ²⁴ (2)	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part C	X	X			

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

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.</i>					
Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619 (3)	X	X			
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA					
Programs receiving CCDF funds (4)			X		
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Specify by tier (add rows if needed):</i> 1 star (lowest tier, same as licensing)					
1+ star					
2 stars			X		
3 stars (highest tier)			X		
Other <i>Describe:</i> Tribal CCDF Programs					
Other <i>Describe:</i> State Pilot Early Childhood Program (5)	X	X	X	X	
Other <i>Describe:</i> Children First home visiting program (6)	X		X	X	

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.</i>					
Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
Other <i>Describe:</i> Oklahoma Parents as Teachers home visiting program	X				
Other <i>Describe:</i> Office of Child Abuse Prevention home visiting program (7)	X			X	
<p>(1) In prekindergarten there is no requirement for an assessment. Current law requires some sort of screening "prior to first grade entry". A literacy assessment is done in Kindergarten.</p> <p>(2) Head Start/EHS - Head Start performance standards require that all children be screened for development within 45 days of entry and be regularly assessed developmentally throughout the year. Standards specify when developmental assessment is required, which domains are assessed, and how parents are involved. Head Start grantees must choose methods for formative assessment that are reliable and valid, culturally, linguistically and developmentally appropriate, and aligned with the 11 domains of the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Grantees are required to use the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to measure adult-child interactions.</p> <p>(3) IDEA Part B - Assessments are determined by the eligibility team. Assessments are individualized based on the students. Screening measures and formative assessments are used in all initial evaluations. Other assessments will be used based on the students needs</p> <p>(4) CCDF - Except when supply of providers is insufficient, CCDF children are in two- and three-star providers. These providers are required to be assessed with a measure of environmental quality by a state rater every three years.</p> <p>(5) State pilot – All partners are required to use Teaching Strategies GOLD and have phased in use in 2010-11 through training, T/A, personalized training. GOLD assessment guides instruction formatively based on a developmental continuum. Authentic, thoughtful assessment at checkpoints. Partners are observing and documenting progress against GOLD milestones. In year 2 and 3 partners have an environmental quality rating done by outside evaluators (OU-Tulsa) Results drive professional development decisions. Requirement is one-time per partner. In year 2 of program participation, outside evaluators complete the Arnett Caregiver-Child Interaction index in each partner classroom. Requirement is one-time per partner.</p>					

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.</i>					
Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
(6) Children First – Screening – ASQ administered at every 2 months from 2-24 months old; ASQ-SE at 6, 12, 18, and 24 months of age.					
(7) Office of Child Abuse Prevention – ASQ, ASQ-SE screening development tools 4-24 mos: 4 mos., 6 mos, 8 mos., 10 mos., 12 mos; 27-36 mos: 27 mos., 30 mos., 33 mos., 36 mos.; 6 mos. – 5 years: 6 mos., 12 mos., 18 mos., 24 mos., 30 mos., 36 mos.; Kempe Family Stress Checklist; Edinburgh Post-Natal Depression Scale; Assess for referrals if appropriate.					

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
State-funded preschool <i>Specify:</i> Universal prekindergarten offered at school district option	X	X	X		
Early Head Start and Head Start (1)	X	X	X	X	Child Mental Health services Dental

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
					home and dental services
Programs funded under IDEA Part C		X			
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619	X	X	X		
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	X	X	X		
Programs receiving CCDF funds (2)	X		X		
1 star (lowest tier)	X		X		
1+ star	X		X		

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
2 star	X		X		
3 star	X		X		
State licensing requirements (2)	X		X		
<i>Describe: Tribal CCDF Programs</i>					
<i>Describe: State Pilot Early Childhood Program (3)</i>				X	
Children First Home Visiting Program (4)	X	X			
<i>Describe: Oklahoma Parents as Teachers home visiting program</i>		X	X	X	

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
<i>Describe:</i> Office of Child Abuse Prevention home visiting program (5)	X	X	X	X	
<p>(1) Head Start grantees must determine within 90 days of program entry whether a child has a regular provider of health care, obtain a determination that the child is up to date in receiving preventive health care that meets the state requirements for early, periodic, diagnosis and treatment, and obtain further treatment where indicated. Grantees must work with families to develop plans to meet the nutritional needs of each child, participate in a USDA Child Nutrition Program. Providers are required to promote dental hygiene in association with meals. Staff, parents, and children all receive health literacy training through the program curriculum. This includes instruction in understanding nutrition, health habits such as hand washing, oral health and brushing teeth, the "Dental Home" concept and "Medical Home" concept, physical activity, and mental health.</p> <p>(2) CCDF, licensed child care, quality rating and improvement system. Maintenance of children's health records, requirements for staff certification in age-appropriate first aid and CPR, health and safety standards for facilities, play equipment safety standards, and cleanliness standards. Age-appropriate minimum equipment levels for large motor skill development, daily outdoor play (weather permitting), balanced meal and nutrition requirements.</p> <p>(3) State pilot - Partners must complete a family work plan for each family, similar to Head Start Work plan addresses health elements.</p> <p>(4) Children First – Health and safety requirements – Nurses are required to complete home safety audits when child is 2, 10, and 21 months of age. Tulsa and Oklahoma City sites collaborate with the Safe and Healthy Home Project. Children identified as being developmentally delayed through ASQ or ASQ-SE are referred to Sooner Start (Early Intervention).</p> <p>(4) Office of Child Abuse Prevention. The OCAP/Start Right program is represented at the Home Visitation Leadership Advisory Coalition (HVLAC), an entity with representatives from various state and not profit organizations that coordinates efforts in home visitation elements, one objective being a collaboration of support for high-quality health promotion practices. The Start Right program is driven by a logic model that focuses on family strengthening components, all of which are related to OSDH priority health issues and beyond, with</p>					

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
	<p>identified specific health issues. Contractors are required to hold multiple family and community health awareness events each funding period.</p> <p>Health and safety: maintenance of children’s health records, requirements for staff certification in age-appropriate first aid and CPR, health and safety standards for facilities, play equipment safety standards, and cleanliness standards.</p> <p>Health promotion: age-appropriate minimum equipment levels for large motor skill development, daily outdoor play (weather permitting), balanced meal and nutrition requirements</p>				

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
<p>State-funded preschool Specify: Universal prekindergarten offered at school district option</p>	<p>Support services for family engagement include two parent conferences or home visits annual, parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, and transition to Kindergarten activities.</p>
<p>Early Head Start and Head Start</p>	<p>Parent engagement is embedded within all standards and practices of Head Start and EHS. Specific citations include: Involving parents in child health and developmental services, CFR 1304.20(e)(1)-(5); family assistance with nutrition, 1304.23(d); Family Partnerships, 1304.40(a)-(i) – 9 items; Program Governance, 1304.50(d) Policy Council & (e) Parent Committee;</p>

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
	<p>Management Systems and Procedures, Communication with Families, 1304.51(c). Grantees are required to work with families to provide individual family plans that include family goals and identify needed supports. Providers must provide families with a range of options for interacting with programs. Head Start providers must work with families to identify community supports including emergency or crisis assistance, programs supporting parental mental health, and opportunities for education and training. Parents must be involved in policy-making and operations, be involved in curriculum and other aspects of their child's participation. Providers must provide assistance in both child and adult literacy. Teachers are required to make 2 home visits and hold at least 2 parent-teacher conferences each year.</p>
Programs funded under IDEA Part C	<p>The SoonerStart (IDEA Part C) program engages families on a daily basis. It is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to involve parents in the development of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and services to the extent practicable. Most services are provided with the parent or caregiver present with the goal of the parent/caregiver being comfortable in carrying out different activities after the SoonerStart staff is gone. Early Intervention services are most beneficial to parents that are willing to learn different ways to assist their child in moving forward with developmental milestones.</p> <p>SoonerStart works specifically with parents in transitioning from early intervention to the local school district or other community services as appropriate and desired by the parents during the 2-3 year old time frame. Additionally, SoonerStart provides families with information about community resources such as day care, parent's day out, food pantries, clothes closets, housing and any other type of community based services which may be needed.</p> <p>SoonerStart also involves parents by including them in stakeholder groups to help in decision making within the program. The IDEA requires states to have an Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC) which is chaired by a parent that has a child with a disability. In Oklahoma SoonerStart has a Family Leadership Committee under the ICC. This group is active in providing support as need with the state legislature and as advocates for other families in the program.</p>

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
	<p>Parent consent is required for all assessments administered. Parent involvement is required for the development of an IFSP and services cannot be provided without parent consent. Parents are a required member of the IEP team.</p> <p>Parents are also invited to be a part of our stakeholder groups regarding policy development, change, and implementation.</p>
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619	<p>Parent consent is required for all assessments administered. Parent involvement is required for the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Services cannot be provided without parent consent. Parents are a required member of the IEP team.</p> <p>Parents are also invited to be a part of stakeholder groups regarding policy development, change, and implementation. In addition, parents are invited to be on our focused monitoring teams when monitoring for compliance.</p>
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	<p>Parental Involvement activities are conducted at both Targeted and School-wide Title I Sites. Parents are always included as part of a stakeholder requirement. Some parents are selected to serve on planning committees. The parent activities will vary throughout the state; however, the idea is to provide opportunities for parents that include them as educational partners. The activities will include Parent Academies that include ways to help their children with their homework, introducing technology integration, behavioral management, effective parenting, college and career awareness, and effective ways to transition their child from high school to college.</p>
Programs receiving CCDF funds	<p>CCDF may only be used at licensed providers, all of which have required family engagement strategies. These are summarized below by star level in the QRIS.</p>
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Specify by tier (add rows if needed):</i>	<p>Select four items from a menu of 1) welcoming parents at all time, 2) annual parent conferences, 3) parent resource area, 4) parent dinners with programs or events, 5) parental bulletin board or handbook, and 6) parental involvement in decision-making.</p>

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
1 star (lowest tier)	
1+ star	All of the items in the 1-star menu plus maintain a system for parent communication and making license requirements available to parents.
2 stars	All 1+ star requirements plus a written report at the parent conference and maintaining a file of community resources.
3 stars (highest tier)	Same as 2 stars
State licensing requirements	Select four items from a menu of 1) welcoming parents at all time, 2) annual parent conferences, 3) parent resource area, 4) parent dinners with programs or events, 5) parental bulletin board or handbook, and 6) parental involvement in decision-making.
Other <i>Describe:</i> Tribal CCDF Programs	No family Engagement Strategies are currently required.
Other <i>Describe:</i> State Pilot Early Childhood Program	Bachelor's-degreed family support workers provide assistance to families of enrolled children at an approximate ratio of 1 worker per 50 families. Assist families in identifying and referring to community resources, respond to family needs and goals, including emergencies, intervene and follow up as necessary. Have specific job tasks. Family support works to develop an annual family plan similar to the HS requirement. Providers hold parent meetings. In 2011-2 family support workers must use support use of learning games for adults to work together with children at home.
Other <i>Describe:</i> Children First home visiting program	To increase family engagement, services are provided in the home or location chosen by the family. Although there is a prescribed visit schedule, clients are asked to develop a schedule that meets their needs. Visits can be scheduled after 5 p.m. and on weekends, if needed. Nurses utilize a menu format to allow clients an opportunity to choose topics for discussion during the home visits. Specific program topics such as growth and development, parenting, and parent-child interactions are covered routinely throughout the

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
	<p>intervention. Nurses are required to utilize the parenting curriculum, Partners in Parenting Education (PIPE) to encourage positive parent-child interactions. The current guidelines include father-friendly materials and fathers are strongly encouraged to attend home visits. With client approval, other family members can also participate in the home visit.</p> <p>The program recognizes that “engagement” is also related to some nurse factors Nurses receive training in how to establish, maintain, and terminate therapeutic relationships. Reflective consultation is provided for all nurse-home visitors weekly. Children First provides regular training on techniques currently being utilized in the industry. For instance, all nurses are currently being trained in the use of Motivational Interviewing.</p>
Other <i>Describe:</i> Oklahoma Parents as Teachers home visiting program	Personalized monthly visits. Parent group meetings. Resources and referrals. Developmental screenings. Connect parents with schools.
Other <i>Describe:</i> Office of Child Abuse Prevention home visiting program	Engagement strategies include outreach to pregnant women and following baby’s birth in hospitals; community health awareness events required of each contract site by contract agreement. The Start Right home visiting program is formatted with weekly home visits then bi-weekly, then monthly, then home visits and/or program site-based consultation/involvement with parents as they wish. The program includes a center-based component offering either regular, curriculum-based instruction for participating families or community-based parent support groups that are parent-led and co-facilitated by contracted program staff. Families are also engaged through primary care physicians, Head Start, local community service organizations, Oklahoma State Health Department Family Support and Prevention web site, and word-of-mouth referrals. In addition, families may be engaged through a local Head Start or community service organizations, or the Oklahoma State Health Department Family Support and Prevention web site.
<i>[Edit the labels on the above rows as needed, and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i>	

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials²⁵ currently available in the State				
List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
Director Certificate *	Yes	172	2.6%	
Master Teacher Certificate *	Yes	443	6.8%	
Infant/Toddler Certificate *	Yes	154	2.3%	
Teacher's Assistant Certificate *	Yes	701	10.8%	
Child Development Associate (CDA) (1, *)	Yes	1,504	23.2%	
Certificate of Mastery***	yes	444	6.8%	
Director's Certificate of Completion ***	Yes	47	0.7%	
Infant-Toddler-Age 3 Certificate (IT3) (2)	Yes	2	.03%	
Associate Degree (1)	Yes	419	6.4%	
Bachelors Degree (1, 2)	Yes	2,490	38.4%	
Advanced Degree (MA, PhD, or JD) (1,2)	Yes	517	7.9%	
Oklahoma does not currently have the capability to track Early Childhood Workforce by degree/certification. Based on the data sources (cited below) the best estimation of Oklahoma's total early childhood workforce is 6,482 professionals.				

²⁵ Includes both credentials awarded and degrees attained.

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials²⁵ currently available in the State				
List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
<i>Data Sources:</i>				
<p>(1) Head Start Program Information Report (PIR), 2009-2010 for tribal and non-tribal EHS and HS.</p> <p>(2) Data represents the number of certificates awarded by Career Technology Centers during the previous school year.</p> <p>(3) Prekindergarten workforce estimations provided by OSDE’s Director of Early Childhood. The IT3 Certification is a newly offered certification by the State Department of Education, which began in 2010.</p> <p>*Data represents the number of certificates awarded by Career Technology Centers during the previous school year. These are competency certificates typically pursued during high school.</p> <p>***Data represents the number of community college certificates awarded through Scholars program.</p>				
<p>Additional Information: State has defined core/knowledge competencies for practitioners, a career ladder, a practitioner registry, a training approval system, and career advising, mentoring/coaching, a database or calendar of training opportunities, scholarships, wage supplements/incentive bonuses, and a voluntary-based workforce registry.</p>				

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? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>
Southwestern Oklahoma State	1	Yes

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? (Yes/No/ Not Available)
University (SWOSU)		
Tulsa Community College (TCC)	122	Yes
Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College (NEOAMC)	23	Yes
University of Oklahoma (OU)	28	Yes
University of Central Oklahoma (UCO)	105	Yes
East Central University (ECU)	31	Yes
Northeastern State University (NSU)	117	Yes
Northwestern Oklahoma State University (NWOSU)	13	Yes
Cameron University (CU)	3	Yes
University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma (USAO)	10	Yes
Western Oklahoma State College (WOSC)	30	Yes
Redlands Community College (RCC)	38	Yes
Langston University (LU)	5	Yes
Connors State College (CSC)	31	Yes
Eastern Oklahoma State College (EOSC)	5	Yes
Murray State College (MSC)	10	Yes
Seminole State College (SSC)	28	Yes
Oklahoma City Community College (OCCC)	60	Yes
Rose State College (RSC)	36	Yes
Carl Albert State College (CASC)	135	Yes
Northern Oklahoma College (NOC)	19	Yes
Oklahoma State University-	25	Yes

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? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>
Oklahoma City (OSU-OKC)		
Oklahoma State University (OSU)	146	Yes
Southern Nazarene University (SNU)	3	Yes
Oklahoma City University (OCU)	10	Yes
Oklahoma Christian University (OC)	27	Yes
Oral Roberts University (ORB)	0	Yes
Bacone College (BC)	3	Yes
St. Gregory's University (STG)	0	Yes
Career Technology Centers (1)	2,280	Yes
<p>Source: Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Productivity Reports, Public and Private 2- and 4-year institutions (2008/2009 counts are preliminary)</p> <p>(1) There are a total number of 29 Career Technology Center districts located on 64 campuses and 16 early childhood programs in the state.</p>		

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 (including early mathematics and early scientific development)	Approaches toward learning	Physical well-being and motor development	Social and emotional development
Domain covered? <i>(Y/N)</i>	Y				
Domain aligned to Early Learning and Development Standards? <i>(Y/N)</i>	Y				

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 (including early mathematics and early scientific development)	Approaches toward learning	Physical well-being and motor development	Social and emotional development
Instrument(s) used? <i>(Specify)</i>	DIBELS; Literacy First; BEAR				
Evidence of validity and reliability? <i>(Y/N)</i>	Y				
Evidence of validity for English learners? <i>(Y/N)</i>	Y				
Evidence of validity for children with disabilities? <i>(Y/N)</i>	Y				
How broadly administered? <i>(If not administered statewide, include date for reaching statewide administration)</i>	One of the three instruments is administered at the local level				
Results included in Statewide Longitudinal Data System? <i>(Y/N)</i>	Y				

Table (A)(1)-13: Profile of all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State							
List each data system currently in use in the State that includes early learning and development data	Essential Data Elements						
	<i>Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems</i>						
	Unique child identifier	Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier	Unique program site identifier	Child and family demographic information	Early Childhood Educator demographic information	Data on program structure and quality	Child-level program participation and attendance
WAVE/P12 SIS	X	X	X	X	X		X
Oklahoma Parents as Teachers data base (1)	X		X	X			X
Start Right (OCAP data base)	X		X	X	X		X

Table (A)(1)-13: Profile of all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State							
List each data system currently in use in the State that includes early learning and development data	Essential Data Elements						
	<i>Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems</i>						
	Unique child identifier	Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier	Unique program site identifier	Child and family demographic information	Early Childhood Educator demographic information	Data on program structure and quality	Child-level program participation and attendance
Children First Module (Children First data base)	X		X	X			X
Guidance Module	X		X	X			X
Sooner Start- Early Intervention	X		X	X			X
Head Start / Early Head Start (2)				X	X	X	X
Child Care Licensing System			X		X	X	
KIDS	X			X			X
Child Care Electronic Payment Services (CCEPS)	X		X			X	X
PS/2 and FACS				X			X
Child Count (IDEA Part B and Part C)	X		X	X			X
(1) Oklahoma Parents as Teachers – Unique child identifier is a family ID							
(2) Programs do assign identifier for child, educator and program site, but is currently not part of the state data at this time							

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evidence for (A)(2)

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

(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;

Simply put, Oklahoma's goal is that all of its children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. Oklahoma has long been one of the nation's leaders in providing high-quality early childhood services, particularly to Children with High Needs, and now is the moment for Oklahoma to take its existing strengths and use them as the platform for another significant jump forward. Driven by a new accountability system, we will improve outcomes for

Children with High Needs through improved program quality -- giving parents better choices for their children. All of our services are and will continue to be only for those parents who choose to access them, but we will ensure that parents (particularly those of Children with High Needs) understand what our programs do, and how they can help achieve school readiness.

Goal: Ensure that all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

While we must be realistic about what can be achieved in the grant period, our long term goal must be that all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. At this time, we know we have a long way to go: 49% of Oklahoma's first graders do not successfully complete the state's Reading Sufficiency Act requirements for literacy, based on the state's current Literacy Screening Assessment.

Over time, we need to improve our ability to *measure* kindergarten readiness, with one purpose being to inform program design and implementation in early learning. While kindergarten entry assessment is not at this time an appropriate tool for early learning program accountability, it can provide a wealth of information about the strengths and needs of young children that can be used to inform program design and resource use in Early Learning and Development Programs.

By providing better opportunities for Children with High Needs, we will improve outcomes for them, and help them enter kindergarten at the same level as their peers.

Goal: Increase the number of Children with High Needs who have access to programs that support kindergarten readiness.

Oklahoma has been a leader in providing programs for Children with High Needs to support kindergarten readiness – but we can do more. Our existing programs may support kindergarten readiness, but they frequently do so in varying and uncoordinated ways. Through a new QRIS that includes preschool, Head Start, and child care, we will create a common understanding of the attributes and practices that support kindergarten readiness – and then make sure the system is set up to support programs in developing those attributes and implementing those practices. Our goal is that by the end of the grant period, we will increase the number of programs delivering high quality services from 218 3-star child-care programs to 1580 3-, 4-, and 5-star Early Learning and Development Programs.

In addition, we are committed to building stronger connections among our existing resources. Many children in preschool, Head Start, and child care have needs that could be met by existing health and development programs, and many families in existing health and home visitation programs have needs that can be met by early learning and development programs, but our systems for connecting those children to services are inadequate. Much of our grant work will focus on building the infrastructure that allows our Children with High Needs to take advantage of existing opportunities.

- (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 goal.*
- (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*

Oklahoma has always taken a comprehensive approach to meeting the needs of Children with High Needs, and this grant application offers a plan that is both comprehensive and coherent. We see a new tiered quality rating and improvement system as sitting at the heart of our early childhood system, and driving the activities and practices that will lead to improved outcomes for young Children with High Needs. The new system will be based on high standards; incorporate the use of assessments; drive the provision of health, behavioral, and developmental supports (including a comprehensive approach that engages the medical community); require family support; be linked to a progression of workforce credentials; and be supported by a data system equipped to meet the demands of the new system. We believe that all of these elements are necessary to help Children with High Needs enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The new QRIS will be tied explicitly to school readiness, and will provide clear information about program statuses, with targeted supports to help programs improve school readiness. The system will be designed through a collaborative process that engages providers, so that they see it as useful system of support. Moreover, Oklahoma understands full well that not all programs will be set up to provide the full range of services needed to help children reach kindergarten readiness; thus, the quality rating and improvement system will hold

programs accountable for excellence in those services they are responsible for providing, and will help parents understand how they can complement the work done by providers.

What follows is an explanation of how the new accountability system will serve as the hub of the state's reform agenda, and a discussion of how Oklahoma will address each of the grant's criteria in a manner that will help the state achieve its goals. This discussion is meant to address both (A)(2)(b) – detailing an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving its goals – and (A)(2)(c), providing a rationale for why the selected criteria will help the state achieve its goals.

1. The New System

Abundant research shows that for Children with High Needs, no factor influences their kindergarten readiness more than the quality of their interaction with adults. Oklahoma starts with the premise that the most important adult interactions children have will always be with their families. But when Children with High Needs are interacting with adults in Early Learning and Development programs funded by the state, Oklahoma's responsibility to those children is to ensure that the quality of their interactions is as high as possible. Its new QRIS – summarized here and described in more detail in (B) -- will be designed to maximize the quality of those interactions, and will be available to all Early Learning and Development Programs.

Oklahoma's new quality rating and improvement system will develop new rating tiers that set higher expectations, and are tied to kindergarten readiness (based on the state's Early Learning and Development Standards). The tiers will build on the best practices of preschool, Head Start, and child care, creating common expectations and common information for parents. All of the tiers will be carefully differentiated. Over time, Oklahoma's expectation is that the tier definitions will be updated based on new research and experience.

The system will be designed to set clear expectations for providers, and will provide the supports and incentives for programs to meet higher expectations. The system will make available a menu of supports that can be tailored to meet the individual needs of programs – an approach necessary to make it appealing to a wide range of providers. The state will seek to create, in effect, a club that providers would want to join. And one benefit of the system will be that providers can use the programs ratings and supports to explain to parents the quality of

the service they provide, and their ongoing efforts to improve their service.

2. *The Rationale for Comprehensiveness*

Oklahoma has chosen to address all of the criteria in the Early Learning Challenge. Oklahoma's approach to serving young children has long focused on quality early education and care, combined with outstanding health supports. The new accountability system will allow Oklahoma to use resources more effectively in serving Children with High Needs. Based on the state's high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards ((C)(1)), the system will be designed to ensure that all of the grant criteria are addressed.

(a) *Identifying and Meeting the Needs of Children with High Needs*

Government programs, due to their scale, tend to focus on particular issues that affect numerous children – frequently discrete issues like vision or hearing. But we know that all children have unique needs. The new accountability system will be designed to ensure that child needs are identified appropriately – and then provide links to existing programs that can meet those needs.

The identification process will take place largely through the screening and formative assessments required as part of a comprehensive system ((C)(2)), which all programs in the QRIS will be expected to conduct. One factor in program ratings under the QRIS will be their ability to conduct proper assessments, and then act appropriately on the results. To ensure that they are able to do so, the system will provide appropriate training and supports. (A similar process will occur for young children entering kindergarten through the kindergarten entry assessment described in (E)(1).) Oklahoma is investing heavily in the development of its comprehensive assessments, recognizing their crucial role in tailoring supports to meet the needs of children.

Identifying needs is a start, but on its own is not enough. Through its work to support child health, behavior, and development ((C)(3)), Oklahoma will ensure that resources are mobilized most effectively to support Children with High Needs. For Early Learning and Development programs conducting child assessments, the resource mobilization effort will have two components: (1) providing training in the Early Learning and Development programs to provide them the capacity to serve children better; and (2) supporting referrals, so that when the assessing program cannot meet the child's need they can at least find another program that

can. This includes strengthening this network of consultants by identifying additional professionals as well as providing specialty training to enhance their efforts to work with children struggling with social/emotional challenges in the group environment.

Partnering with interested parents ((C)(4)) is another critical component of program accountability. The quality rating and improvement system will set standards for programs in their engagement of parents, and hold them accountable for doing so. We know that for children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs, a partnership between providers and parents is the most effective way to ensure kindergarten readiness.

Supporting all of these efforts will be a new unified data system ((E)(2)). At the Data Roundtable hosted by the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness in December 2010, one of the top priorities identified for the state's unified data system was the ability to help connect children to needed services. The data system will be a great resource for parents and providers to act on the needs of children once those needs are identified. Moreover, it can help reduce the amount of duplicative screening by connecting records of screenings (a significant issue with highly mobile populations). Indeed, a major focus of the data roundtable was on the fact that in many instances, data about the same child currently housed in different and unconnected parts of state government could be combined in ways that benefit the child and make better use of state resources.

(b) Supporting an Excellent Workforce

For Children with High Needs to have high-quality interactions with adults, we need to ensure a high-quality workforce. Oklahoma is fortunate to have many outstanding early educators, but the success of its early childhood workforce can be improved through better system design. Ideally, the tiers of the accountability system should be aligned with the workforce competencies and teacher credentials: the competencies will reflect the particular practices required of programs at different levels, and teacher credentials will reflect mastery of those competencies. Through its work in (D)(1), Oklahoma will design the infrastructure of that system – and through its accountability system, Oklahoma will make sure that improved credentialing has positive consequences for educators and programs. Moreover, the accountability system will drive improved professional development aligned to the competencies ((D)(2)). Through an innovative Early Learning Consortium to provide

professional development, Oklahoma will ensure that professional development is high-quality, comprehensive, and mobilized to where it is needed.

The state's comprehensive assessment system ((C)(2)) must also provide for the quality of the classroom environment, and actually evaluate the quality of the teacher-child interaction. These elements of the assessment system will be reflected in the quality rating and improvement system's rating and monitoring procedures, described further in ((B)(3)).

Once again, the state's data system will be an important support, providing information about programs and personnel to help track their improvement. Through the accountability and data systems, Oklahoma will ensure that Early Learning and Development Programs supported by state funds are providing the best possible service, improving continuously, and properly informing parents about how they support child development and kindergarten readiness.

3. *The Clear Path to Achieving Oklahoma's Goals*

All of the areas in the grant have an important role to play in meeting the needs of children – and building on its strong existing systems, Oklahoma will use grant funds to develop the infrastructure to meet all of those needs. But rather than build a series of standalone efforts, Oklahoma will build one system – a system in which a comprehensive accountability system supports program improvement, and provides a framework for assessing and meeting child needs. Oklahoma believes this comprehensive approach is the only way to truly say that it is doing everything it can to support Children with High Needs.

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

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

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

Identification of the one or more selection criteria that the State has chosen to address in Focused

Investment Area (D):

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

- (D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.
- (D)(2) Supporting 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):

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(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;

Oklahoma approaches the organizational demands of implementing our “ambitious yet achievable” State Plan outlined in this Early Learning Challenge Grant application with an existing interagency structure in place. Oklahoma’s success implementing our Early Learning vision will depend upon developing an effective and well-coordinated process within the existing interagency structure to reach consensus, make decisions and take joint action through the Early Learning Challenge partnership. This grant will require state agency leaders and staff to develop a robust process of interagency collaboration and cooperation in order to implement

- A comprehensive assessment system that assures children enter kindergarten ready to succeed and
- A comprehensive accountability system that supports program improvement, and provides a framework for assessing and meeting children’s needs.

In Oklahoma, the governance process for the Early Learning Challenge Grant begins with strong leadership from Governor Mary Fallin, who will be responsible for assuring supports are in place for state agency leaders who will be responsible for achieving the goals of Oklahoma's State Plan. On a more operational level, Oklahoma has an existing advisory body that makes recommendations to Governor Fallin on strengthening the early childhood system: the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) that has also served as the State Early Childhood Advisory Council since 2003.

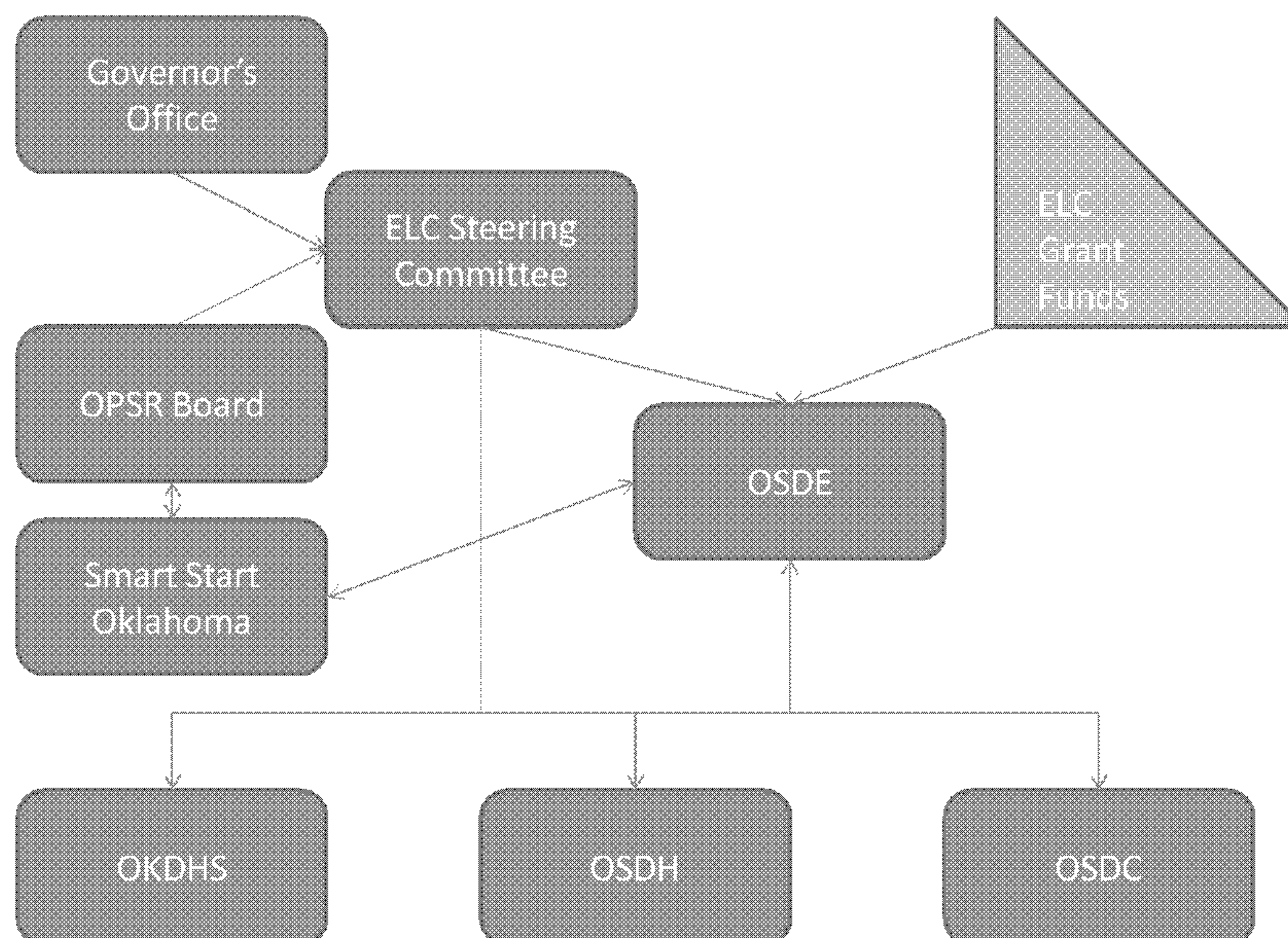
The OPSR is charged under state statute and now under federal legislation to make recommendations to the Governor on early childhood issues. The OPSR is a 32 member public-private partnership board; holds monthly board meetings; operates under the Oklahoma Open Meeting Act; and has an infrastructure through existing workgroups to obtain broad based input from key early childhood stakeholders such as parents, business leaders, philanthropy, policy makers, private providers, state agency staff, higher and common education professionals in making recommendations to the Governor. The OPSR will focus its efforts on making recommendation to assure that the State Plan is implemented with the intent stated in the application. The OPSR serves Governor Fallin as her Advisory Council on Early Childhood.

Oklahoma will establish a governance structure to implement the State Plan in the ELC grant application:

- The Early Learning agency heads – with the addition of a select number of governor's appointees – will function as a steering committee for the implementation of the grant.
- The OPSR board will continue to convene agency representatives and other stakeholders to ensure that the work under the ELC grant stays aligned to Oklahoma's broader Early Learning objectives, and its committees will support specific grant projects.
- A special Data Governance Committee will also be established to support the implementation of the ELC State Plan – including the Early Learning Data System, but also to coordinate with the data governance committees of OSDE and the P20 Data Coordinating Council to oversee the operation of the larger Oklahoma P20 Education Data System and P20 Education Data Portal

(Appendix 20).

- The grant's organizational chart:



(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

Lead Agency: The lead agency for the grant is the Oklahoma State Department of Education and the State Board of Education. The State Board has broad statutory and constitutional powers and duties related to education. It is chaired by the elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction, who also serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the Oklahoma State Department of Education. The Oklahoma State Board is composed of members appointed to serve six year terms by the Governor and they represent each Congressional district and one at-large member. The State Department of Education oversees Pre-K to 12 education initiatives including the state's educational data system, curriculum standards, policy development, intervention in chronically low performing schools, and teacher certification and training.

The OSDE will provide programmatic and fiscal management and oversight for the application and will be responsible for gathering information needed to meet reporting

requirements to the US Department of Education. The State Superintendent will designate and identify agency staff that will be responsible for the implementation of OSDE activities related to the State Plan. It will be critical that the OSDE have the infrastructure to adequately manage this application. It will add five OSDE staff to participate in all interagency planning activities. The OSDE will be responsible for the implementation of the Kindergarten Entry Assessment, development of the Data System, and work in close coordination with OSDH and OKDHS for the development of a comprehensive assessment system, enhancement of early learning standards and alignment with K-12 standards and oversight of all State Plan goals and activities to ensure compliance with the grant.

Key Tasks:

- 1) Work collaboratively with and support the Participating State Agencies in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scopes of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of the Memoranda of Understanding;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for each Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with each Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with each Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
- 3) Provide feedback on each Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep each Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from each Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

The State Advisory Council: The Board of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) will serve as a forum for the Participating State Agencies and other stakeholders to work collaboratively on policy development. While a low level of time

commitment is required, a high level of personal engagement and organizational authority across the wide range of agencies and organization represented on the Board will be required from this level to support the implementation of the Grant.

The State Advisory Council/Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) is staffed by Smart Start Oklahoma. Smart Start Oklahoma will designate a staff position to support the work of the OPSR and local communities in implementing grant activities. Smart Start Oklahoma will be responsible for convening stakeholders to conduct interagency planning and develop recommendations on all goals identified to implement the State Plan. Final decisions related to the State Plan will be made by each agency responsible for implementation and will be informed by the recommendations and input developed through the SSO workgroups, committees and the OPSR Board. SSO will ensure that each workgroup membership is representative of content experts, stakeholders, parents and represents the cultural and linguistic diversity of Children with High Needs. The state agency responsible for the coordination of the Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C is a member of the OPSR Board. The established work groups of the OPSR board provide a rich infrastructure to support of the ELC grant.

(Appendix 5) Smart Start Oklahoma will also be responsible for the coordination of public engagement activities identified in the application.

Smart Start Oklahoma also supports a network of 18 local community coalitions. Local Smart Start community projects are responsible for mirroring state level systems building at the local level. In order to provide local community development throughout the state, Smart Start communities will be expanded from 18 to 24 sites. They will be responsible to convene local stakeholders and facilitate planning and communication to support implementation of QRIS and comprehensive assessment systems across all early learning and development programs, develop 4 year old collaboration models and coordinate local training for the early childhood workforce. They will work closely with the new Early Learning Consortium for professional development, the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development, the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, the Head Start Regional Technical Assistance Office, Oklahoma's Child Care Warmline, and local school districts to ensure cross systems planning and coordination occur at the local level.

The Participating Agencies: The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS),

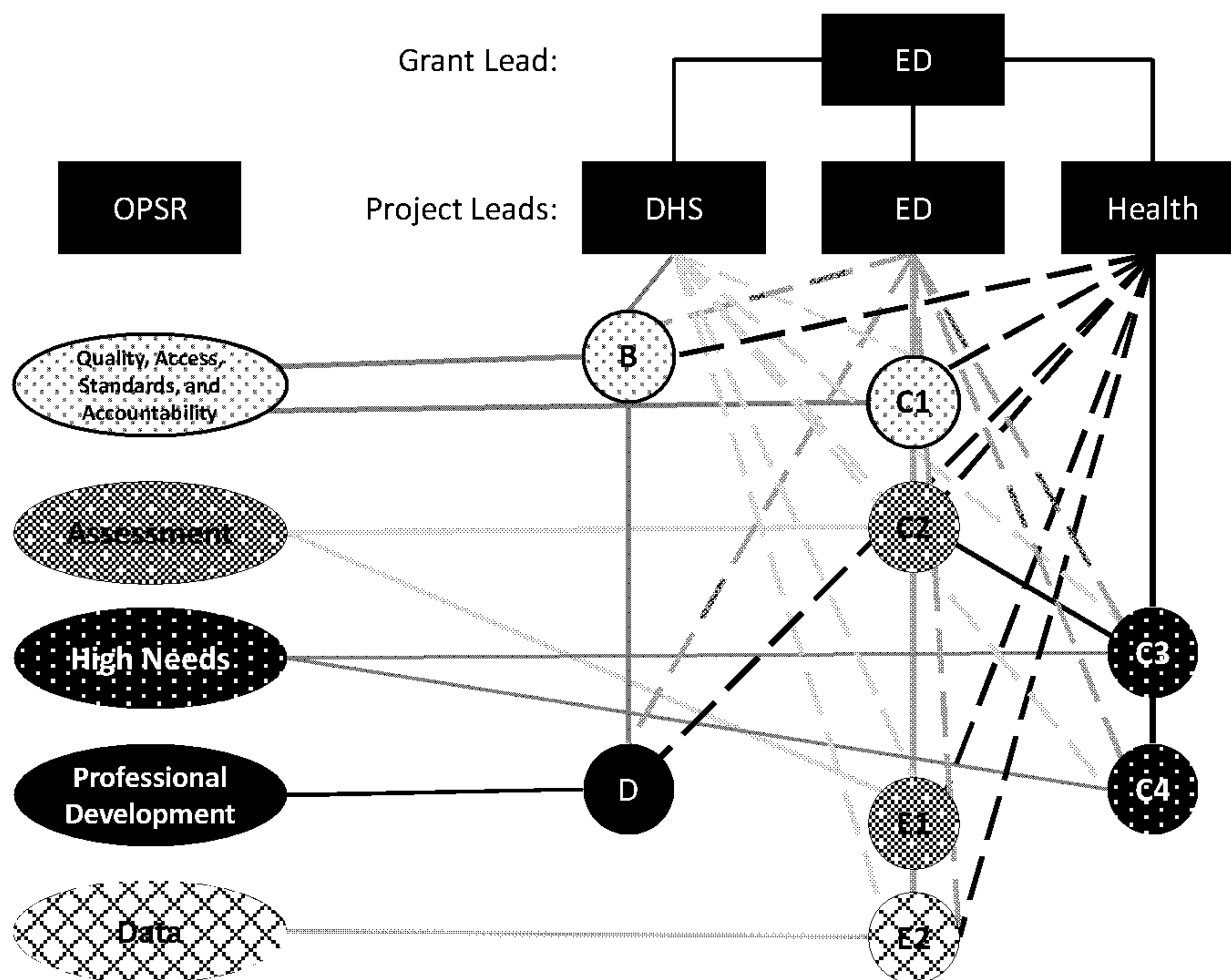
Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) and the Department of Commerce are required participating state agencies. The OKDHS and OSDH will each designate a position as a lead staff member to provide interagency coordination. The OKDHS will be responsible for overall coordination of the enhancements of the quality rating and improvement system, and expansion of the early childhood workforce professional development system. The OSDH will be responsible for the overall coordination of the integration of health promotion standards, efforts to work with children in group environments struggling with social/emotional challenges, family engagement strategies and will work in close coordination with the OSDE in the development of a comprehensive assessment system related to overall health promotion standards. The Department of Commerce will be responsible for overseeing the integration of the State Plan with the Head Start/Early Head Start Performance Standards, quality rating and improvement, professional development, and data systems.

The Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) will facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies. The HSSCO director holds a full-time position of sufficient authority and access to ensure collaboration is effective and involves a range of State agencies. Specifically, the HSSCO facilitates collaboration among Head Start agencies and State and local entities as charged by the Office of Head Start in the Regional Office. The Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) will facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies and state and local partners. The Head Start State Collaboration Office is located in the offices of the Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies (OKACAA) through a contract with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (ODOC), which provides state supplemental funding for Head Start programs and federal Community Services Block Grant funds for Community Action Agencies. This allows for strong partnerships across the state with all the local and state partners that support Community Action and Head Start programs serving Oklahoma's neediest children and families in their quest for stability and self-sufficiency. The HSSCO has established an advisory board made up of representatives across all early childhood sectors, agencies, and organizations to advise the HSSCO Project and provide linkage to the SAC. The HSSCO director is a statutory public sector member of the SAC, chairs the SAC Professional Development and Workforce Workgroup, and sits on the Data Coordination and Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability Workgroups of the SAC. The HSSCO director works directly with the Office of

Head Start Regional Program Manager and State Team Lead in the Region VI Office of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to ensure effective relationships and communication with regard to state early childhood activities and Regional Office priorities.

In collaboration with the OPSR, the Lead and Participating State Agencies will be responsible for establishing a governance process to ensure joint agency activities adhere to grant guidelines and are conducted on time in the intent of the State Plan. Bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) secure the commitment of the lead and participating agencies to work together and will be reviewed and renewed annually to confirm that Lead and Participating State Agencies remain supportive of the State Plan and to work together to improve Early Learning for all children in Oklahoma.

For (A)(3)(a)(2): An organizational chart that shows how the grant agencies and goals relate to one another



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

The chart above [For (A)(3)(a)(1) & (A)(3)(a)(2)] depict the interagency structure and relationships of the Participating Agencies and the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) with the goals in the ELC grant. While most decisions will be made jointly, each agency will have an identified area of responsibility for ensuring Oklahoma is implementing each key area of the application. Oklahoma has purposefully developed a governance structure that builds upon its existing structure to avoid the creation of additional governmental entities. Participating State Agencies will develop a process to make decisions related to administration of the grant and to ensure the administrative processes of this application are completed.

The next steps for the OSDE as lead agency will be to prepare an RFP to recruit a leading national expert on data governance to help Oklahoma establish and begin to operate governance over the ELC Grant implementation and coordinate data system development with the OSDE and P20 data Coordinating Council. Once Oklahoma is awarded an ELC grant, work will need to begin quickly through the OPSR to establish a governance framework for the grant that builds on the collaboration already in place within the structure provided by OPSR and Smart Start Oklahoma.

Although the full nature of grant implementation will take time to establish, there are several ideas that the lead and participating agencies have already agreed to. Specifically, the organizational chart represents the structure that will be utilized to develop recommendations and ultimately policy and practice decisions. Ultimately agency leadership at the Department of Education will serve as the grant lead, making all final decisions and advising the Governor. Department of Human Services, Department of Education, and Department of Health will serve as project leads for each section outlined in the grant. The current workgroup structure of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness will be updated to address the criteria outlined in each section of the grant. Each Goal Committee will consist of experts in the field, as well as corresponding agency staff.

- (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 this grant*

Through the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness, Oklahoma already engages a

strong cross-section of stakeholders in its policy development process. The OPSR and its committees will continue to play that role during the grant period, providing a forum for agency personnel and stakeholders to work together to support children. Through the grant process representatives of programs, educators, parents, and others will be asked to participate in the OPSR processes to help ensure the successful implementation of the grant.

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan

The attached Participating State Agency Memoranda of Understanding and scopes of work (1) reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each agency; (2) require each Participating State Agency to implement applicable portions of the State Plan and maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become participating programs; and (3) include the signature of an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. The Scope of Work descriptions demonstrate the key role that each agency will play in the implementation of the grant. The unified text of Exhibit I to the Memoranda of Understanding is included in **Appendix 6**.

(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)

In **Appendix 5**, Oklahoma demonstrates commitment to the plan from a broad array of stakeholders. In addition to wide support within the early learning community, Oklahoma's support includes university leaders, business leaders, health leaders, Tribal leaders, community leaders, teachers, school districts, and political leaders. As described elsewhere in this grant, Oklahoma has a wide range of organizations that understand the importance of the early years, and are committed to supporting high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs.

Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities

Participating State Agency	Governance-related roles and responsibilities
Oklahoma State Department of Education	1) Work collaboratively with and support the Participating State Agencies in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scopes of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of

Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities	
Participating State Agency	Governance-related roles and responsibilities
	<p>the Memoranda of Understanding;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for each Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with each Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with each Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application; 3) Provide feedback on each Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products; 4) Keep each Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from each Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan; 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.
Oklahoma State Department of Human Services	The OKDHS will be responsible for overall coordination of the enhancements of the quality rating and improvement system, and expansion of the early childhood workforce professional development system.
Oklahoma State Department of Health	The OSDH will be responsible for the overall coordination of the integration of health promotion standards, efforts to work with children in group environments struggling with social/emotional challenges, family engagement strategies and will work in close coordination with the OSDE in the development of a comprehensive assessment system related to overall health promotion standards.
Oklahoma State Department of Commerce	The Department of Commerce will be responsible for overseeing the integration of the State Plan with the Head Start/Early Head Start Performance Standards, quality rating and improvement, professional development, and data systems.
Other Entities	
State advisory council on early childhood education and care	Convene workgroups, committees and public-private board to obtain develop recommendation for policy and practice

Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities	
Participating State Agency	Governance-related roles and responsibilities
	decisions for the State Plan
State Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA	Participate in the OPSR Board as a legislatively mandated public board member; participate in the Special Populations Workgroup;

Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable)	
List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State	Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix (Y/N)?
Cherokee Nation	Y
Chickasaw Nation	Y
Choctaw Nation of OK	Y
Community Development Support Association	Y
Community Service Council Of Greater Tulsa	Y
Early Childhood Association of Oklahoma	Y
Lawton Success By 6/Smart Start	Y
Logan Community Services	Y
Oklahoma Early Childhood Teacher's Association	Y
Oklahoma Chapter of the American Academy for Pediatrics	Y
Oklahoma Child Care Association	Y
Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association, Inc.	Y

Oklahoma Council for Exceptional Children	Y
Oklahoma Department of Mental Health	Y
Oklahoma Head Start Association	Y
Oklahoma Head Start State Collaborative Office	Y
Smart Start Bartlesville	Y
Smart Start Canadian County	Y
Smart Start Central Oklahoma	Y
Smart Start Cherokee County	Y
Smart Start Durant	Y
Smart Start Kay County	Y
Smart Start Muskogee	Y
Smart Start North Central Oklahoma	Y
Smart Start South Central Oklahoma	Y
Smart Start Stephens County	Y
Success By 6 of Pottawatomie County	Y
University of Oklahoma Center for Early Childhood Professional Development	Y

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

The extent to which the State Plan--

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

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

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

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

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

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

The State's response to (A)(4)(b) will be addressed in the Budget Section (section VIII of the application) and reviewers will evaluate the State's Budget Section response when scoring (A)(4). In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to (A)(4)(a) and (A)(4)(c) and may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

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

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

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

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local 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;

Oklahoma's financial commitment to Early Learning and Development Programs is significant, and in the Early Learning Challenge all of the programs will be engaged in seeking

to help improve outcomes for Children with High Needs. The nature of Oklahoma's approach – implementing an overarching QRIS that serves the full range of Early Learning and Development Programs – guarantees that all funding currently spent on those programs will be leveraged in service of Oklahoma's Early Learning Challenge goals. Over time, all of Oklahoma's annual spending on Children with High Needs should be improved in quality and focused on implementing standards-based best practice; the QRIS will help move Oklahoma's spending in that direction. This section gives a brief description of those resources and how they will help support Oklahoma's overall goals.

i. State Pre-Kindergarten Program

Oklahoma's Pre-K program through the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) is a part of the state's school funding formula, receiving about \$4,477 per child in State dollars in the 2009-2010 school year (NIEER, 2010). Oklahoma's Kindergarten program is also included in the formula. School districts are reimbursed at the per-pupil rate with specific funding amounts or weights determined by the length of the program day and age of the child. Funding for the program also comes from Federal programs including IDEA Part C, Title I, and Title II.

Around 71% of 4-year-olds within the state are currently enrolled in this program on a voluntary basis and 93% of Kindergarten students enrolled attend a full-day program on a voluntary basis, as only half-day Kindergarten is mandated by the State.

Despite having no state funds for 3-year-olds, around 3,000 are in 3-year-old classroom programs across the state. Districts have utilized resources from local and federal dollars to pay for this program.

By including Pre-K in the redesigned QRIS, Oklahoma will be able to ensure that Pre-K's are improving outcomes for Children with High Needs in a manner aligned with the state's overall goals. The unparalleled scope of Oklahoma's Pre-K means that when the state adopts new policies through the Challenge – particularly new assessment and data use practices – the impact on Children with High Needs will be significant and direct. Leveraging the investment in Oklahoma's Pre-K program will be a key part of Oklahoma's success.

ii. Child Care Investments

Oklahoma will use its significant investment in child care quality and supports to support

its work in the grant. All of Oklahoma's existing investment will be leveraged to improve quality and support the grant projects. Oklahoma has a longstanding commitment to providing high-quality care for Children with High Needs, and this grant will help Oklahoma elevate the quality of service and the outcomes achieved.

The OKDHS Child Care and TANF programs have historically worked in collaboration to meet the needs of families through combined CCDF / TANF plans and budgets. Despite only receiving \$75 million in CCDF funding, OKDHS budgets nearly \$170 million for child care during a fiscal year. Approximately \$132 million of funding allocated for Child Care supports the tiered reimbursement for the QRIS/subsidy program. This ensures that families qualifying for subsidized child care have equal access to quality child care.

Through the CCDF/TANF budget, Oklahoma Department of Human Services spends approximately \$9 million annually on Quality Initiatives. The Quality Initiatives include the following programs: Resource and Referral, Professional Development, Wage Supplements and Scholarships. Quality Initiatives funding supports the professional development system that promotes partnerships to provide resources to the early care and education field. The funding allows for professional and technical assistance to a workforce of approximately 20,000. All of these Quality Initiatives will be fully aligned to the work of the grant, including the work of the Early Learning Consortium for professional development described in (D)(2)(a).

OKDHS Child Care licenses over 4,500 child care facilities throughout the state, with the capacity to care for more than 135,000 children. 175 Licensing Specialist (FTE) provide licensing consultation, and make a minimum of 3 unannounced monitoring visits to all facilities per year. In addition to the Licensing Specialist, 15 QRIS Consultants (FTE) provide child care programs with technical assistance, and coaching to improve quality of care. OKDHS spends over \$9 million in staff that provide direct support to child care facilities to ensure quality care for Oklahoma children and families.

iii. Other Programs Supporting Improved Outcomes for Children with High Needs

As explained throughout the grant, Oklahoma funds an array of services meant to help support kindergarten readiness for Children with High Needs. Oklahoma has long recognized that kindergarten readiness is not just about academics – if a child is in bad health, or is hungry, or is not supported at home, then their ability to learn will be substantially affected. The

programs described below are efforts in Oklahoma to meet the needs of Children with High Needs, which can all play a role in the new aligned and coordinated system Oklahoma is committed to developing.

The OSDH created the multidisciplinary Child Guidance program to promote optimal development for children birth to age 13. This program is funded through state appropriations, local millage and federal funds. This statewide program is located in 16 regional sites with an annual budget of \$5.2 million for State FY 2012. (\$2.5 million state appropriations, \$1.7 million local county millage, and \$1 million Federal). The budget supports 14 regional centers located within OSDH county health departments and two contracts for services at the Tulsa City-County and Oklahoma City-County Health Departments for a total of 16 locations, statewide. Approximately 80% of the budget supports services for children 0- 5 and their families. These services include developmental screening and assessment, intervention and prevention services, and professional development/consultation for professionals working in group environments serving children.

Also housed at OSDH within the Child Guidance Service, OKDHS provides support of \$244,000 for the Child Care Warmline to provide consultation and support for child care workers who care for children exhibiting social/emotional challenges or have health-related questions or issues for children cared for in these subsidized child care environments. The Warmline also provides a network for contracted Child Care Consultation services to address challenging behaviors in these group environments. These services are provided by a network of child development specialists, behavior health specialists, and other identified professionals with specialized backgrounds and training in this area.

Additionally, \$83,000 is spent on an Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Coordinator who provides training and support to professionals working in early care environments. This position is paid for through an agreement with the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) which provides 20% of the funding and the OSDH which provides 80% of the funding which supports these efforts specifically in the area of infant and early childhood mental health.

In early October 2011, the United States Department of Education awarded the OSDE with a Professional Development grant in the amount of \$5,851,154.16 to assist with Response

to Intervention, Positive Behaviors Interventions and Supports, and other services over the span of 5 years.

Additionally, the OSDE administers the Oklahoma Parents as Teachers program, funded by the legislature since 1992. The program served 4,573 families and 5,094 children in 2009-2010 at a cost of \$390 per child. In the 2011-2012 school year, \$1,585,471 was appropriated to 74 school districts, serving around 2975 children birth through age three and their families.

Also funded through the OSDE is the State Pilot Program, which provides a range of supports to increase the quality of early care programs. It leverages private donations and state funds to serve at-risk children in at least one urban and one rural area of this state. The grantee selected by the State Board of Education was the Community Action Program of Tulsa County. The program began with \$5,000,000 in state funds in FY07, and \$10,000,000 in each fiscal year since, that must be matched by private dollars at a minimum of \$10,000,000.

SoonerStart, Oklahoma's Part C early intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities and developmental delays, is currently funded at \$22,453,149 (\$14,417,922-state and \$8,035,227-federal). 12,899 infants and toddlers will receive evaluations, direct services and resource coordination with a monthly caseload of 2,923 children being projected. Seventy-one (71) FTE are currently budgeted for the OSDE, as lead agency, to provide oversight, compliance monitoring and resource coordination with 168.25 FTE budgeted for the OSDH to provide direct individualized services such as speech-language pathology, occupational and physical therapy, child development and nursing. Through its eight regional offices, program staff will continue to work closely with local school districts to transition children eligible for preschool special education services at age three, and to facilitate community-based referrals to assist families as needed.

iv. Smart Start Oklahoma

Smart Start Oklahoma receives \$1.615 million in state appropriation per year that will continue to support the state office staff and 18 local community projects. Both at the state level and in the local communities, support will continue to be provided to coordinate collaboration efforts and build early childhood systems. The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Foundation is the state's designated grantee for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' State Advisory Council grant, a three-year grant for \$1.671 million. Funding for that

grant provides a foundation for activities that will be enhanced in this application. This includes \$200,000 to support a pilot for Kindergarten Entry Assessment; \$165,000 to determine the degree of access to quality programs by children who are low income; \$148,000 to conduct a needs assessment to learn more about professional development; and \$150,000 to recommend a statewide professional development and career advancement plan for the early childhood workforce.

(b) How the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan

Oklahoma's long history of investment in Early Learning and Development Programs gives it a strong base on which to build. It has chosen to invest strategically to build on strengths and address gaps in its current policy set. These investments include:

- *\$11,748,208 to expand the Quality Rating and Improvement System.* The new QRIS is meant to serve as the state's primary engine of improvement. While implementing the new QRIS will draw heavily on existing resources – and lead to improved efficiency in the expenditure of current dollars – there will be startup costs associated with ramping up the quality and focus of the system. The QRIS expenditures will make possible the transition from the existing legacy system to the next-generation system described here.
- *\$16,750,500 to develop a Comprehensive Assessment System.* As described in (C)(2), one of the major focuses of this grant for Oklahoma is to improve its existing early learning assessments. Assessments are an essential aspect in personalizing service to Children with High Needs. Given that this is an area where Oklahoma has very limited infrastructure at this time, Oklahoma will invest significantly in the assessment system's startup costs, including tools and initial training.
- *\$12,177,262 to develop an Early Learning Data System.* Oklahoma has a significant underutilized resource in its existing agency data systems. By creating a linked system, Oklahoma will be able to better unlock the power of its existing information. New data systems have significant startup costs, and Oklahoma will use this grant to address many of those costs.
- *\$7,701,696 to implement the Early Learning Consortium for professional development.* Throughout the grant criteria is a consistent theme: the importance of having Early

Childhood Educators who are able to meet the needs of children. The Early Learning Challenge – and Oklahoma's application – envision Early Childhood Educators mastering numerous competencies: assessment, the use of learning standards, supporting health and development, and engaging with families, among others. Oklahoma will help Early Childhood Educators meet those needs by creating an Early Childhood Consortium to provide high-quality TA in a thoughtful and organized manner. This budget will be used to cover start-up costs for the Consortium, as it brings coherence to a policy area that has long needed it.

- *\$5,176,172 for Strengthening Families.* Family engagement is a critical priority for Oklahoma. Given its success with the Strengthening Families model, Oklahoma has chosen to make Strengthening Families a focus of its Early Learning Challenge work.
- *\$3,281,756 for Early Learning and Development Standards.* Oklahoma has Early Learning Guidelines that meet the criteria for high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards. However, with expectations for the early childhood system changing, the Guidelines will need to be updated. This budget will allow Oklahoma to update and support the implementation of its guidelines.
- *\$2,724,076 to improve health practices.* Because improving the health of Children with High Needs is a key priority for Oklahoma, this line-item has been included to provide additional support for efforts to improve child health, as described in (C)(3).

Taken together, these projects address supports for Children with High Needs comprehensively, with a focus on building the infrastructure that will allow Oklahoma to make the most effective use of its annual spending.

(c) Sustaining after the grant period to ensure that the percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded

Oklahoma has a longstanding commitment to serving Children with High Needs, as described in (A)(1). That commitment remains steadfast. Oklahoma's goal in this Early Learning Challenge is to provide *better* service to those Children with High Needs. The ultimate measure of Oklahoma's work will be the quality of the interaction between adults and children in the communities where those children live; the state's role is to provide the infrastructure supporting those adults and children, and through this grant the state is committing

to doing that job more effectively. At this time, it is impossible to project what the state's budget climate will look like at the end of the grant period, and it would be meaningless to commit Oklahoma's as-yet-unelected 2015 legislature to spending obligations in FY 2016 and beyond. However, through this grant, we intend to make more efficient use of the dollars we spend on serving young Children with High Needs. Whatever our annual "carrying cost" for programs, those annual dollars will have greater impact if we leverage our one-time funds to put better systems in place. Thus, the heavy emphasis of this grant is on one-time investments and startup costs that leverage long-term outcomes without any more than minimal increases in annualized spending (and indeed, the grant budget emphasizes spending in the first two years that ramps down, to ease the transition when the grant period ends). By ensuring that Children with High Needs have better access to existing opportunities, and improving the quality of those opportunities, Oklahoma will improve outcomes for its Children with High Needs in a way that can be sustained after the grant period expires.

Table (A)(4) – 1 Existing other Federal, State, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.

Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 2012	Fiscal Year 2013	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2015	Total
<i>SDE(1)State funding</i>	\$1,445,825	\$1,138,426	\$512,260	\$512,260	\$3,608,771
<i>OKDHS – CCDF Funding</i>	\$307,711	\$437,711	\$297,711	\$297,711	\$1,340,847
<i>OSDH – State Funding</i>	\$239,369	\$203,369	\$103,369	\$103,369	\$649,477
<i>OPSR - ARRA</i>	\$625,000	\$625,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$1,300,000
<i>Total</i>	\$2,378,775	\$2,404,506	\$938,340	\$938,340	\$6,899,095

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

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

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

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

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

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards²⁶ that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State shall include the evidence listed below and describe in its narrative how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion; the State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included

²⁶ See such nationally recognized standards as:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2009). Head Start Program Performance Standards. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. PDF retrieved from: 45 CFR Chapter XIII - 1301-1311 http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Head%20Start%20Program/Program%20Design%20and%20Management/Head%20Start%20Requirements/Head%20Start%20Requirements/45%20CFR%20Chapter%20XIII/45%20CFR%20Chap%20XIII_ENG.pdf

U.S. Department of Defense. DoD Instruction 6060.2, Child Development Programs (CDPs), January 19, 1993, certified as current August 25, 1998 (to be updated Fall 2011). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense. Retrieved from:

http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/portal/page/mhf/MHF/MHF_DETAIL_1?section_id=20.60.500.100.0.0.0.0.0¤t_id=20.60.500.100.500.60.60.0.0

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health association, and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2011) Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Early Care and education Programs. Elk Grove Village, IL; American Academy of Pediatrics.

relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

Evidence for (B)(1):

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

Oklahoma is a historical leader in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) and is well positioned to build on its experiences and accomplishments to set the standard for a new generation of QRIS. Our system will extend beyond licensing and program standards to incorporate all aspects of child readiness, including health, family engagement, assessment, and effective use of data systems. The system will support kindergarten readiness for all children – particularly Children with High Needs -- by establishing clear expectations for programs and clear metrics for parents and for policy makers. Programs that are rated at higher levels will exemplify quality, and will be able to demonstrate that children who are participating in these programs will be better prepared to enter school.

Oklahoma's existing QRIS has significant strengths and provides an excellent platform on which to build a system that even more effectively recognizes and encourages quality early care and education across many sectors and Early Learning and Development

Programs(ELDP). Oklahoma's Tiered QRIS has a long history, high participation levels, good public awareness, and strong requirements for early childhood educator qualifications and family engagement. The current QRIS design is not adequate to ensure kindergarten readiness, and there are key Early Learning and Development Programs – particularly state Pre-K – that have not been included within its scope. However, its historical success and existing framework provide a strong foundation for Oklahoma to develop a system that is both broader in its participation and deeper in its power to drive quality improvement.

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

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

(1) Early Learning and Development Standards;

The Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines will be embedded in the quality rating and improvement system, and the ability of programs to successfully implement the Guidelines will be a key determinant of the program's rating level. As with each item within (B)(1)(a), Oklahoma will develop subscales that identify four or more levels of program implementation of the Guidelines. Each subscale will include specific, measurable gradations of program effort in implementing the expectations under each standard. For example, the Guidelines subscale may require that all programs (the lowest tier) have appropriate staff and director training on the early learning guidelines and provide parents information on how early learning guidelines are used in the program. Higher quality levels may require that the curriculum is aligned with the early learning guidelines, the use of assessments measuring child outcomes are based on the guidelines, and that the program provides clear and meaningful guidance to parents on how children are progressing through the developmental expectations in the early learning guidelines.

The Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines were developed jointly by representatives of licensed child care programs, Head Starts, and Pre-K and are compatible with standards for all three programs. The standards are aligned with the Priority Academic Skill Standards (PASS), which define what children are expected to know in kindergarten. While the Guidelines have been jointly developed and enjoy widespread support of ELDPs, they have not yet been fully incorporated into the fabric of early learning in Oklahoma.

(2) A Comprehensive Assessment System

Oklahoma's new QRIS will incorporate a ladder of assessment efforts that align the Comprehensive Assessment System (see (C)(2)) within the QRIS. These assessments will be conducted in a cross-sector manner. While the current QRIS does not require comprehensive assessments, Oklahoma's new design will ensure that best practices in early childhood assessments are implemented widely.

Programs that use child assessment and screening more rigorously and appropriately will receive higher QRIS ratings based on an assessment subscale to be defined specifically in this project. In particular, the ratings subscale will measure the ability of programs to conduct child-facing assessments, and then act on those results (either by providing services directly or through using systems set up to make referrals to other services). The highest-quality programs will be those that best ensure that children with identified needs have those needs met.

All programs will be expected to use the measures of program and personnel quality implemented through the Comprehensive Assessment System, and the QRIS will measure their ability to take the results of those assessments and use them to improve quality. Under the current QRIS, licensed child care programs seeking higher tiers are assessed with Environment Rating Scales (ERS) to measure features of the learning environment such as the materials, activities, routines, provisions for health and safety, and interactions that influence children's experiences in the setting. Affected programs in Tier 2 (which has the largest number of children receiving CCDF subsidies) receive ERS assessments every three years. Information from the ERS is utilized by programs to create quality improvement plans that include achievable goals. ERS is not presently required in lower tiers or in the top tier, where accreditation substitutes for this requirement. The State Pilot Program incorporates regular formative, environmental, and adult-child interaction assessments and can serve as a model for incorporating assessment systems into the QRIS. In the future, environmental ratings will be an integral part of every rating tier.

(3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications

Oklahoma will revisit, revise, and realign early childhood educator qualifications so that they reflect a cross-sector approach to the QRIS that incorporates best practices from all Early Learning and Development Programs. As described further in (D)(1), Oklahoma will evaluate

credentials and degrees and update as needed to ensure continued alignment to the Workforce Competencies and QRIS. These credentials and degrees will be directly linked to the QRIS: programs employing personnel with higher-level credentials and degrees will be more highly rated, and new quality levels will be added to incorporate programs that employ teachers with higher formal credentials. The QRIS will include a qualifications subscale that provides clear upward steps in qualifications.

Oklahoma's existing QRIS effectively incorporates staff qualifications and is closely aligned with the existing early childhood career ladder. To achieve the top two tiers in the QRIS, programs must have a master teacher for every 30 children in the first year in the tier and for every 20 thereafter. Master teacher qualifications align with the OKDHS Professional Development Ladder and requirements for Head Start. Master teachers must possess either a master/lead teacher competency certificate, child development associate/certified child care professional, certificate of mastery, 30 college credit hours with emphasis on early childhood, a four-year degree with work in early childhood, or State Department of Education certification as an early childhood teacher.

Oklahoma's Pre-K program requires teachers to have bachelor's degrees and specialized early childhood training. The new QRIS will provide a consolidated framework for all programs incorporating these different requirements.

(4) Family engagement strategies

Oklahoma's new QRIS will build on existing family engagement requirements. In conjunction with the work conducted under (C)(4), the QRIS will include a family engagement subscale. The higher tiers will include strategies such as home visits and family support staff available on site.

Currently, programs that participate in QRIS must implement parent involvement strategies that promote parental awareness of resources and communication between parents and providers. Requirements are tiered and begin at the second lowest tier. At the second lowest tier (1+ stars), centers must offer eight parent involvement strategies, including parent conferences, parent resource area, newsletters, and parent participation in program planning. To reach the next two tiers, programs must also provide a written report at the annual conference and assist parents in connecting with community resources.

(5) Health promotion practices

Oklahoma will create a quality subscale for health promotion that encourages children and families to embrace a healthy lifestyle, in conjunction with the work on child health described in more detail in (C)(3). This will include enhanced efforts in health promotion to support parents in their understanding of health literacy.

Oklahoma's current QRIS requires all participating programs to meet licensing standards, including compliance with health and safety, safe outdoor play and healthy meals provisions. The current QRIS does not have higher requirements for higher tiers. OKDHS consultation and professional development for programs includes promotion of healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and movement. This consultation and professional development can provide the basis for a tiered health promotion subscale.

(6) Effective data practices

When the project is complete, all publicly-funded programs will be expected to participate in the statewide early childhood data system, as described in more detail in (E)(2). The current QRIS measures the ability of programs to utilize data to improve the quality and personalization of their service. The new QRIS will continue to rate programs on their ability to implement best practices in data use, including continually updating practices to reflect the results of data analysis.

Plan for addressing (B)(1)(a)

Because Oklahoma's approach to all six parts of (B)(1)(a) is consistent and unified, and linked to the effort to develop distinct quality tiers, the design work will be conducted through a single High Quality Work Plan described in greater detail under (B)(1)(b).

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

(b) Measurable and Meaningfully Differentiated

Oklahoma will renovate its existing QRIS to redefine how programs, families, and policy makers think of quality. This will involve a meaningful shift of the quality scale that acknowledges that the highest current quality rating is not the highest that can be achieved and should not be the highest we seek. Similarly, the state will re-evaluate licensing and program

standards for all ELDPs to determine if the current minimum should be the new minimum in a high-quality system. The expected result of this system is a 4- or 5-star system applying to all ELDPs – one with higher expectations at all levels than the current system.

Oklahoma developed the first QRIS and continues to operate an effective system with meaningful differentiation between quality tiers, high participation, and high numbers of Children with High Needs in the upper tiers. Since 1998 Oklahoma has operated the “Reaching for the Stars” QRIS, which rates all licensed child care providers. This program is administered by OKDHS Child Care Services. The Stars program consists of four star levels. Each level builds on the previous level with increasing criteria in each component. The components are: on-going training for directors, staff, primary caregivers and assistance; learning environments including reading to children; parent involvement; staff qualifications; administrative practices and program evaluation.

Oklahoma’s “Reaching for the Stars” rates programs using a block approach, meaning that programs must meet all requirements of a lower tier in order to achieve a tier above. Licensure and compliance are the lowest level and accreditation the highest level of the 4-tier system. Oklahoma Child Care Services uses research-based criteria to develop standards in the rating system that are cross-walked with the standards of NAEYC, Head Start, early learning guidelines, and environment rating scales (**Appendices 9, 10 and 11**).

Oklahoma will implement the following High-Quality Plan to build on the strengths of a nationally leading QRIS while recognizing—and meeting—the need for a new definition of quality early care and education.

The initial design work for the new QRIS will be led by the OPSR's Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability (QuASA) workgroup. QuASA includes representation from all state agencies that will participate in the updated QRIS and are the appropriate arenas for all state agencies and stakeholders to have meaningful participation in developing that QRIS. QuASA will work closely with agency representation from OSDE, OKDHS, and Head Start/Tribal Head Start, and will engage experts in the areas of infants and toddlers, the health community, representatives from Tribal Child Care and the Latino Community Development Agency and children with special needs. QuASA's membership can be adjusted as needed for this task, potentially including additional expertise in assessment, data systems, and health promotion, all

of whom are available locally.

QuASA's process will be highly transparent, and will include continuous solicitation of public feedback through presentations, public meetings, surveys, and Internet forums. Smart Start Oklahoma communities around the state will serve as hosts for these discussions. It will produce its report by December 2012.

- Working with QuASA, the OSDE will secure a QRIS Development Consultant with national expertise in quality rating and improvement systems. The consultant will conduct a complete review of the current OKDHS QRIS “Reaching for the Stars” and provide recommendations to build upon this system with a tiered set of standards based on evidence that incorporate the core components of a quality system. The consultant will complete the following tasks:
 - Conduct a literature review of current QRIS best practice. This review will assess existing and planned state QRIS in an effort to determine where Oklahoma’s program should be improved. The consultant will review how states incorporate staffing, initial staff qualifications, ongoing training, learning environments, administrative practices, program evaluation, early learning standards, assessment, health promotion, family engagement and effective data practices into their QRIS.
 - Conduct a review of current state and local strategies for moving ELDPs to higher quality tiers and identify models for future Oklahoma efforts (see (B)(2)).
 - Collect stakeholder input from early childhood educators who work in programs that will participate in the quality rating and improvement system and from parents/legal guardians. This input will be obtained continuously through public meetings, online surveys, and other web-based tools.
 - Analyze data collected through the OPSR Needs Assessment that will be completed in December, 2011 and the information that has been gathered in the School Readiness Risk Index (SRRI) report to determine access and participation to quality programs for Children with High Needs.
 - Evaluate findings of the baseline study of program quality described in (B)(5).
 - Evaluate existing licensing and related standards for all state ELDPs to determine whether all programs meet desired minimum quality and how different ELDPs align

on the existing QRIS scale.

- Recommend an enhanced quality rating and improvement system by:
 1. Incorporating subscales developed under (B)(1)(a) for each element that will be measured by the new QRIS, including the Program Standards, health and safety standards, staffing ratios, and other elements the State wishes to include in its QRIS.
 2. Addressing findings of previous tasks and research in early childhood education, arranging the subscales into quality tiers that best predict improved child outcomes.
 3. Submitting a report that recommends a comprehensive QRIS. The QRIS will use tiers and/or a points system to evaluate all participating ELDPs on all defined subscales of quality and combines scales in a way that ELDPs have multiple options to move to higher tiers while ensuring that all programs in each tier are equivalent in quality.
- Recommend a system of supports and systems changes developments that will be needed for individual ELDPs to achieve higher quality ratings (see also (B)(2)(b)).

Through these activities, QuASA will create by February 2013 a QRIS working paper that explains the value and impact of an improved QRIS, and proposes a new QRIS model with key decision points framed. The report will inform action by the State Department of Education, the Department of Human Services, and others needed to implement the QRIS. The OSDE and OKDHS will be responsible for developing the regulations needed to implement the QRIS – and, if applicable, will propose any legislative changes. The regulations for the new QRIS will be adopted by July 2013.

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

(c) Linked to the State Licensing System

The current system is linked to licensing for child care providers; licensing is the lowest tier of the four levels and all licensed providers effectively participate in QRIS. Both licensing and QRIS are administered by OCCS. In the new system, all programs subject to licensing will need to meet licensing standards in order to receive a quality rating. The state will also consider

whether the QRIS provides an opportunity to raise minimum licensing requirements. While school-based programs will not be required to obtain OCCS licensure, they will be required to meet all applicable health and safety requirements in order to receive a quality rating.

Budget

For the work described in (B)(1) through (B)(5), Oklahoma has budgeted a total of \$11,748,208. This significant investment will provide Oklahoma the opportunity to design its new system, begin ramping up its implementation, and evaluate the quality of its design and execution.

Summary

Oklahoma has been and remains a leader in QRIS. Its present system includes clear delineations of quality, has high participation, and has been documented to relate closely to actual program quality. However, expectations of QRIS have changed, commensurate with changing expectations of ELDPs as a whole. Oklahoma is prepared to meet these higher expectations by updating its QRIS to include “shift the quality curve” by introducing higher levels of quality and seriously examining current minimum standards. In doing so, it will incorporate all Program Standards, as well as other known indicators of program standards such as staffing ratios and health and safety requirements into a clear and measurable set of quality scales. These scales will be combined in a way that ensures that ELDPs are aware of how quality is defined, can see a clear path to increasing quality, and that all programs of equal rating are comparable in terms of actual quality.

The Quality Rating and Improvement System will also be thoroughly interconnected with all of the other elements of the grant. It will measure quality in standards implementation, the use of assessments, health and behavioral supports, parent engagement, workforce qualifications, and data use – and support improvement in all of those areas.

Table (B)(1)-1: Status of all Program Standards currently used in the State							
List each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State; specify which programs in the State use the standards	Program Standards Elements²⁷ <i>If the Program Standards address the element, place an "X" in that box</i>						
	Early Learning and Development Standards	Comprehensive Assessment Systems	Qualified workforce	Family engagement	Health promotion	Effective data practices	Other
Child care licensing			X	X	X	X	
Quality Rating and Improvement System	X		X	X	X	X	
Early learning guidelines for infants, toddlers, and twos	X			X	X		
Early learning guidelines for children ages three through five	X			X	X		
Core competencies for early childhood practitioners	X		X	X	X		
Head Start performance	X	X	X	X	X	X	

²⁷ Please refer to the definition of Program Standards for more information on the elements.

Table (B)(1)-1: Status of all Program Standards currently used in the State							
List each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State; specify which programs in the State use the standards	Program Standards Elements²⁷ <i>If the Program Standards address the element, place an "X" in that box</i>						
	Early Learning and Development Standards	Comprehensive Assessment Systems	Qualified workforce	Family engagement	Health promotion	Effective data practices	Other
<i>[Add additional rows as needed and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i>							

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

Additionally, the State must provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measure under (B)(2)(c).

Oklahoma will update and enhance its QRIS by applying it to all publicly funded early childhood programs as part of the strategy to promote school readiness. Programs included in the comprehensive quality rating and improvement system will include Pre-K classrooms (which also currently include the majority of the 4-year-olds served by the IDEA Part B and Title I programs), Head Start and Early Head Start programs, Tribal Child Care/Head Start, licensed child care centers, and licensed child care homes. This rating system will be developed based on best practices in all of these systems, as described in (B)(1). This system will ensure alignment of Early Learning Guidelines across programs in order to ensure that children are prepared to enter school ready to succeed. Support to achieve higher levels of quality will be directed toward programs that serve children with greater needs, as research suggests that they benefit most from programs that meet higher levels of quality.²⁸ Existing financing policies will be examined to determine strategies to help more families of children with high needs have access

²⁸ National Research Council (2001) *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*. Committee on Early Childhood Pedagogy. Barbara T. Bowman, M. Suzanne Donovan, and M. Susan Burns, editors. Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=9745

to higher quality programs, and that programs are adequately reaching out to children with high needs.

Oklahoma presently has very high program participation in its QRIS, even though it is limited in intended scope:

- All licensed child care centers and home care providers as well as all Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program participate in QRIS. Approximately half of CCDF providers are in the top two tiers of four.
- Head Start programs that are required to be licensed participate in QRIS. Those that are school-based are exempt from licensure.
- The State Pilot Program promotes participation in the QRIS, although participation is voluntary for those programs that are not licensed.
- The majority of tribal child care programs participate in state licensure and QRIS.

The new QRIS will build on this strength as it covers new areas. In particular, the state will need to address the incorporation of school-based programs, which historically have not been included.

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

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

With this grant, Oklahoma will re-invigorate its QRIS standards and will secure statewide participation of ELDPs under the authority of the State Department of Education by the end of 2015 – creating nearly complete participation of Early Learning and Development Programs enrolling Children with High Needs. To achieve this, Oklahoma will phase in participation of state-funded preschool and programs funded under Title I of ESEA and Part B of IDEA that are

school- or center-based, and create incentives for Head Start programs to seek higher quality ratings. This will be accomplished through the state's first cross-program analysis of current quality and through development of a QRIS that set clear expectations that apply equally to all ELDPs. Even programs that are not directly included in the QRIS will be aligned through use of common tools. Oklahoma will employ research- and experience-based incentives, technical assistance, and bonuses to encourage ELDPs to participate and increase quality.

Since 2004, child care programs must participate in QRIS at a One Star plus level or higher in order to have a child care subsidy contract. The majority of children are served in Two and Three Star facilities (94%).

The most significant category of Early Learning and Development programs not currently participating in the QRIS is the set of programs funded by the Department of Education. Most state funded preschool (Pre-K) and Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA and 619 of part B of IDEA do not participate in a QRIS. However, there are already existing meaningful connections to be built upon. Approximately 208 districts (39%) report to the State Department of Education that they utilize a collaboration model for Pre-K programs – with collaboration partners including child care, faith-based facilities, Head Start, private schools, corporate businesses, and universities. The most common collaboration was with Head Start, reported as a partner by 136 districts. Out of 519 districts, 100 report they offer Pre-K through a collaboration agreement only (for example, a district that collaborates with Head Start only for Pre-K) and 108 report offering a traditional program through collaboration (for example, a district like Oklahoma City that offers Pre-K in a variety of settings, including schools). Thus, many districts are already working collaboratively with rated programs. Additionally, many children who are served by IDEA Part B (3-5 year olds) attend child care and/or Pre-K programs in their local school districts.

Oklahoma will also seek the participation of its Tribal Child Care and Head Start programs. As noted above, most Tribal Child Care programs already participate in QRIS voluntarily. The tribes will be included in the planning of the new QRIS to increase the inclusion of standards that are culturally appropriate, to provide a greater incentive for tribal programs to participate.

The High-Quality Plan for promoting participation in the QRIS will be led by the OPSR

Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability (QuASA) workgroup. As part of its system design (described above in (B)(1)), it will draw on best practices from multiple programs, and consider ways to incentivize their inclusion. After completing its recommended system design, it will then develop a set of specific recommendations for expanding program participation – recommendations developed in collaboration with the affected programs. These recommendations will operate in two dimensions:

- A geographic focus on piloting expansion in communities with a significant number of Children with High Needs. In doing so, the workgroup will draw on two key documents in particular: (1) the School Readiness Risk Index (SRRI) created by OKDHS in September 2011, which maps the current identified risks by county for children in the zero to five age group, and the availability of quality child care is also included in the series of maps (**Appendix 12**); and (2) the OPSR *Access to Quality Programs for Children with High Needs* assessment (to be completed in December 2011), which will provide information on program participation by children who are high need. The workgroup will also consider school performance in the K-12 accountability system when choosing communities of focus.
- Including new programs. The workgroup will identify programs that are not currently engaged in the Quality Rating and Improvement System – particularly school-based and tribal-based systems – and work closely with the Department of Education to define a set of supports and incentives that will lead to greater participation.

This public process will in effect serve as a continuation of the work begun under (B)(1), and will be completed by August 2012. After that point, the State Department of Education and Department of Human Services will be responsible for activities to increase enrollment:

- By July 2013, the State Department of Education will provide information to all school districts confirming their eligibility to participate in QRIS, and explaining to them the benefits of doing so. It will then focus its follow-up on increasing participation in communities identified as priorities by the workgroup. The OSDE will draft regulations for approval by the State Board of Education to establish a phase in timeline for districts to participate in QRIS.
 - In phase I, by the end of 2013, the lowest performing 25% of elementary schools

(as determined by their Adequate Yearly Progress status under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act status) will be required to begin implementing the new statewide QRIS for their Pre-K programs.

- In phase II, by the end of 2014, the lowest 67% of elementary schools will be required to begin implementing the new statewide QRIS for their Pre-K programs.
- In phase III, by the end of 2015, all elementary schools will have begun implementing the new statewide QRIS for their Pre-K programs.
- The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) will implement a plan to achieve full participation of Head Start, State Pilot Program, and Tribal Child Care programs in the new QRIS. Tasks under this activity include conducting and publishing quality ratings of all programs. The tribal state early childhood network and Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association will be engaged to help to develop a plan for participation and provide input on how to ensure that QRIS can succeed in the unique tribal setting.

In sum, Oklahoma's QRIS already includes all subsidized child care, and will continue to; it already includes a substantial number of Head Start, Tribal Head Start, and Tribal Child Care providers, and will focus on increasing that number; and it will also include all of the state's Pre-K programs. In short, it will become a comprehensive system that is broadly inclusive of Oklahoma's Early Learning and Development programs..

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

Oklahoma's new QRIS will start with a significant advantage: the strong policies and practices Oklahoma already has in place to make high-quality care abundant and affordable for families. The state's historical track record in this area is very strong:

- Oklahoma's child care environment is supported by a strong and effective subsidy program under the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF). Families up to 85 percent of median income are eligible for the Oklahoma child care subsidy program, one of the most generous benefit levels in the nation. Co-payments are based on a sliding fee scale rather than the cost of child care (**Appendix 13**).

- Oklahoma provided subsidized care for 47,739 children 0-5 years of age in FY 2011. A recent independent study ranked Oklahoma's subsidy program third among the 50 states for effective assistance to families. Oklahoma ranked in the top 10 in 2009 in four of the seven categories studied. This showed that Oklahoma spends well above national averages on child care subsidies and that it reaches a higher proportion of eligible children. Subsidies supported 13% of low-income children in Oklahoma, compared to 9% in a representative sample of states.²⁹
- Oklahoma has no waiting list for subsidies and is able to serve all eligible families who apply, typically approving benefits within 48 hours of application.
- Oklahoma's subsidy program encourages use of quality care through an aggressive tiered reimbursement system. Oklahoma's 67 percent premium for the highest quality of care is well above the 19% average of states that use tiered reimbursement. As a result, children in subsidy enjoy a higher level of care than the population as a whole. In March 2011, subsidy children represented just 8% of capacity at the two lowest stars level and 38% at the highest two. The density of subsidy children is highest (43%) at the top star level, which includes only nationally accredited providers.
- In order to support high needs children with disabilities, Oklahoma provides financial incentives for homes or centers who serve this population. The child care subsidy payment supports families whose children are at risk of entering child welfare custody. Children in child welfare custody, such as family foster care, can access the child care subsidy as well.
- Oklahoma serves more children with free, high-quality Pre-K than any other state.

Oklahoma will build on this base of success by implementing this High-Quality Plan. The QRIS design recommended by QuASA ((B)(1)(b)) will identify and implement strategies to encourage families -- particularly families of children who are high need -- to participate in programs that have achieved higher quality ratings by (1) revising the subsidy structure as described in (B)(2)(a), and (2) reviewing policies and practices in child care, Head Start and Pre-K to identify and remove barriers to program participation for children with high needs. When

²⁹ Community Action Project. (In press). *Better Benefits for Oklahoma Families*.

the new QRIS is rolled out, all Participating State Agencies will be part of a public engagement campaign to provide families with information on benefits to participating in quality programs, including impacts of quality programs on environment, teacher-child interactions, and child outcomes.

(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

Oklahoma has established the targets below for increasing the number of programs participating in the QRIS. By including Pre-K programs (including programs and children funded by Title I and Part B), removing barriers to Head Start advancement beyond the lowest tier, and achieving full tribal Head Start and CCDF participation, Oklahoma will increase program participation by more than a thousand programs.

Summary

Oklahoma has extensive experience in creating and encouraging participation in a QRIS. Our approach to (B)(2) will leverage that experience but increase our reach by including the extensive and growing Pre-K network, and achieving full and meaningful participation by Head Start and tribal programs. It will also encourage both program and parental participation in a wide range of ELDPs that strive to achieve quality levels well beyond those that Oklahoma has previously expected. As a result, Oklahoma will see an increase in the number of children who have the skills to be successful in school.

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	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>									
		Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target -end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool (1) <i>Specify: Universal</i>	996	0	0	0	0	249	25%	667	67%	996	100%

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	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>									
		Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target -end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
prekindergarten offered at school district option											
Early Head Start and Head Start ³⁰ (2)	398	75	19%	90	23%	140	35%	199	50%	298	75%
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	797	0	0	0	0	199	25%	533	67%	797	100%
Programs receiving from CCDF funds (3)	2,621	2,516	96%	2,541	97%	2,567	98%	2,593	99%	2,621	100%
Other <i>Specify: Tribal CCDF programs (4)</i>	91	0	0	0	0	23	25%	45	50%	68	75%
Other <i>Specify: State Pilot Early Childhood Program (5)</i>	26	5	19%	0	0	6	25%	17	67%	26	100%
<p>(1) State-funded preschool is the actual number of elementary schools.</p> <p>(2) Head Start is actual number of sites as of September 2011.</p> <p>(3) Programs receiving CCDF is actual number of sites with CCDF contracts, as of March 2011. This includes some Head Start, Tribal, and Pilot Early Childhood Program sites, which are counted again in those categories. All licensed providers are considered participating in the QRIS, though some are at lowest quality tier, which is same as licensing. See Table (B)(4)(c)(1) for distribution among tiers.</p> <p>(4) Tribal participants are actual as of September 2011 as reported by Oklahoma Department of Human Services.</p> <p>(5) State Pilot Early Childhood Program is actual sites as of August 2011. Some are providers also</p>											

³⁰ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

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	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>									
		Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target -end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
counted in other categories, such as Head Start											

(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs. (15 points)

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

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

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

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

An essential element in the implementation of a comprehensive tiered quality rating and improvement system is rating and monitoring of programs that participate in the system. The development of the quality rating and improvement system will include identifying benchmark or targets for programs to achieve certain levels of competence in order to obtain a higher level. These benchmarks are tied to program and teacher attributes that lead to improved child outcomes. Therefore, a system that builds upon the existing infrastructure of rating and monitoring that is already in place for child care will be developed to provide cross program rating and monitoring systems. Oklahoma will develop a collaborative of existing monitoring staff to create a unified multi-agency monitoring team, which will use a single rating protocol for all programs and have measures to ensure inter-rater reliability; while raters will remain housed in their existing agencies, they will work together on an ongoing basis to ensure consistent quality in implementation.

Oklahoma's will build on the excellent monitoring system already part of its existing QRIS. The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA 2010) (**Appendix 14**) determined that Oklahoma exceeds all states and the Department of Defense in regulatory oversight.

(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

Monitoring the quality of programs is essential to the state's goal of increasing the capacity of and participation of high needs children in high quality early learning and development programs. Oklahoma will create a coordinated monitoring process based on a set of aligned quality standards that ensures compliance with all aspects of the new QRIS. These tools will be used in the context of comprehensive, regular, and transparent review of each program's compliance with all aspects of the QRIS. This effort will build on and align existing monitoring systems used for Pre-K, licensed child care, and Head Start, including Tribal early childhood programs.

i. Valid and Reliable Tools

The development of a unified suite of rating tools will be part of the design and implementation of the new QRIS. Consistent with the newly-defined tiers and the Comprehensive Assessment System, Oklahoma will ensure that monitors of all programs in the

QRIS – regardless of funding source – are providing data based on a single QRIS scoring rubric system that will evaluate programs using aligned standards in the assignment of a quality level. Establishing strong and effective tools, a sound data system, and training with all monitoring staff will be an important part of assuring implementation of a valid and reliable rating system . The OSDE as the lead agency will contract with an outside consultant (the QRIS Evaluation Consultant) to review and assess the enhanced QRIS over a three year period. Once the framework for this process has been developed and validated, the QRIS Evaluation Consultant will provide an ongoing plan for Oklahoma to annually conduct this review. This would include activities such as onsite observations through a random sampling of assessment in local program sites.

ii. Trained monitors with an acceptable level of Inter-Rater Reliability and Rating Programs with appropriate frequency

Essential to the success of the monitoring system will be the quality of its people, and in this regard Oklahoma builds on strength. Oklahoma presently monitors QRIS compliance through an aggressive and reliable evaluation system. OKDHS provides three visits per year to child care facilities to determine if they meet the requirements of their assigned QRIS tier as well as all licensing requirements. Reliability of ratings is promoted by initial and ongoing training to its licensing and QRIS staff and standardization of work processes. Additionally, observational monitoring is part of the Oklahoma process. Oklahoma also uses Environment Rating Scales with a random selection process to determine which classrooms to monitor and follows systematic procedures for training and assessing the reliability of observers as recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.³¹

Under the new QRIS, all Early Learning and Development Programs will comply with equivalent standards. This means that monitoring staff in each of these agencies must understand the new standards and be able to effectively participate in the system. To this end, staff from all rating agencies will be part of the same training and oversight for inter-rater reliability – the goal will be that staff from any agency could rate any program in the QRIS with equal skill. The agencies will use collaborative staffing to give staff from each agency

³¹ Administration for Children and Families. (2009). *ACF Performance Plans and Reports*. Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation. Available at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/acf_perfplan/ann_per/index.html

experience in rating programs funded by other agencies, to ensure consistency across agencies and program settings.

High-Quality Plan

Oklahoma's High-Quality Plan for (B)(3)(a) will build on the strengths of existing monitoring processes, incorporate broader assessments in the monitoring process, monitor QRIS participants more frequently, and create an aligned staff of highly-trained and reliable monitors that will be responsible for both initial ratings and compliance monitoring. This Plan includes the following activities:

- Develop an aligned rating process based on the new quality rating and improvement system and the Comprehensive Assessment System.
 - The tool or suite of tools for monitoring will be developed by a consultant working under OKDHS in collaboration with the Department of Education. (September 2013)
- SDE and OKDHS will pool existing monitoring staff and contractors to create a unified rating and monitoring team, which will use a standardized set of ratings protocols for all programs, and have measures to ensure inter-rater reliability. This will increase school readiness for high needs children by ensuring that more high needs children are in programs that are implementing school readiness practices. This will be accomplished through the following tasks:
 - Identify existing staff, budget, and support currently assigned to monitoring processes, which may include OKDHS Child Care Services, OSDE Regional Accreditation Officers, participants in the Teacher Leader Effectiveness Model for monitoring Pre-K ; Tribal CCDF licensing and monitoring staff; or Center for Early Childhood Professional Development Environment Rating Scale Assessors (September 2013).
 - Complete training staff on the new QRIS standards, monitoring tools, and resources. (November 2013)
 - Create a pilot assessment monitoring process under the new QRIS. In the first six months of the pilot, monitors will assess at least 10 percent each of Head Start, licensed child care, tribal child care, and Pre-K programs. At least two monitors will independently monitor each site and the departments will monitor and take steps to

improve inter-rater reliability as necessary. This task will result in a system that assures inter-rater reliability of the assessments determined for use to measure program quality. (December 2013)

- In 2013 the QuASA workgroup will design further continued quality assurance strategies, an open and fair appeals process, and a process for posting results on site and in searchable databases of programs. The State Department of Education and Department of Human Services will adopt policies in these areas by November 2013.

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

Oklahoma will develop multiple strategies and resources to actively involve and provide parents who have children enrolled in programs that participate in the comprehensive quality rating and improvement system, information on how these standards improve children's overall development and how that contributes to being ready for school. Quality ratings and results of monitoring visits will be available to the public through existing and new reporting mechanisms, and will be linked to a web site specifically designed to facilitate parent access to information.

OCCS provides the Child Care Locator for licensed child care on its website (including Head Start and Tribal Child Care). The portal provides the locations of all licensed homes and facilities in the state. Families can search for programs based on QRIS ratings and other criteria and access program quality rating data, information, and licensing history, including any health and safety violations. Once a list of homes or centers has been generated, the locator links to the Summary of Facility Monitoring which shows the previous twelve months of monitoring history, including areas of non-compliance and complaint information. Screen shots of these are provided in **Appendix 15**. Quality rating information is also displayed at program sites. For Pre-K, Oklahoma annually publishes school report cards that summarize service area demographics, student characteristics, and child outcomes at the 3rd grade level and above.

As described in (E)(2), Oklahoma will develop a P20 Education Data System capable of answering policy questions and producing actionable information, as well as a P20 Education Data Portal to all stakeholders to find these answers and this information. Where the answers

require data from only one agency, the Portal will offer secure access to those data, but when the answers require data from multiple agencies, the P20 Education Data System will link these data and the results will be available to the P20 Education Data Portal. The P20 Education Data Portal will offer a single entry point to find Quality rating information and make comparisons across programs, the data for which would come from different agencies.

The OPSR, through its QuASA and Data System & Coordination Committees, will solicit public feedback to design a "standard report" on programs in the quality rating and improvement system, so that information can be presented in a unified format that includes key data and is easy to understand. The report will draw on the final requirements of the QRIS, and will be available both on-line and in printed form. The public process will be conducted in the Fall of 2013, and a final report will be approved by December 2013. The report will then be made available on the P20 Education Data Portal as soon as it is completed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the

State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

Additionally, the State must provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measures under (B)(4)(c)(1) and (B)(4)(c)(2).

Oklahoma holds a strong belief that high quality early learning and development programs will support children, especially those with high needs, in being prepared to be successful when they enter school. Oklahoma will implement a comprehensive system of supports for quality rated programs, and supports for working families to participate in the quality rating and improvement system. This system will include incentives and technical assistance for programs to achieve higher quality, funding structures that drive both demand and supply of the highest-quality ELDPs, and bonuses for programs that achieve higher tiers in the QRIS. Efforts will be unified and coordinated across all Participating State Agencies and available to all participating ELDPs. This program of supports will increase the number of high-quality programs, and support efforts to increase access to programs by families of Children with High Needs.

Oklahoma's current QRIS provides supports to programs to improve and incentives to parents to participate. OKDHS is responsible for the development of quality initiatives supporting the mission of OCCS. Child Care and Development Fund regulations require that no less than four percent of the funds expended in a fiscal year are used for quality activities. OCCS participates in the development of initiatives; creation of contracts through an invitation to bid process, interagency agreement or grant award; and monitoring of initiatives for effectiveness.

“Reaching for the Stars” has been successful in defining true quality, encouraging

programs to improve quality, and encouraging parents to demand quality. Oklahoma contracted for an independent review of the tiered QRIS in 2001 (**Appendix 16**). The assessment measured the quality of care provided among the child care providers studied. Child care quality was found to be strongly influenced by licensing regulations and QRIS criteria. Environmental rating scores in 2-Star and 3-Star/Accredited centers are significantly higher than in 1-Star and 1-Star Plus centers. The quality of care was found to be higher than in the first years of QRIS implementation. In 2001, eighty percent of the randomly selected classrooms had global quality scores of 5 or higher on a 7-point scale. In 2011, 2,313 of 4,368 licensed facilities had reached a one-star plus or higher level. In 2011 only 2% of children receiving center-based subsidized child care were attending one-star centers, down from 40% in 2002. Approximately 38,500 Children with High Needs are in subsidized care; of that number, 36,190 (94%) are in Two and Three Star programs.

Oklahoma's state Pre-K also serves a significant number of Children with High Needs; of 38,441 Pre-K students, 17,542 are eligible for free and reduced price lunch, and 26,072 are served through Title I programs.

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

Oklahoma's approach recognizes that providers respond best to clear targets and positive incentives for reaching those targets. At the conclusion of this project, Oklahoma will have clearly spelled out the steps to higher quality, provided technical assistance and financial incentives for improving quality, awarded bonuses to programs that achieve higher tiers, and other funding sources to reward both programs who improve quality and families who demand quality.

Oklahoma has a strong record of encouraging program quality. Oklahoma's child care program presently offers significant incentives for programs to improve quality. The tiered CCDF reimbursement pays strong premiums to top tier programs, and Oklahoma's quality incentives for training and development for the child care workforce support ongoing quality improvement. As a result, Oklahoma has a very high number of child care programs in the two highest QRIS tiers and high enrollment of Children with High Needs in those tiers.

Oklahoma's quality incentives for training and development for the child care workforce also support ongoing quality improvement, which is a necessary companion to program improvement. Oklahoma's State Pilot Program (SPP) also has been an effective example of the state's aggressive support for continuous program improvement. This program uses state and private funding to expand and enhance services for at-risk 0-3 year olds at schools, Head Starts, and child cares. The program supports smaller class sizes, highly-trained and competitively compensated bachelors-degreed lead teachers, customized on-site training, a recognized infant-toddler curriculum, common assessment and data system and family support services. If these programs are in licensed facilities, they are at the highest QRIS level.

OKDHS and OSDE will implement a High Quality Work Plan to jointly develop the supports and incentives need to drive program quality improvement. Building on recommendations made through the design process led by QuASA (see (B)(2)), they will design a menu of supports and incentives that will suit the needs of different programs in different settings. The development will include the following tasks:

- Review the successes and limitations of prior state incentive programs, considering current program quality and cost-quality relationships evidenced by the baseline study in (B)(5).
- Identify a menu of specific improvements to be accomplished through incentives, estimating fixed and variable costs necessary to achieve each improvement on the menu (considering program type, geographic location, number of children served), and a contract that links incentives with results and rewards. Incentives may be different for each program due to structure and funding mechanisms but will focus on equipment, curriculum, and learning materials. (Fall 2013).
- Using Challenge Grant funds, provide one-time bonus payments to create an incentive for programs to join the QRIS and improve to higher levels. (Ongoing through the end of the grant)
 - The state will design an ongoing bonus program that rewards programs appropriately for achieving a higher tier on the new QRIS. This will include a review of state practices and consider program costs evidenced by the baseline study in (B)(5). The departments will jointly develop a schedule of bonuses for each tier improvement.

- Bonuses would be allocated based on a formula that considers the number of Children with High Needs served and other factors as appropriate. (November 2013).
- Identify a scope of work and joint process for developing contracts with existing resources (i.e. Department of Education Regional Accreditation Officers and/or the Teacher Leader Effectiveness Model; OKDHS-CATSS (Consultation and Technical Support Specialist); Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association; Center for Early Childhood Professional Development-Oklahoma Registry Consultants; and the OSDH-Child Care Consultation Network) for TA to provide support to child care centers, Tribal child care programs, Head Start and Pre-K programs to raise their quality rating level. (December 2012).
 - Review the CCDF subsidy and consider revisions to increase program participation in the QRIS and upward program movement. This review addresses both (B)(2) and (B)(4) because it increases program participation and increases the number of Children with High Needs participating in programs at the highest tiers. Recognizing that changes to the subsidy system must be achievable within budget limitations and that changes should not unduly harm existing recipients, the state cannot commit to specific changes in this application. (November 2013)
 - Create an application system for ELDPs to request incentives and a system for evaluating and selecting applications. (March 2014).
 - Revise staffing, training, and protocols for quality monitors to review applications, visit sites, and agree to specific quality improvement plans (QIPs). (April 2014).
 - Begin implementing contracts, including incentives and supports. (June 2014).
 - Evaluate results to ensure that the system of supports is cost-effective and targets resources appropriately to the goal of improving outcomes for high-need children (June 2015).
 - Identify strategies for sustaining incentives and bonuses beyond grant period. Funding streams to consider include Title I, CCDF, Tobacco Settlement Funds, and other existing program funding. This would not be new funding, but rather a reprioritization of current program funding to support participation by program in higher levels of quality (July 2015).

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

In order to address the needs of parents who are working and to maximize resources, Oklahoma will build more local collaborations that make it possible for more Children with High Needs to participate in full-service programs. Parents of 4-year-olds in Oklahoma demand and participate at a high rate in Pre-K programs. This can result in programs competing for enrollment, and financial hardships for child care providers who depend on the income from older children to offset higher operating expenses for caring for infants and toddlers. Further, working parents are not able to meet their needs for full day child care in Pre-K or Head Start programs, and are forced to seek before and/or after school care. Although this can be a challenge everywhere, it is a particular challenge in Oklahoma's many small communities – as a primarily rural state, some small communities have a misalignment among the programs designed to serve young children and the population of children to be served by those programs.

Oklahoma has several successful models of collaboration that provide high-quality care for children of working parents:

- More than 25% of districts collaborate with Head Start and/or child care centers to pool resources, space and staff to provide a collaborative program. This model utilizes funding streams to maximize access to not only “slots” but also braids the best of each system into a more comprehensive approach. This model allows programs to offer before and after school care, meet high levels of provider education, and maximize classroom space and materials.
- The State Pilot Program described above also effectively blends funding from four sources to offer high quality infant-toddler care all day for 50 or more weeks per year.
- Oklahoma’s Head Start and State Pilot Programs both offer extensive family support services and the QRIS encourages programs at the highest levels to connect parents with community resources their families need.

Through this grant, the Participating State Agencies will study existing models of collaboration between Pre-K, child care, and Head Start, both in Oklahoma and in other states, and develop models for communities to follow. Communities that make an extended commitment to the models will be given startup grants to help facilitate the collaboration. The models will be

designed to maximize local capability to use myriad federal, state, local and private funding, with a focus on increasing the quality of service for Children with High Needs.

Other activities the state will undertake to provide additional supports to working families who have Children with High Needs:

- SDE will conduct an aggressive outreach campaign to expand enrollment of eligible programs into the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and encourage use of the new option for a full afternoon meal. OSDE and OSDH will continue to work aggressively to improve direct certification for free school meals for children whose families participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and will explore the potential for creating a state-level CACFP direct certification program for children whose families participate in SNAP (fall 2012-spring 2013).
- OKDHS will leverage recent investments in automated benefits enrollment for OKDHS and Medicaid benefits to help parents access benefits for which they qualify for through their ELDPs. OKDHS, the Oklahoma Health Care Authority, and private non-profit agencies in Oklahoma have all invested in benefit screening and enrollment systems in recent years and have created a centralized network for Oklahomans to apply for benefits. OKDHS will coordinate with these agencies and find ways for parents to apply for benefits through their ELDPs. Methods for accomplishing this will vary but may include parent group site visits to OKDHS offices, OKDHS mobile enrollment opportunities at ELDP sites, and expansion of kiosk and other technologies into participating ELDPs (fall 2012-spring 2013).
- OSDE will target schools in areas of high needs as indicated by the State Risk and Reach Index to encourage expansion of Pre-K from half- to full-day. While state resources provide a majority of additional operating funds for full-day Pre-K, many schools face facility and capital funding limitations. In identified communities, OSDE will work with local school districts and Smart Start communities to identify facilities for potential full-day Pre-K collaborations and identify local and private funds to finance needed capital (spring-fall 2013).
- As described in (B)(4)(a) above, Oklahoma will review and to the greatest extent possible revise its CCDF policies to reduce barriers to braiding CCDF funds with Pre-K and/or

Head Start funds (fall 2013).

- OKDHS will review its subsidy policies and consider whether it can reduce co-payments for families; provide co-payment rebates for parents of Children with High Needs who attend highly-rated Early Learning and Development programs; restructure subsidy payments based on the needs of the new QRIS; and eliminate prohibitions on using subsidy during regular hours of programs funded by other public funds, such as Pre-K and Head Start. The review will be completed by the fall of 2013 and possible changes will be considered in conjunction with the implementation of the new QRIS.

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing-- (1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and (2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System

As summarized in the following tables, Oklahoma has set ambitious goals for increasing the number of providers achieving high ratings. It will also increase the number and percentage of children with high needs served by the highest-quality providers.

Summary

Oklahoma's approach to this element is collaborative, positively oriented, and comprehensive. Oklahoma will achieve the goals of increasing the number of programs in top tiers of the QRIS and the number of Children with High Needs enrolled in these programs through a mix of public and program outreach and education, and technical assistance, incentives and bonus payments to programs. Oklahoma will re-evaluate and re-purpose funds so that these initiatives can be sustained and so both programs and parents demand quality in early learning programs.

Performance Measure for (B)(4)(c)(1): Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.					
	Baseline (Today)	Target- end of calendar year 2012	Target- end of calendar year 2013	Target- end of calendar year 2014	Target- end of calendar year 2015
Total number of programs covered by the Tiered Quality Rating and	4,456	4,506	5,270	6,650	7,590

Improvement System (1, 2)					
Number of 1 star programs (lowest tier)	2,058	2,058	2,015	1,965	1,890
Number of 1+ star programs (proposed lowest tier effective 2014)	208	208	175	150	100
Number of 2 star programs	1,892	1,895	1,875	1,850	1,800
Number of 3 star programs (highest current tier)	218	220	325	415	560
Number of 4 star programs (proposed new tier)	0	35	159	424	632
Number of 5 star programs (proposed new highest tier effective 2014)	0	0	104	385	423
<p>(1) Baseline data is actual number of programs currently participating in QRIS. Targeted numbers include other programs to be incorporated into the quality rating system, such as preschool and Head Start.</p> <p>(2) Of the total baseline, 4,376 are licensed child care facilities of which 2,621 receive funding from CCDF.</p>					

Performance Measures for (B)(4)(c)(2): Increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.												
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percent of Children with High Needs Participating in Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>										
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2012		Target - end of calendar year 2013		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target-end of calendar year 2015		
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Universal prekindergarten offered at school district option</i>	17,542	0	0	0	0	4,385	25%	11,753	67%	17,542	100%	
Early Head Start and Head Start ³²	20,649	3,923	19%	4,749	23%	7,227	35%	10,324	50%	15,487	75%	
Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	26,072	0	0	0	0	6,518	25%	17,468	67%	26,072	100%	
Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program	47,739	45,829	96%	46,307	97%	46,784	98%	47,261	99%	47,739	100%	
Other <i>Describe: Tribal CCDF Programs</i>	6,381	0	0	0	0	1,595	25%	3,190	50%	4,786	75%	
Other <i>Describe: State Pilot Early Childhood Program</i>	1,965	0	0	0	0	491	25%	1316	67%	1965	100%	
Baseline data is actual enrollment in each program. Targets are based on same percentage as Table (B)(2)(c).												

³² Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

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

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

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

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

In the text box below, the State shall write its full response to this selection criterion. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

The Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) has the potential to connect early learning development programs that strive to improve quality with parents who insist on quality programs to result in better child outcomes. Without validation, however, the potential may not be met. QRIS must indicate quality programs and quality programs must produce quality results. Oklahoma will build on its experience with QRIS validation to create a continuous validation program during the life of this grant. The project will result in the first clear definition of program quality across all sectors, in understanding relationships between

rated quality and actual quality, and in continuously improving quality systems as indicated by validation studies.

(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

Oklahoma was the first state to adopt a QRIS and among the first to validate its system. Both center and family child care QRIS were studied. All major indicators of input- and process-quality for child care, including group size, staffing ratios, staff credentials, family engagement, staff turnover and compensation, environmental ratings, and participation in OKDHS quality improvement initiatives. These studies found a relationship between providers' quality ratings and other indicators of quality. On balance, one report concluded that Oklahoma's QRIS and the tiered reimbursement subsidy system did raise both expectations and many measures of effort for child care centers.³³ Another study found that in family care settings, as in centers, the criteria that comprised the Stars system were associated with higher quality care.³⁴ While the studies would now be considered dated, they reveal both Oklahoma's commitment to validation and its ability to complete effective validation studies.

Other Oklahoma ELDPs have strong records of research-based validation. Evaluation has been a centerpiece of the State Pilot Program since its inception. Classroom environment ratings have found mean classroom environments to be good to excellent in five of the seven scales of the Infant/Toddler Environmental Rating Scale-Revised, comparable to results from a national study of Early Head Start classrooms. More recent research focused on both environmental and child assessments and found that SPP teachers had higher educational attainment and more specialized training than those at other child care centers in their communities, SPP classrooms had fewer children and higher adult: child ratios, SPP classrooms had significantly higher scores on all subscales and total scores on environmental rating scales, and, most importantly, that SPP

³³ Norris, Deborah, Dunn, Loraine, and Dykstra, Stacy. (2003, November). *Reaching for the Stars: Center Validation Study*. Available at <http://www.oklahomachildcare.org/system/files/ECCO%2520Center%2520Exec%2520Summary.pdf>

³⁴ Norris, Deborah and Dunn, Loraine. (2004, August). *Reaching for the Stars: Family Child Care Home Validation Study Executive Summary*. Available at http://www.okdhs.org/NR/rdonlyres/11E190FA-7FF2-4166-8F6E-19ED34FE4E0F/0/ReachingForTheStarsFamilyChildCareValidationStudyFinalReport_dcc_05092007.pdf

children had mean scores for language, cognitive, and social/emotional measures that were at the national mean and comparable to children in comparison centers in their community, in spite of a \$20,000 difference in mean income.³⁵

Oklahoma's Pre-K program has been extensively evaluated and found to increase children's readiness for kindergarten and later learning. Successive evaluations have found that children who participated in Pre-K had higher assessment scores after controlling for other variables and projected that Pre-K children will have significantly higher earnings as adults.^{36 37} Oklahoma can thus demonstrate that it has invested wisely in quality early education for all children, and that its investments make a difference for children, their families, and the community at large.

Recognizing that the environment and needs have changed, Oklahoma has proposed an aggressive new QRIS that includes new criteria, sets higher levels of performance, and provides incentives for ELDPs to supply and families to demand quality (See (B)(1)-(B)(4)). Oklahoma similarly expects to raise its expectations and performance in understanding quality and the relationship between QRIS ratings and other measure of child quality. At the end of the project, Oklahoma will have accomplished these key goals:

- Design a new QRIS (see (B)(1)) that applies to all Early Learning and Development Programs in the state, and is based on a careful analysis of the standards currently used to measure and monitor quality.
- Evaluate the validity of the new QRIS by a cross-sectional and longitudinal evaluation of representative ELDPs, comparing the new QRIS standards and ratings to other research-based measures of quality and determining whether ratings are statistically related to these other measures of quality.
- Evaluate the implementation and impact of the QRIS through a longitudinal study that

³⁵ Norris, Deborah. (In Press). *State of Oklahoma Pilot Early Childhood Program*.

³⁶ Gormley, William Jr. and Phillips, Deborah. (2005). *The Effects of Universal Pre-K in Oklahoma: Research Highlights and Policy Implications*. Available at http://www.tecec.org/files/PK_Oklahoma.pdf

³⁷ Bartik, Timothy J., Gormely, William, and Adelstein, Shirly. (2011). *Earnings Benefits of Tulsa's Pre-K Program for Different Incomes*. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. Working Paper 11-176. Available at http://research.upjohn.org/up_workingpapers/176

compares program quality change for ELDPs that receive technical assistance, professional development, incentives, and bonuses to improve quality to comparable centers that do not receive such supports.

- Revise the QRIS and quality improvement supports to reflect the results of this research.

This project involves three key activities:

Activity 1: The state will complete a baseline quality study that establishes the current quality of all ELDPs to be included in the updated QRIS (licensed child care, Pre-K, Head Start, Tribal Child Care, and Title I programs). Tasks involved in this activity are:

- The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) will contract with the QRIS Evaluation Consultant to complete the baseline quality study (Spring 2012).
- As directed by the OSDE with the assistance of OKDHS and OPSR, the QRIS Evaluation Consultant will develop measures of program quality to be used to assess sampled programs. Program measures will include at a minimum: group size; staffing ratios; staff compensation; staff qualifications; practices to promote assessment, health, family engagement, and effective collection and use of data; extent to which programs incorporate the Early Learning Guidelines; environmental ratings; staff assessment of quality and concerns; and family assessment of quality. These measures will be compared with measured outputs of the programs. The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will also analyze the information using cost models for different levels of the QRIS. (August 2012).
- The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will select an appropriate random sample of programs from each ELDP sector listed above. The sample will be stratified to provide statistically valid results for each sector, for rural and urban locations, for programs serving infants, toddlers, and pre-school age children, and for each quality level in the current QRIS. The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will collect the program measures described above and conduct appropriate analysis (September 2012 – December 2012).
- The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will prepare a final report that effectively describes the nature and range of quality among Oklahoma ELDPs today and the relationship between program cost and quality in each ELDP type. (February 2013).

Activity 2: The state will validate the implementation of the new QRIS continuously

from its inception. This activity will result in a determination of the extent to which overall quality has improved in the state, the extent to which QRIS rating is related to other measures of program quality, and the impact of interventions designed to improve ELDP participation in the QRIS and quality ratings. This activity will include the following tasks:

- OSDE will contract with the QRIS Evaluation Consultant to conduct the study. The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will propose and OSDE, OKDHS, and OPSR will approve appropriate program measures for the study. These measures will include the measures developed for the baseline study (July 2013).
- The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will immediately assess each ELDP that has been selected to receive quality incentives payments or technical assistance and an appropriately constructed comparison group of ELDPs not receiving such assistance. This assessment will use comparable measures and methods to the baseline study (Fall 2013). The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will re-assess the same ELDPs 6, 12, and 18 months later (Spring 2014-Fall 2015).
- The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will complete a validation study similar to the baseline study at least one year after the new QRIS has been fully implemented. This study will use the same program measures, and will assess a random sample of ELDPs that leads to valid results for each subgroup described above. The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will collect program measures and conduct appropriate analysis (Fall 2014-Winter 2014-5).
- The QRIS Evaluation Consultant will complete a report by Summer 2015 that:
 - compares initial and final quality for ELDPs that received state assistance to improve quality with the comparison group of ELDPs that did not receive assistance and documents the extent to which such incentives demonstrably improved quality;
 - describes the results for each program measure for every QRIS tier and for each subgroup of ELDP within each QRIS tier;
 - provides a conclusion and evidence that documents whether QRIS tiers accurately differentiate program quality as measured by inputs, environment, child outcomes, and provider and family assessments;
 - recommends changes to the QRIS indicated by these findings; and
 - compares program quality in this study to program quality in the baseline study to

determine the extent to which overall ELDP program quality has increased in two to three years.

Activity 3: The state will revise its QRIS and quality incentives based on results of the validation study. This activity will involve two tasks.

- The OPSR Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability (QuASA) workgroup, which includes representatives of all Participating State Agencies and other major stakeholder groups, will review whether the QRIS standards should be changed. This task will include consideration of the results of the validation study completed in Activity 2, input from Participating State Agencies, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, ELDP managers, early learning professionals, and parents. This task will result in a formal recommendation by the OPSR board (Fall 2015). The Participating State Agencies will consider this recommendation and, if warranted, implement changes through the rulemaking process following conclusion of this project.
- OSDE and OKDHS will determine whether changes are needed in monitoring, training, technical assistance, incentives, and bonuses to improve implementation of the QRIS and promote quality improvement. This task will include consideration of the results of the validation study completed in Activity 2, input from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, ELDP managers, early learning professionals, and parents. (Winter 2015)

(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

Oklahoma will seek to use the Early Learning Challenge to make a new connection between measures of program quality and child outcomes. This effort will serve as a model for ongoing research linking ELDP quality with child outcomes, made possible on a regular basis by work completed in creating a Comprehensive Assessment System (see (C)(2)) and an early childhood data system (see (E)(2)). At the conclusion of this project, Oklahoma will know how each type of ELDP at each QRIS tier contributes to child readiness during a year.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education will contract with a consultant to develop a plan to conduct formative assessments of children in quality-rated Early Learning and Development Programs (July 2013). The Assessment Consultant will:

- Select a sufficiently large and representative sample of ELDPs that will be stratified to provide statistically valid results for each sector, for rural and urban locations, for programs serving infants, toddlers, and pre-school age children, and for each quality level in the QRIS (July 2013).
- Complete a longitudinal study to measure changes in child outcomes during the 2013-4 school year for all children who participate in an ELDP for the entire year. The Assessment Consultant will use formative assessments adopted as part of the Comprehensive Assessment Program (see (C)(2)) four times during the year for as many children at each ELDP as possible. Child information will include demographic information, mobility history, program participation history, and other data that could explain assessment results. All research will include appropriate protections for privacy and will be conducted only with informed consent of parents and program staff.
- At the conclusion of the 2013-4 school year, report on the change in child assessment results, after adjusting for demographic differences and other factors beyond the control of the ELDP for each program type in each quality rating tier (Fall 2014). This will allow the state to identify relationships not only between QRIS levels and child outcomes, but between QRIS levels within program type and child outcomes.
- SDE and OKDHS will then determine if changes need to be made. (Fall 2014)

Summary

Oklahoma will build on its experience with program research, evaluation, and validation to complete studies that will provide the first cross-program analysis of ELDPs to inform the creation and implementation of the state's new QRIS, validate the QRIS to determine that quality tiers meaningfully differentiate real program quality, and determine how program quality and child outcomes are connected.

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

The State must address in its application--

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

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

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

Note: The total available points for (C)(1) through (C)(4) = 60. The 60 available points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria in the Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points.

The applicant must address two or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Oklahoma has already developed high-quality standards that cover all of the Essential Domains of School Readiness, and are used in all major early childhood programs (**Appendices 1, 2 and 3**) Through the new quality rating and improvement system, these standards will be made the bedrock of practice for all Early Learning and Development programs, including curricula, assessment systems, workforce competencies, and professional development. All personnel in rated programs (and many other personnel) will be appropriately trained and supported in the use of the standards. The standards will be used to inform the effective use of resources to help its Children with High Needs enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

Oklahoma's existing Early Learning Guidelines for Children Ages Three through Five were initially developed in 2004 and have most recently been revised in 2010. Early Learning Guidelines for Infants, Toddlers and Twos were most recently revised in 2011. The guidelines are organized into nine concept areas or domains, and each domain has multiple standards that

are simple and measurable -- for example, "The child will hear and respond to sounds in the environment. At each age level the guidelines give examples of typical indicators and give teachers suggested responses (for infants and toddlers) and strategies and activities (for preschool)."

The guidelines are aligned across sectors, including licensed childcare, Pre-K, Head Start, and tribal child care. They thus represent a unified standard by which children's development can be better understood and monitored and by which early learning and development programs can more successfully support and prepare children for kindergarten.

Section (B) notes that the state's new tiered quality rating and improvement system will be fully aligned to the standards. This puts additional pressure on the standards to be a living document, and for the standards to continue to improve based on new research and practical experience. While Oklahoma's standards currently meet all of the grant criteria, Oklahoma must have in place a process to ensure that they continue to do so.

- a. 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*

Oklahoma's standards cover all of the Essential Domains of School Readiness identified in the Early Learning Challenge definition. As the following table shows, each of the Essential Domains is included within Oklahoma's set of standards:

Essential Domain of School Readiness	Concept Area in the Guidelines
Language and literacy development	Communication skills and early literacy (language arts)
Cognition and general knowledge	Creative skills Mathematics Science
Approaches toward learning	Approaches to learning
Physical well-being and motor development	Physical development Health and safety
Social and emotional development	Social and emotional development Self and social awareness

Oklahoma also has worked to ensure that its standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The

Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines were developed with input from a wide range of professionals from the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association, Oklahoma Head Start Association, and child care programs. Their content reflects that they are designed to be appropriate in all essential respects:

- The guidelines reflect current research on growth and stages of development, appropriate program planning, learning outcomes for children, and best practices in early education.
- Developmental appropriateness is emphasized in the early learning guidelines. Introductory material emphasizes the differential rate of development among children, particularly the youngest children. Standards for infants and toddlers are given for narrow age bands (0-8 months, 6-18 months, and 16-36 months). Progressions across examples are simple and progressive.
- Oklahoma's early learning guidelines include introductory material stressing the role of inclusion and diversity in successful early learning environments. Programs are reminded of the need to consult family members and community members with expertise in languages and cultures of children attending the program, conveying respect for English Language Learners, using special equipment that allows children with physical disabilities to participate, and so forth.

The guidelines are internally reviewed for alignment with the Oklahoma Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) and Head Start Performance Standards. The Task Force that created the guidelines was responsible for assuring that they were developed based on evidence. Oklahoma's Early Learning Guidelines have not yet been validated by an external reviewer, but that validation will occur as part of the Early Learning Challenge process.

Through the Early Learning Challenge, Oklahoma will develop further evidence for (C)(1)(a) by implementing an external assessment and validation review of the early learning guidelines to generate evidence of impact on what children should know and be able to before kindergarten entry. This review will also ensure that the guidelines are developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate. The process is described further in (C)(1)(b).

- b. 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*

In developing its Early Learning and Development Standards, Oklahoma has worked to

ensure alignment with K-3 academic standards, particularly in early literacy and mathematics. Oklahoma's learning standards are known as the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS), and they include Pre-K standards as well as K-12 standards. During the revision of the Early Learning Guidelines for Children Ages 3-5, a process was conducted to ensure these guidelines were aligned with the PASS for literacy and mathematics.

Oklahoma is committed to implementing new K-12 standards by 2014 to improve the rigor of college and career readiness. Accordingly, it will be critical to review the Early Learning Guidelines to ensure continued alignment. The review of the existing Early Learning Standards noted above in (C)(1)(a) will also include a review to ensure alignment with the State's K-3 academic standards. The work will be conducted as follows:

- The Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability Workgroup will convene stakeholders and participate in the alignment of the early learning guidelines with K-3 academic standards as subject matters in their areas of expertise. This workgroup is an existing workgroup that is responsible for coordinating inter agency efforts to ensure that Early Learning Guidelines are appropriately implemented across early childhood programs. The workgroup has expertise in programs such as child care, Head Start, Pre-K, Home Visitation, SoonerStart and Early Childhood Special Education, and will also include representatives of early childhood educators, child development, psychology and/or social work. (January through June 2012)
- By June 2012 the QuASA workgroup will provide input to the Oklahoma State Department of Education on the development of a contract with consultant with expertise in early learning guidelines and K-12 standards to conduct a thorough review of all Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines to ensure that they are (a) developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness, and (b) aligned with K-3 standards so that children will experience a continuity of expectations. The contract period will be from September 2012 through December 2012.
 - As part of the work, QuASA and the consultant will also ensure that the standards appropriately establish a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety ((C)(3)(a)) and family engagement ((C)(4)(a)).

- The Quality Access Standards and Accountability workgroup will meet and will convene stakeholders to provide input to the recommendations to align the Early Learning Guidelines to the K-12 standards and the enhanced quality rating and improvement system.
 - Over the course of 2012 the consultant will work closely with the workgroup and will provide recommendations for alignment of the Early Learning Guidelines with the new K-12 standards that will be implemented in Oklahoma in 2014.
- The consultant will provide a report and recommendations to the OSDE, the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness, and the Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability (QuASA) work group by January 2013.
- By March 2013, OPSR Board will make recommendations for modifications to the Early Learning Guidelines that has been reviewed and approved for implementation OKDHS, OSDE, the Head Start Collaboration, and OSDH will be responsible for approving the modifications
- c. *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*

Oklahoma's new quality rating and improvement system will ensure that the Early Learning and Development Standards are at the heart of program improvement. Oklahoma's Comprehensive Assessment Systems will be explicitly built on the standards, as will the state's workforce competencies and professional development. Indeed, Oklahoma's plan is for its Early Learning and Development Standards to form the foundation of all of its Early Learning Challenge grant projects. In taking that approach, Oklahoma will build on a track record of using its Early Learning Guidelines in all of these areas.

i. Program Standards

Oklahoma's program standards for preschool and child care require those programs to be based on the Early Learning Guidelines. Training for child care providers is not approved until the trainer demonstrates that the training will address at least one of the early learning guidelines and that the training provides practical techniques for implementation strategies in the

classroom. Preschool teachers are expected to develop curriculum based on the Early Learning Guidelines. Home visitation programs in Oklahoma follow evidence based program models and are required to implement those models with fidelity.

ii. Curricula and Activities

The curricula and activities used by Oklahoma Early Learning and Development Programs are based on the Early Learning Guidelines, through a series of requirements in the individual programs. The new QRIS system will require that in all rated programs, the curriculum selected and implemented must be aligned to the Early Learning and Guidelines. Resource materials and technical assistance will be available to programs so that they may cross-walk curriculum with the Early Learning Guidelines. Through the Early Learning Consortium (described in (D)(2)(a) Oklahoma will incorporate the alignment of curricula and activities with the early learning guidelines in training . The ongoing monitoring of early learning guidelines will review classroom practices to ensure alignment and integration is ongoing.

iii. Comprehensive Assessment Systems

Although Oklahoma will be substantially building out its Comprehensive Assessment System, its existing assessments are consistent with the Early Learning and Development Standards. Children who participate in home visitation programs, who are referred to Early Intervention programs, and in a handful of physician offices are regularly screened using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. This instrument provides developmental screening in five domains, and is a valid and reliable tool to identify children who may need additional testing or specialized services. Formative Assessments occur in a small number of high quality programs in the state such as Oklahoma's Educare programs and the Oklahoma State Pilot Program. Environmental Rating Scales are administered in a number of home visitation and center based programs to ensure that the physical surroundings support positive learning environments. Head Start is now implementing a scale that measure the quality of adult-child interactions.

Early learning guidelines and the comprehensive assessment system described in (C)(2) will be integrated to ensure that the assessments inform program providers on children's developmental progress.

iv. Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

Oklahoma's existing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework is based on the

Early Learning Guidelines. Providers in child care, Pre-K and Head Start all receive training in various formats to understand and implement early learning guidelines. The competencies are the foundation that will be used by programs to establish educator job descriptions and personnel evaluation to ensure staff retention and to promote child learning and development. The comprehensive training plan described in (D)(1) will ensure that the workforce knowledge and competency framework appropriately ensures that educators will master the content addressed in the guidelines and can implement teaching practices that support children's progress in areas of learning described in the Guidelines.

v. *Professional Development*

Oklahoma's primary professional development efforts are based on the Early Learning Guidelines. All training provided to child care providers must align to the early learning guidelines in order to be approved by OKDHS, in partnership with the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD). The CECPD has a Professional Development Registry that is a comprehensive data system that ensures the alignment of professional training and core competencies for the individual staff member, their program, and from an overall systems perspective. As described further in (E)(2), Oklahoma aims to fully integrate its professional development system and activities into its longitudinal data system. Going forward, all professional development will continue to be based on the Early Learning Guidelines, under the auspices of the Early Learning Consortium for professional development (described further in (D)(2)(a)).

In sum, going forward, Early Learning Guidelines will be integrated into the enhanced quality rating and improvement system described in (B)(1)(a)-1 and will be used across all early learning programs as a key determinant of quality program standards:

- The quality tiers of the QRIS will be defined with reference to the Early Learning Guidelines, which will incorporate the Guidelines into Program Standards – and QRIS will require curricula to be aligned to standards, as noted above.
- The Comprehensive Assessment System, as described in (C)(2), will be based on the Guidelines, and the QRIS will hold programs accountable for performing assessments.
- The Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, as described in (D)(1), will be aligned to the Guidelines – as will the professional development activities defined in

(D)(2).

d. Oklahoma has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs

Oklahoma's Early Learning and Development Programs – and the families they serve – are already supported in their implementation of the Early Learning and Development Standards. Through the new tiered quality rating and improvement system, those efforts will be strengthened and broadened, building on the strong implementation efforts Oklahoma already has in place.

Staff from OCCS and CECPD provide professional development opportunities regarding Early Learning Guidelines. The Early Learning Guidelines are the foundation of all professional development offered through OCCS contracted services and specified higher education coursework. OCCS provides publications and technical assistance that support the Early Learning Guidelines. Early Learning Guidelines documents are provided during all training (**Appendix 17**), assisting educators in the utilization of the Guidelines; they are also available on-line and provided during consultation visits.

Parents will be aware of developmentally appropriate expectations and will have access to information to support the development of these skills with their children at home.

- The Public Engagement workgroup of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness will develop a public engagement campaign to provide information to parents on developmentally appropriate expectations, and suggestions to support their child at home.
- Existing websites that provided information to families will be linked through an easy access site that is parent driven.

Going forward, Oklahoma will develop a cross sector professional development training plan that will support an understanding of the Early Learning Guidelines, which will be implemented as part of the Early Learning Consortium for professional development (described further in (D)(2)(a)).

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

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

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

(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 Systems;

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

(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.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

Oklahoma will fully implement assessments that meet all of the requirements of a Comprehensive Assessment System. To date, Oklahoma has not developed a strong infrastructure in this area, and there are many gaps between the definition of a Comprehensive Assessment System and current Oklahoma practice. Through the Early Learning Challenge, Oklahoma is committed to substantially building its Comprehensive Assessment System infrastructure. Accordingly, a significant percentage of its requested grant budget will be designated to support the development and implementation of assessments: Oklahoma has budgeted \$16,750,500 of its \$60 million allocation to the development of a Comprehensive Assessment System, recognizing its need to build infrastructure in this essential area.

A Comprehensive Assessment System includes four kinds of assessments: Screening Measures, Formative Assessments, Measures of Environmental Quality, and Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions. The first two will be conducted primarily by personnel in programs, and will be required by the quality rating and improvement system. The latter two will be conducted primarily as part of the quality improvement of programs through the quality rating and improvement system.

One significant design philosophy of Oklahoma's overall application is that it is intended to help personalize the experience of early childhood education for Children with High Needs. A major goal of the grant is to help use resources most effectively by connecting children to the supports they need, and programs to the support they need. While the tiered quality rating and improvement system will help create the framework for making those connections, it will be Oklahoma's Comprehensive Assessment System that provides the information needed to tailor follow-up. Thus, it is essential that the comprehensive assessments have the right tools, and that personnel be well trained in how to use them.

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

Oklahoma will work with Early Learning and Development Programs to identify and select the best Early Learning assessment tools – including the Kindergarten Entry Assessment – that will be forged into a Comprehensive Assessment System to be used statewide by all Early Learning and Development Programs. Through the Comprehensive Assessment System:

- Children moving through the early learning system or entering the system at multiple points will be assessed in a systematic and linked way;
- Parents, programs, service providers, and state agencies will have a clear, coherent way to evaluate programs, find successful models, and improve the quality of early learning across the state; and
- Oklahoma will improve efficiency and lower costs over the long term.

In developing a statewide Comprehensive Assessment System, Oklahoma will draw on the experience of the many programs in the state that are already implementing assessments. Oklahoma's Early Learning and Development Programs already use a great deal of assessment, but it is not done systematically across programs. Assessments are currently used in the

following ways:

- Children who participate in home visitation programs and who are referred to Early Intervention programs are regularly screened using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, which is also used in some physician offices. This instrument provides developmental screening in five domains, and is a valid and reliable tool to identify children who may need additional testing or specialized services.
- Formative Assessments occur in a small number of high quality programs in the state such as Oklahoma's Educare programs and the Oklahoma State Pilot Program.
- Environmental Rating Scales are administered in a number of family child care home and center based programs to ensure that the physical surrounding support positive learning environments. Head Start is now implementing a scale that measures the quality of adult-child interactions. The Oklahoma State Pilot Program and Oklahoma's Educare programs provide a full range of comprehensive assessments, although a relatively small number of children in the state have access to these programs.
- Programs that participate in the QRIS at the 2 star level receive an Environment Rating Scale (appropriate to the program type) every three years. OCCS contracts with CECPD for six assessors who have received training and established inter-rater reliability at 85% or higher with the authors of the tool.
- Directors of programs that participate in Leadership Academy receive a pre and post Program Administration Scale assessment for the purpose of evaluating director administrative practices and validation of instruction received.

Oklahoma's commitment in the Early Learning Challenge is to fully implement assessments that meet all of the requirements of a Comprehensive Assessment System. The development and implementation of the system will help improve the quality of program effectiveness by giving program staff better information about children in their programs, families more information about how well their children are on track at current stages of development and on track toward achieving school readiness, and will yield much better knowledge about the effectiveness of Oklahoma's high quality programs to drive program improvements.

The selection of assessment tools will be led by the Department of Education in

conjunction with the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness, through a process that will also include the development of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (as described in (E)(1)). The Partnership will convene a stakeholder meeting in January 2012, including at a minimum the following stakeholders needed to develop a Comprehensive Assessment System:

- Experts in early childhood development from Oklahoma's leading institutions of early childhood professional development who have an expertise in assessment (including OU-Tulsa's Early Childhood Institute and Oklahoma State University);
- Early childhood staff from all Participating State Agencies;
- Head Start staff, including staff from the regional training office;
- Representative Early Childhood Educators from a range of programs; and
- Other additional stakeholders with expertise in this area, such as private and/or non-profit sector representatives.

The consolidated work plan for (C)(2)(a) and (E)(1) is described in full detail in (E)(1). The work plan summarizes the steps that will be taken to develop the tools for a Comprehensive Assessment System and Kindergarten Entry Assessment in a manner that fully engages Oklahoma's Early Learning and Development Programs.

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 Systems

The work of helping Early Childhood Educators to understand the purposes and uses of assessments in the Comprehensive Assessment System will be led by the Early Learning Consortium for professional development, described in greater detail in (D)(2)(a). This centralized approach will ensure consistent quality in helping Early Childhood Educators to understand the purposes and uses of assessments. The Consortium will be responsible for ensuring that available trainers have the needed expertise in all forms of assessment included in the Comprehensive Assessment System.

OCCS currently offers professional development training and consultation regarding program evaluation and Environment Rating Scales. CECPD offers professional development training entitled Focused Portfolio I and II instructing educators regarding child observation and assessment by using portfolios of children's work and observation to connect with the child's achievement of developmental milestones.

Another existing support are SoonerStart and Child Guidance clinicians, who in working with families often provide services in Early Childhood Education settings or consult with early care educators. One of their roles is to help early care educators understand screening and assessment results as they relate to the children in their care and to help facilitate individualized goals across settings. Child Guidance personnel also provide training to Early Childhood Education staff on screening and assessment.

- 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*

Continuing the work of the Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability Workgroup under OPSR described in (C)(1), it will also be necessary to vertically align Early Learning assessments with the Grade 3-8 (as well as the optional K-2) assessments developed through the multi-state “Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers” (PARCC) that will be first administered in 2014-15. In 2013, the Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability Workgroup will contract and work closely with an assessment consultant who will provide recommendations for alignment of the Early Learning assessments with the new PARCC Assessments and the Early Learning Guidelines. The assessment consultant will also be required to provide recommendations regarding the alignment of assessments, alternative assessments and tools designed to support high needs students with the Early Learning assessment system and with the Early Learning Guidelines.

The OSDE is currently developing a tool within the P12 Student Information System that allow parents whose children are enrolled in a student support program to grant permission for student performance data and outcomes to be reported to the program for evaluation purposes. The initial pilot phase for this tool will be in early 2013 and adapted for full implementation in 2013-2014. The OSDE will explore adapting this tool to track referrals into SoonerStart and other Early Learning programs.

Oklahoma has participated in the ABCD III pilot project to assure the developmental screening results of children with high needs are shared between the medical home and potential referral sources such as SoonerStart, Child Guidance, Sooner Success and Oklahoma Family Network. Participation in this project has allowed Oklahoma to develop an infrastructure

concept for sharing information that could be expanded to a statewide level. Programs such as the ABCD III pilot would be well suited for adapting the program reporting tool described above. OSDE will work with participating agencies and OPSR to identify current and ongoing Early Learning programs that would be ideal candidates for which to adapt this reporting tool in the P12 Student information System.

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

Oklahoma's training for Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessment and interpret and use assessment data will be provided by the Early Learning Consortium for professional development, described in greater detail in (D)(2)(a). The Consortium will be responsible for making available training in the child-facing assessments that are part of the Comprehensive Assessment System, and ensuring that Early Childhood Educators have access to that training. The training will also include follow-up from the assessments – that is, best practices for acting on the results of the assessments, including both direct pedagogical practices and referral practices.

The State Department of Health has participated in providing screening and assessment training at Tier II training events as requested by providers across the state as well as participation in Directors Leadership Academy offered by CECPD. The OSDH Director of Child Development has participated in plans to train Early Childhood Educators on developmental screening statewide to support the Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Annually ERS assessors receive a week long individualized instruction by the authors of the scale including validation of inter-rater reliability. Regular communication between assessors and the authors throughout the year ensures consistent implementation of the scales. Quarterly meetings with ERS assessors and CATSS (Consultation and Technical Support Specialist) achieve the goal of establishing a common foundation of Environment Rating Scale knowledge and streamlining services to programs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Additionally, States must provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measures under (C)(3)(d).

Evidence for (C)(3)(a):

- To the extent the State has established a progression of health standards across the levels of Program Standards that meet the elements in criterion (C)(3)(a), submit--

- The progression of health standards used in the Program Standards and the State's plans for improvement over time, including documentation demonstrating that this progression of standards 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;

Evidence for (C)(3)(b):

- To the extent the State has existing and projected numbers and percentages of Early Childhood Educators who receive training and support in meeting the health standards, the State shall submit documentation of these data. If the State does not have these data, the State shall outline its plan for deriving them.

Evidence for (C)(3)(d):

- Documentation of the State's existing and future resources that are or will be used to address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs. At a minimum, documentation must address the screening, referral, and follow-up of all Children with High Needs; how the State will promote the participation of Children with High Needs in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care; how the State will promote healthy eating habits and improved nutrition as well as increased physical activity for Children with High Needs; and how the State will promote health literacy for children and parents.

Oklahoma has a longstanding commitment to supporting the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs. The goal of Oklahoma's work in the years to come will be to take its existing high-quality supports and build connections among them – to ensure that Children with High Needs get the services they need, and to maximize the efficiency of its resource use. The new quality rating and improvement system will provide a framework for that work, holding programs responsible for identifying child needs and then seeing that they are addressed. This will ensure that Children with High Needs in all Early Learning and Development Programs are not held back by problems that could have been identified and remediated.

The Oklahoma Health Improvement Plan (OHIP) outlines three flagship issues: Obesity Reduction, Tobacco Cessation, and Child Health. The Child Health Plan encompasses all aspects of children's health (i.e. immunization, oral health, nutrition) including mental health. The Children's Health Panel adopted a plan that promotes: awareness of key children's health

issues, access to high quality primary health care, prevention focus on children's health care, enhancing the capacity of the workforce, developing and expanding quality child health programs, utilizing research and evaluation, and policy recommendations that can improve child health and well being. Specific recommendations made included data linkages between programs, school health education primary prevention, special populations and communication strategies to inform Oklahomans about available children's health issues and services.

One foundation for Oklahoma's work will be the Oklahoma Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Strategic Plan, which was developed through the collaborative efforts of numerous stakeholders representing the public and nonprofit sectors, each with a strong commitment to building an effective and efficient infant and early childhood mental health system that meets the needs of our youngest children and their families. A unified plan was necessary to increase the potential for achieving positive long-term outcomes for children, their families, and their communities. OSDH has grown its efforts in this area through inclusion of Infant and Early Childhood Mental health in the OHIP. By including this section in the OHIP flagship workgroup on children's health, infant and early childhood mental health issues become part of the state's comprehensive plan for children.

- a. Establish 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*

Oklahoma has already developed a progression of standards for ensuring child health and safety as licensing requirements provide the foundation of the current quality rating and improvement system. (**Appendices 24 and 25**) The learning environment is directly related to the Early Learning Guidelines for physical, social, and emotional development. Programs participating in QRIS make appropriate referrals when needed. Oklahoma will ensure that its progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety is thoroughly up to date and aligned with other standards through the process described in (C)(1)(b), combining the efforts (along with the updating of parent engagement standards) to maximize efficiency and alignment.

Oklahoma's new quality rating and improvement system will promote health and behavioral screening and follow up. As described further in Section B, programs will be expected to conducting necessary screening, and ensuring that children receive the supports they need thereafter – either in the program that conducted the screening, or through referral to

another program. How effectively programs conduct this work will have a direct impact on their quality rating; while the expectation will be that all programs can engage in this work to some degree, the breadth and depth of the activity will contribute to the program's final score.

Oklahoma's new quality rating and improvement system will also expect programs to promote children's physical, social, and emotional development. This accountability is already part of the accountability for child care programs regulated by OKDHS, Head Start, and for Pre-K programs (as part of the state's standards). The quality rating system will review program design and implementation in this area and incorporate both as part of the quality rating.

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

Oklahoma already has underway specialized efforts to support Early Childhood Educators in ensuring that health and developmental needs are being met for Children with High Needs. For example:

- Statewide Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) support families and communities in their development of children to become healthy and ready to learn at school entry.
- Oklahoma's current child care consultation network currently has 42 clinicians from six agencies that provide on-site child care consultation on health issues. During FY 2010, 847 total visits were made for a total of 1,786 hours on-site and an average hours per site visit of 2.1 hours (online-OSDH Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation FY2010 Report).
- Oklahoma's Warmline is a statewide toll free service for child care educators seeking answers about a variety of health and child development related issues. Currently the Warmline has two professional staff that have supported over 700 calls (10-15% of those have been from parents, the other from individuals working in early childhood program environments), sent out over 400 packets of resource information, and logged over 1,100 calls to the automated voice response system which houses 1,500 topics related to health, behavior, and child development topics with the potential to add new topics related to caring for children with special needs. The Warmline serves as the initial point of contact for Child Care Consultation requests. Warmline staff approve and track requests,

including need and amount of time spent on each referral.

The OSDH Child Guidance personnel have provided information, curriculum, and training for individuals working in environments serving young children.

OSDH has a history of utilizing partnerships with other state agencies to leverage funds and resources to increase the amount and quality of services provided in Oklahoma. Current child care consultation network requires expansion to support the multitude of early childhood programs. Oklahoma will use \$200,000 from the grant to:

- Recruit additional consultants through current agency collaborations to seek individuals with specialty knowledge in social-emotional development and training in the area of child development and early childhood.
- Contract with qualified professionals who would provide quality on-site mentorship and reflective supervision to the network consultants providing child care consultation focused on meeting the health standards. Contracts with individuals will be in place by July 2012.
- Provide enhanced training for child care consultants on early childhood trauma, consultation skills, and quality early care and education environments. This training will be completed by October 2012.
- This expansion component will be completed by July 2012.

Oklahoma's Warmline requires expansion to serve additional high needs populations such as parents who participate in OPAT, Children First, Pre-K programs, Head Start/Early Head Start, and child care.

- Oklahoma will recruit one (1) additional professional staff member to assist with call volume and outreach to these identified high need populations. This position will be in place by July 2012.

High-quality training for Early Childhood Educators will be provided going forward through the Early Learning Consortium for professional development, described further in (D)(2)(a).

c. Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity

In 2008 the Oklahoma Legislature required through SJR-41 that the State Board of Health develop a comprehensive health improvement plan. The Oklahoma Health Improvement

Plan (OHIP) was developed with input from leaders in health, business, tribes, non-profits, private citizens, state legislators, labor, academia, state and local governments and professional organizations. The mission of OHIP is “general improvement of the physical, social and mental well being of all people in Oklahoma through a high-functioning public health system”. The three key flagship goals are: Tobacco Use Prevention, Children’s Health, and Obesity Reduction. In order to address obesity reduction, OSDH collaborated with the Tobacco Endowment Settlement Trust Fund to implement a healthy lifestyle campaign called Get Fit, Eat Smart Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan. In addition, public policies were identified for implementation. The OHIP obesity project is a multi-partner collaborative aimed at reducing obesity in Oklahoma, with an approximate combined budget of \$8.7 million.

This year Oklahoma committed to improving the eating habits, nutrition, and physical activity of its young children by joining the First Lady's *Let's Move Child Care* initiative. *Let's Move Child Care* is a train-the-trainer initiative that Oklahoma Child Care Services is partnering with other early childhood programs to implement. The state was selected, in part, due to the obesity epidemic among children and adults in Oklahoma. Staff participated in training this summer (2011) and will be implementing the program in the coming years using the CATSS (Consultation and Technical Support Specialists), Oklahoma Registry Educators and by incorporating the Lets Move Child Care curriculum learning objectives within all professional development based on early learning guidelines. It has the following elements, encouraged for both child care providers as well as parents:

- **Physical Activity:** Provide 1-2 hours of physical activity throughout the day, including outside play when possible.
- **Screen Time:** No screen time for children under two years of age. For children age two and older, strive to limit screen time to no more than 30 minutes per week during child care, and work with parents and caregivers to ensure children have no more than 1-2 hours of quality screen time per day, the amount recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- **Food:** Serve fruits or vegetables at every meal, eat meals family-style when possible, and no fried foods.
- **Beverages:** Provide access to water during meals and throughout the day, and do not

serve sugary drinks. For children age two and older, serve low-fat (1%) or non-fat milk, and no more than one 4-6 ounce serving of 100% juice per day.

- **Infant feeding:** For mothers who want to continue breastfeeding, provide their milk to their infants and welcome them to breastfeed during the child care day; and support all new parents in their decisions about infant feeding.

Oklahoma will promote action components of *Lets Move Child Care* in all OKDHS child care professional development opportunities, and agencies will continue to support obesity reduction goals as outlined in the OHIP state plan. The annual budget for CATSS is \$500,000.

- d. Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--*
- i. Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);*
 - ii. Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and*
 - iii. 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.*

Oklahoma's commitment is to leverage existing resources to improve the number of Children with High Needs who are screened, who receive follow-up services, and who participate in ongoing health care. This effort will be supported by the quality rating and improvement system, which will measure the ability of programs to do screening and ensure the follow-up – and rate them on that ability; through the Workforce Competencies, which will ensure that personnel are able to carry out this work; and through its new data system, which will be designed to support the process of conducting screening and referral by allowing for screening results and referral needs to be shared more easily among appropriate providers. The work Oklahoma will undertake in this area will build on some significant existing strengths, as Oklahoma has already devoted substantial effort to screening and referral.

Reach Out and Read (ROR) is a national physician based literacy program that promotes early literacy and school readiness by making books and reading aloud a standard part of pediatric primary care. ROR supports the belief that every healthy childhood should include books and reading and that pediatric healthcare providers have a unique opportunity to deliver

that message to families. ROR is an evidence based model supported by peer-reviewed published research studies.

The Oklahoma Health Care Authority over the past several years has made a large push to serve children with high needs and have met their target number of children under the age of 5 enrolled in Medicaid. Currently there are 187,599³⁸ children participating. During this time and to build upon their efforts, the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, OSDH, and the University of Oklahoma Child Study Center implemented a developmental screening initiative. Through multiple promotion efforts, over 120 physicians ordered and implemented, through on-site technical assistance, several approved screening tool measures within well-child checks that were reimbursable through the health care authority's system. During this 18 month initiative these were given to physicians, free-of-charge, for use in their practices. While this initiative has ended, the University of Oklahoma Child Study has continued the charge to provide on-going training for physicians through their practice enhancement assistance (PEA) project which has also collaborated with the ABCD III project.

To expand efforts, OHCA was awarded an ABCD III grant in 2009 for 3 years. During this project efforts have been focused on making better connections to referral sources based on the results of developmental screenings provided in participating physician offices in 4 identified high-needs counties. Based on this effort, continued strides are being made in expanding developmental screening in physician offices to include an expansion of the medical home model at OHCA to enhance the development and implementation of a web-based referral processes to include early intervention services such as SoonerStart, Sooner Success, Child Guidance, and the Oklahoma Family Network. Talks are currently taking place to enhance this web-based system within the OHCA software and program system supports to better serve the high needs children participating in the state Medicaid program.

Building capacity within the child care consultation network will expand a necessary network that will serve children in all early childhood environments exhibiting social and emotional challenges. By strengthening the professional expertise of identified professionals, and being inclusive of all environments, Oklahoma's children with high needs will be supported

³⁸ Oklahoma Health Care Authority. (2011, August). *SoonerCare Children Fast Facts*. Available at <http://okhca.org/research.aspx?id=87>

in this crucial area of development necessary for increased school readiness.

Oklahoma will continue its support of primary care physicians who primarily serve children eligible for Medicaid Services by providing developmental screening and literacy tools and on-site technical assistance by Child Guidance staff as requested by physicians to increase developmental screening across Oklahoma. This would enhance capacity and support to physicians who wish to implement school readiness activities as part of their practice. (Budget: \$10,000.00 per year of the \$200,000)

- OPSR will coordinate expansion of the Reach Out and Read (ROR) program in Oklahoma County, currently being operated through OU Physicians. (Budget C 3, \$50,000)

Performance Measures for (C)(3)(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual statewide targets.					
	<i>Baseline and annual targets</i>				
	Baseline (Today, if known) <i>If unknown please use narrative to explain plan for defining baseline and setting and meeting annual targets</i>	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 (Child Guidance FY10) (1)	3,304	3,634	3,997	4,397	4,837
Number of Children with High Needs screened (SoonerStart FY10)	8,583	All children referred into the SoonerStart program	All children referred into the SoonerStart program	All children referred into the SoonerStart program	All children referred into the SoonerStart program

Performance Measures for (C)(3)(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual statewide targets.					
	<i>Baseline and annual targets</i>				
	Baseline (Today, if known) <i>If unknown please use narrative to explain plan for defining baseline and setting and meeting annual targets</i>	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 (Children First NFP FY10)	5,498	All pregnant women referred to the Children First program	All pregnant women referred to the Children First program	All pregnant women referred to the Children First program	All pregnant women referred to the Children First program
Number of Children with High Needs referred for services who received follow-up/treatment (Child Guidance FY10) (2)	1,257	1,381	1,519	1,670	1,838
Number of Children with High Needs referred for services who received follow-up/treatment (SoonerStart FY10)	2,923	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of Children with High Needs referred for services who received follow-up/treatment (Children First FY10)	1,890	All pregnant women who are eligible to receive Children First Services	All pregnant women who are eligible to receive Children First Services	All pregnant women who are eligible to receive Children First Services	All pregnant women who are eligible to receive Children First Services
Number of Children with High Needs who participate in ongoing health care	Unknown	25% of information shared across agencies	50% of information shared across agencies	75% of information shared across agencies	100% of information shared across agencies

Performance Measures for (C)(3)(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual statewide targets.					
	<i>Baseline and annual targets</i>				
	Baseline (Today, if known) <i>If unknown please use narrative to explain plan for defining baseline and setting and meeting annual targets</i>	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
as part of a schedule of well child care (3)					
Of these participating children, the number or percentage of children who are up-to-date in a schedule of well child care (4)	Unknown	25% of information shared across agencies	50% of information shared across agencies	75% of information shared across agencies	100% of information shared across agencies
<p>(1) Data is actual numbers from Child Guidance FY2010 data. Targets are based on a 10% referral rate.</p> <p>(2) Data is actual numbers from Child Guidance FY2010 data. Targets are based on a 38% referral rate, which was the rate for FY2010.</p> <p>(3) This information is currently not shared across agencies and will be addressed in the integrated data system. Targets are based on a 25% increase of information sharing across agencies.</p> <p>(4) This information is currently not shared across agencies and will be addressed in the integrated data system. Targets are based on a 25% increase of information sharing across agencies.</p>					

(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- To the extent the State has existing and projected numbers and percentages of Early Childhood Educators who receive training and support on the family engagement strategies included in the Program Standards, the State shall submit documentation of

these data. If the State does not have these data, the State shall outline its plan for deriving them.

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

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

Parents are their child's first and most important teacher. Across Oklahoma, parents seek early learning and development programs for a variety of reasons – parenting support and information, child care and early education. Each family has unique needs, and a responsive early childhood system is prepared to respond to those needs when parents request information, education or seek care outside of the home. Family engagement is a key building block to a high quality early learning and development system.

Oklahoma currently includes family engagement in its quality ratings. The new quality rating and improvement system will continue to require programs to engage families, and where appropriate draw connections to other programs and services that can meet additional needs families have. In addition, the new workforce competencies will require professionals to have the skills needed to properly engage families.

Strengthening Families is an approach that has received national attention for equipping early childhood professionals with strategies to engage and strengthen families. In Oklahoma, Strengthening Families has gained momentum over the last five years. Strengthening Families is a research –based, cost effective framework designed to increase family stability, enhance child development and reduce child abuse and neglect. It is built on five protective factors: Parental Resilience, Social Connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete support in times of need, and social and personal competence of children. Oklahoma will build upon its developing strengths to involve and support parents as decision-makers and leaders at all levels within the system.

- 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*

Oklahoma already includes some requirements for family engagement in its child care licensing and quality rating and improvement systems, in the State Pilot Program, in Head Start/Early Head Start and in Pre-K. The new tiered quality rating and improvement system will include specific requirements for parent and family engagement, with programs expected to engage in best practices in family engagement. Each tier of the QRIS will define clear expectations for increased family participation, build upon their strengths and include them in decision making processes. Standards that have evidence for effective family engagement practices will be included in the new QRIS. See (B)(1) for a description of Oklahoma's plan to develop an enhanced QRIS systems. The QRIS Standards will be evaluated on how well they implement practices such as:

- Providing information about parent access to the program;
- Engaging families in ongoing two-way communication ;
- Providing parent information on child development;
- Providing outreach to both parents and other family members to encourage participation in programs;
- Providing training and support for families as children transition from early childhood programs/preschool to kindergarten;
- Establishing social networks of support;
- Providing intergenerational opportunities such as co-locating services in Assisted Living Centers;
- Building protective factors with families
- Linking families with community supports and adult and family literacy programs;
- Including parents in making decisions about programs for their child; and
- Developing leadership skills with parents

The revised QRIS system will build on lessons that the state has learned from its experience with the Strengthening Families approach. Family Engagement strategies will be developed with input from families and particularly with families who represent diverse cultural beliefs.

The Strengthening Families framework will also be included in programs that do not participate in QRIS to ensure that all early childhood providers are actively engaging families to support their child's education and development.

Oklahoma will establish its progression of appropriate standards for family engagement through its overall process for updating its standards, described in (C)(1)(b). Using this method for updating the standards will ensure consistency and alignment across standards areas.

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

Oklahoma will ensure that Early Childhood Educators are using best practices in family engagement by embedding family engagement in the Workforce Competencies. The Competencies, through their linkage to the Early Learning Guidelines and the tiered quality rating and improvement system, will form the basis for educator preparation and professional development. The development of the Early Learning Consortium of Oklahoma (D)(2) will integrate training strategies to increase family engagement competencies in the early childhood workforce.

The OPSR Professional Development Workgroup will convene stakeholders beginning in February 2012 to make recommendations for the inclusion of family engagement in the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, described in greater detail in (D)(1).

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

Oklahoma already has underway significant efforts to promote family support and engagement statewide, and will increase its leverage of those efforts during the grant period. While home visiting programs play a critical role, there are a range of programs that contribute significantly to the effort.

i. Family engagement in home visiting

Oklahoma's existing home visiting programs are a major aspect of its early childhood infrastructure serving Children with High Needs. Excluding home-based Early Head Start and IDEA Part C services, Oklahoma home visiting programs serve over 6,000 families with an annual investment of more than \$33 million in federal, state, local, and private funds. The state has been offering home visitation programs for up to two decades and relies heavily on evidence-based program models. The various programs benefit families with diverse and complex needs. Oklahoma provides home visiting through Start Right, Children First, Parents as Teachers, and

an MIECHV grant (described further in (A)(1)).

Oklahoma makes special efforts to coordinate its home visiting programs. The Home Visitation Leadership Advisory Coalition meets bi-monthly to identify and address common issues, coordinate services at the management level, and create joint materials for training and reporting. Programs also have developed formal and informal coordinating and resource-sharing mechanisms at the local level. Home visitors in all Oklahoma programs are among the leading source of family referrals to high-quality early care and education services.

The state's new data system will support the referral of families to needed programs and services, and will track the level of family engagement. Section (E)(2) outlines Oklahoma's plan for developing an integrated early childhood data system that will align with the P-20 Student Longitudinal Data System. This system will provide parents with a mechanism to find programs for which they are eligible, and will develop a convenient access for parents to previous program participation.

ii. Other Resources for Parents

Oklahoma's Strengthening Families Initiative has established Community and Parent Cafes in the existing Strengthening Families sites for over four years. This series of structured small group conversations brings parents together to discuss issues important to them. The goal is to directly engage parents in building the protective factors needed to prevent maltreatment and promote healthy outcomes for their children. A recent evaluation of the impact of Community/Parent Cafes showed that this method of engagement provides peer to peer support of family members in raising their children and encourages them to become active members in their communities.

Current family engagement requirements in center based programs encourage periodic participation of families in conferencing or meeting with early childhood center staff. Support services for Pre-K classrooms include two parent conferences or home visits annually, parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, referral to social services, and transition to Kindergarten activities.

iii. Future Activities

Oklahoma will build upon these existing programs through the alignment of the early learning guidelines across programs, and including effective family engagement strategies in the

early learning guidelines. Programs that support parents in developing literacy skills will be expanded.

Oklahoma's High-Quality Plan for strengthening family engagement practices includes:

- Develop evidence-informed choices to embed family engagement strategies in early learning guidelines and mechanisms to ensure families have input into policy decisions (Budget \$150,000) Summer 2013.
- Use existing agency websites and develop a website portal linked to existing resources for parents. This work will be developed as part of the data unification process described in (E)(2).
- Implement a public engagement campaign coordinated by OPSR, to provide parents information on the early childhood programs that are available to them. OPSR will have an annual budget of \$500,000 to conduct outreach activities. This public engagement campaign will continue for the duration of the grant cycle, and will be targeted to families of Children with High Needs to improve access and participation in early learning and development programs.
- Expand networks in local communities to support grant activities., Increase capacity of Smart Start Oklahoma in six areas of the state that do not currently have a local Smart Start coalition. Timeline: Summer 2012 and ongoing throughout the grant cycle; Budget: \$30,000 per site/\$180,000-OPSR.

Overall, Oklahoma has committed to include \$5,176,712 in support for family engagement, demonstrating its commitment to building its infrastructure in this area.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

Note: The total available points for (D)(1) and (D)(2) = 40. The 40 available points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D), each criterion will be worth up to 20 points.

The applicant must address one or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evidence for (D)(1):

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

designed to promote children's learning and development and improve outcomes.

Oklahoma has already developed a set of workforce competencies to promote learning development and improve child outcomes. **(Appendix 18)** Now, it will develop a progression of credentials and degrees tied to the competencies, creating a clear path for early childhood educators to receive recognition for improving their knowledge and skills. Those credentials and degrees will also be tied to the state's new tiered quality rating and improvement system, so that obtaining higher-level credentials and degrees will have direct positive consequences for early learning personnel and the programs that employ them.

As Oklahoma raises the expectations for all of its early learning and development programs, so too will it raise the expectations for its Early Childhood Educators. Through the course of the grant Oklahoma will continue to update the Competencies, and will ensure that they reflect the state of the art in best practice in early childhood. Working collaboratively with institutions of higher education, the state will ensure that the credentials in early childhood reflect best practices in the field, and that ongoing professional development is also fully aligned with the state's expectations.

The Competencies are also integrally related with all of Oklahoma's other work as part of its Challenge grant. The new progression of credentials developed by the state will link to the levels of its tiered quality rating and improvement system. Moreover, the Competencies will ensure that practitioners are adept in the use of Oklahoma's Early Learning and Development Standards and Comprehensive Assessment System; are able to help meet child health, development, and behavioral needs; will engage parents effectively; and are competent in the use of the state's new data system.

a. Developing a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes

The Oklahoma Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners were adopted in 2008 after input from the early education field (including Head Start, public Pre-K , and childcare). Embedded in the Core Competencies are the content areas of the Early Learning Guidelines for Infant, Toddler and Two Year Olds and the Early Learning Guidelines for Three through Five Year Olds. **(Appendices 2 and 3)**

The Oklahoma Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners were designed as a comprehensive resource for individuals and organizations providing programming for young children. The competencies are what all adults who work with young children need to know, understand and be able to do to support children's learning and development. The competencies use the word "practitioner" to indicate that professionals in the field of early care and education are putting knowledge into practice.

The competencies can be used not only as a foundation for professional development but also to guide practitioners in assessing personal skills and to assist program administrators with matching educational requirements of personnel to job descriptions and evaluation. Training organizations and educators can use the competencies to evaluate professional development and coursework. Higher education faculty, staff and administrators can use the competencies to assess current program content and to design future course content.

The core competencies provide a framework of skills needed in each of five skill levels. Level 1 includes the knowledge and skills expected of someone new to early care and education - - and the competencies progress through Level 5, which includes knowledge and skills commensurate with an advanced degree in early childhood education or child development. The eight content areas include: Child Growth and Development; Health, Safety and Nutrition; Child Observation and Assessment; Family and Community Partnerships, Learning Environments and Curriculum (includes Early Learning Guidelines domains); Interactions with Children; Program Planning, Development and Evaluation; and Professionalism and Leadership. These content areas are the foundation of professional preparation and should not be seen as exhaustive.

Although the competencies will be continually updated and will need to be revised to reflect much of the substantive work in the coming years -- including the requirements of the new QRIS and the creation of a comprehensive assessment system -- in their current form they address the areas required by the definition Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. They describe what Early Childhood Educators should know and be able to do, and they:

- (a) Are evidence based. A list of resources is on page 68 of the document, including the Head Start Performance Standards, Oklahoma State Department of Education Competencies for Licensure and Certification, NAEYC Standards for Professional Preparation, and research from other states.

- (b) Incorporate knowledge and application of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, child development, health, and culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with children. The Competencies embed the Early Learning and Development Standards (Early Learning Guidelines) (p. 33); assessment practices (p. 26, p. 27); Child Growth and Development (p. 11); Health, Safety, and Nutrition (p. 15); cultural and linguistically appropriate strategies for working with families (p. 31); and interacting with children (p. 49).
- (c) Include knowledge of early mathematics and literacy development and effective instructional practices to support mathematics and literacy development in young children. These concepts are addressed in the “Learning Environments and Curriculum” section; specifically in the sub-headings of Language Arts and Mathematics.
- (d) Incorporate effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement. Child Observation and Assessment” (p. 28) and Program Planning, Development and Evaluation (page 53) address observation and evaluation guiding instruction and program improvement.
- (e) Include effective behavior management strategies that promote positive social and personal development and reduce challenging behaviors. These are included in the Interactions with Children (p. 47) and Learning Environments and Curriculum sub-headings of Method and Social and Personal.
- (f) Incorporate feedback from experts at the State’s postsecondary institutions and other early learning and development experts and Early Childhood Educators. The introduction (p. 9) describes the process for creating the document, and a feedback form is provided (p. 71).

Oklahoma will continue to update the Competencies to ensure that they represent best practices in the field. In 2013 when the new QRIS is approved, the OPSR's Professional Development and Workforce (PDW) workgroup will initiate a review of the Competencies, through a public process that solicits feedback widely. The workgroup will include representation from private child care providers, Head Start, Early Head Start, public Pre-K ,

home visitation programs, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, Oklahoma Child Care Services, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, college and university faculty, Career Technology Tribal Child Care, Child Care Resource and Referral, the Center for Early Childhood Professional Development, and more. The workgroup will engage a consultant to conduct an independent review of the Competencies in light of the new QRIS, and will then develop recommendations for the revised Competencies. The recommendations will be finalized by December 2013, and implemented by all of the Participating Agencies by March 2014.

The Competencies, once completed, will be published to all stakeholders, including being made available in a web-based format. In May 2014, representatives of the PDW workgroup will publish and present on the competencies to professional development groups and groups of Early Learning, Development Programs, and the Birth to Early Care Affiliates work group (described further in (D)(1)(b) below).

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

Oklahoma's long-term goal is to ensure that all Children with High Needs are served by Early Childhood Educators who have credentials and degrees that reflect adequate preparation to serve those high-need children. As an essential step toward meeting this goal, in the course of the grant Oklahoma will evaluate current credentials and degrees and update them as necessary to maintain alignment to the Competencies – and to the requirements of its tiered quality rating and improvement system. In the new system, credentials and degrees will lead to specific positive consequences, creating an incentive for personnel to obtain them. Moreover, the credentials and degrees will represent the demonstration of mastery of particular knowledge and skills, giving employers confidence in the value of those degrees. Oklahoma is fortunate to build on a strong base of aligned credentials and degrees, which can provide a starting point for the important work of meeting new and raised expectations. **(Appendix 19)**

Currently Oklahoma's Early Childhood Education and Child Development credentials and degrees are incorporated into the Core Competencies:

- The CDA/Child Care Professional credential, OK Competency Certification in Early Childhood Education (Career Tech), Oklahoma Certificate of Mastery (a stepping stone

to an associate degree awarded to participants who complete 12 college credit hours in child development and 3 credit hours in English), and a Directors Certificate of Completion align with level 2 of the core competencies which includes knowledge and skills commensurate with a CDA credential, certificate in child development or equivalent training/ education.

- An associate of arts degrees and associate of applied science degrees in child development, early care education, child care administration, family services and child development and early childhood education align with level 3 of the competencies which includes knowledge and skills commensurate with an associate's degree in early childhood education or child development.
- Bachelor's degrees in early childhood education, child development, Human and Family Science, Family Life Education, Family and Consumer science, and State Teacher Early Childhood Education Certificate align with level 4 of the competencies which includes knowledge and skills commensurate with a bachelor's degree.
- Master's degrees of arts and sciences and doctorate degrees of education and philosophy in the field of child development, early childhood education and Human and Family Science would align with level 5 of the competencies as they include knowledge and skills commensurate with an advanced degree.

Oklahoma has a history of collaborative development of credentials – for example, the Certificate of Mastery emerged from a process led by the Office of Child Care Services and the State Regents for Higher Education in partnership with community college presidents.

In 2010, Oklahoma became the first state to offer a teaching credential for individuals working with infants, toddlers, and 3-year-olds, also known as the IT3. The IT3 Certification track is for individuals who hold a Bachelor's degree in the area of Child Development or Family Relations with an emphasis in the development of infants and toddlers through age three (3) from a regionally accredited higher education institution recognized by the Oklahoma State Board of Education. Individuals pursuing this track must first pass the state's general education exam all certified teachers must take, as well as a Federal Bureau of Investigation background check. During the first year of employment, three credit hours of a reading instruction course must be completed. A standard teaching certificate allowing the individual to teach infants, toddlers, and

3-year-olds is then issued.

The work of updating the progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Competencies in this instance will be led by the Partnership's Professional Development and Workforce workgroup, which will serve as a cross-sector coordinating body. The process will require active engagement from Oklahoma community college and university departments of child development and early childhood education, among others. It will also be informed by the results of a higher education needs assessment that the Partnership is conducting using State Advisory Council Grant funds.

An important partner for the OPSR Professional Development and Workforce workgroup will be a workgroup of community college and university faculty called Birth to Early Care Affiliates (BECA), facilitated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (Regents). The workgroup has met for the last four years to address issues in the field including child development coursework, articulation, NAEYC accreditation, core competencies, and the possibility of additional degrees. This group has helped develop articulation agreements, and currently 41 degrees from community colleges transfer to universities.

The Professional Development and Workforce (PDW) workgroup will consult with the OPSR's Quality, Access, Standards and Accountability (QuASA) workgroup as it works to develop a new quality rating and improvement system. When the new QRIS design is adopted in 2013, the PDW workgroup will develop recommendations for a new set of credentials and degrees aligned to the QRIS. Its recommendations will be completed by Spring 2014, and will then be acted upon by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Grant funds will be used to engage a consultant to support the PDW workgroup's efforts.

As part of its charge, the PDW workgroup will also review the transferability of coursework and the framework for articulation agreements between community colleges and bachelor's institutions. Oklahoma has already made great strides towards a seamless career path. The University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University have early childhood education articulation agreements with Tulsa Community College and Oklahoma State University has articulation agreement with Northern Oklahoma College. There are 39 higher education programs with NAEYC/NCATE accreditation. The Course Equivalency Project (CEP) -- facilitated by the Regents -- meets periodically so that the early childhood education and child

development instructors from colleges and universities can determine course equivalency.

Workforce competencies will be aligned with Higher Education by September 2014.

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

Oklahoma's professional development providers and postsecondary institutions have already shown a strong commitment to providing professional development aligned with the existing competencies. That commitment will only be strengthened with the implementation of the new competencies and tiered quality rating and improvement system, which will demand higher levels of quality from all providers. Building on its existing base, Oklahoma will continue to integrate its professional development providers and postsecondary institutions as it builds its next-generation professional development system.

Currently, professional development delivered through the University of Oklahoma Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD), Office of Child Care Services, and the Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association are aligned with Oklahoma's existing Core Competencies (2010). During FY10, CECPD delivered over 100,000 hours of professional development opportunities to approximately 8,500 participants -- including leadership training for center directors, training in child observation and assessment, and training in creating a positive learning environment. The Early Childhood Association of Oklahoma -- the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children -- and regional affiliate groups work within the state and local communities to provide professional conferences and ongoing professional development based on the NAEYC Standards and Oklahoma Core Competencies; approximately 2,236 attended child care conferences in FY 11. CECPD also maintains a training approval system; Head Start training provided by the Head Start T/TA system and the Oklahoma Association of Community Action Agencies may be approved by this system.

These entities and more will continue to play an active role in providing professional development aligned to the newly revised competencies. They will also be actively involved in the process of updating the Competencies described in (D)(1)(a) and (D)(1)(b).

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

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

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

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

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

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

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

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

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

Additionally, the State must provide baseline data and set targets for the performance measure under (D)(2)(c)(1) and (D)(2)(c)(2).

While developing the right credentials and degrees is an essential part of developing the

outstanding workforce of Oklahoma's future, it is also essential to provide excellent professional development to Oklahoma's current early childhood workforce. Oklahoma's extensive work in this area gives it a strong base of top-notch Early Childhood Educators, but all practitioners benefit from ongoing professional development that helps them master their craft and take advantage of new knowledge in the field. Oklahoma's professional development must be rigorously designed to improve the ability of Early Childhood Educators to master the Competencies and continue to implement best practices over time.

a. Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with Oklahoma's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

Oklahoma has already done significant work to increase access to professional development programs aligned to its existing Competencies. (**Appendix 17**) It already makes available numerous professional development opportunities aligned to the Competencies, including the ones described in (D)(1)(c) through the OU Center for Early Childhood Professional Development, Oklahoma Child Care Services, the Oklahoma Child Care Resource and Referral Association. Through this grant, Oklahoma will create an Early Learning Consortium of Oklahoma, which will provide coordinated and Competencies-aligned professional development across the full spectrum of Early Learning and Development programs – and across the range of needs identified by Early Learning Educators, including several of the areas described in this grant.

Oklahoma continues to look to the future when it comes to expanding opportunities to access high-quality professional development. Improving professional development has been a significant focus of the Partnership for School Readiness, which has committed State Advisory Council grant funds to the effort. Oklahoma plans to continue using CCDF block grant funds to provide professional development, and will also seek to better coordinate with the professional development opportunities supported through the Head Start program. The new tiered quality rating and improvement system will also support professional development opportunities.

An example of the realignment of professional development to align with the Competencies is Oklahoma's Career Technology Programs. To facilitate specialized training and to increase the number of teachers prepared in early childhood education, Oklahoma's Career Technology programs -- secondary and adult, community colleges, and regional and

comprehensive universities -- are working to revise current curriculum to align it to the competencies. The program has developed Pathways to CDA and Pathways to Program Administration, which will be revised and reflect changes in core competencies.

One support Oklahoma will provide to programs later in 2011 is the Oklahoma Professional Development Registry, which will provide a web-based searchable database of registered training events that can be used by all early childhood providers. The state will seek to increase the number of organizations and educators participating in the Registry.

Requirements for Registry participation for training organizations include trainers/educators meeting educational requirements, adult education skills, evaluating training, maintaining training records, and inputting data.

To support high-quality professional development aligned to the Competencies, Oklahoma will create the Early Learning Consortium of Oklahoma to provide leadership, professional development, and expertise to support early childhood practice. The Consortium will organize potentially disparate efforts to create a matrix of professionals with expertise in early childhood practice – including the successful implementation of standards, assessment, health and developmental needs, family engagement, and more. The Consortium will then provide professional development services to all Early Learning and Development Programs.

- By June 2012, OPSR will provide a recommended design for the Consortium to the State Department of Education. The process of developing the recommendations will be led by the Professional Development and Workforce (PDW) workgroup, and will involve public hearings and the active solicitation of feedback from practitioners and the public.
 - The recommendations will focus on structural models that will be sustainable after the conclusion of the grant period. Grant funds will be used to create the initial infrastructure for the Consortium, which will be supported on an ongoing basis by agency technical assistance funds.
- The OSDE, as lead agency for the creation of the Consortium, will hold a competitive bid process to select entities to participate in the consortium. The RFP will be finalized by August 2012, and include the following requirements:
 - Facilitating the training process for early childhood providers on all

substantive areas required by the QRIS, including the implementation of standards, the implementation of a Comprehensive Assessment System, health and behavioral supports, and family engagement;

- Developing web based training modules as appropriate for training;
 - Establishing a certification process for those who complete the PD/training, and demonstrate mastery of whichever topic area the professional development was intended to promote;
 - Developing web-based support for early childhood providers to receive ongoing technical assistance and support;
 - Tracking and reporting numbers of providers trained and certified, programmatic and geographical location providers who have been trained, and types of tools that have been implemented;
 - Participating in "train the trainer" initiatives to maximize the impact of the Consortium; and
 - Offering feedback and making recommendations for systems improvements to the OSDE and the OPSR.
- Beginning December 2012 the Consortium will work collaboratively with all agencies and offices to develop the training plan and calendar, tracking systems, and ongoing monitoring and support.
 - Each December the PDW Workgroup will prepare an annual review of the alignment of professional development led by the Consortium, with the results meant to inform the ongoing work of the system.

The intention is for the Consortium to be the sole source of professional development for programs participating in the QRIS. By one year after the updated Competencies are approved:

- All programs participating in the QRIS system will be required to use professional development funds exclusively for professional development aligned to the Competencies, unless they can demonstrate that no such professional development was reasonably available.
- Direct state supports for professional development will be targeted exclusively to providers who are aligned with the Competencies.

To help expand the availability of professional development aligned with the Competencies, the state will provide supports to professional development providers on a competitive basis to align their services with the competencies. The competition will be announced when the new Competencies are adopted, and providers will be given one-time grants to upgrade their service. The competition will prioritize providers with a demonstrated track record of working with providers serving Children with High Needs, as a way of maximizing the impact of the funds on the children most in need of highly qualified early educators.

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

Oklahoma's new tiered quality rating and improvement system will provide incentives and supports for high-quality professional development, building on many of the incentives and supports Oklahoma already provides.

Oklahoma Child Care Services partners with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Scholars for Excellence in Child Care to offer a scholarship program that provides assistance with CDA credentials and early childhood and school-age coursework, which will be modified to reflect the expectations of the new system. The program has Scholar Coordinators at community colleges in 13 locations. Scholar Coordinators at each of the community colleges recruit child care professionals who would not attend college without the additional assistance of the Scholars for Excellence program. The coordinator supports and mentors child care teachers seeking a credential, certificate or associate degree in early childhood education. Oklahoma State Regents administer a scholarship program that helps students pay for tuition and books. The program averages 1,000 scholars in class per semester (annual report and application attached). From 2001 to summer of 2011, the program has provided child care professionals with 392 CDA credentials, 2685 Certificates of Mastery, 753 Associate degrees, and 209 Director's Certificates of Completion.

- A bachelor scholarship is currently being piloted, and East Central University, Northeastern State University, and University of Central Oklahoma have articulation agreements with community colleges to accept coursework towards a bachelor's degree in child development. This pilot will be expanded to provide the opportunity for a BA at universities that have articulation agreements with community colleges.

- A Tulsa-based philanthropist, working in conjunction with the Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education, has funded endowed chairs in child development and early childhood education at Tulsa Community College (TCC) and the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa (OU-Tulsa). The two chairs and their faculty have developed a strong 2+2 program, leading to the bachelor's degree and Oklahoma State Early Childhood Educator Teacher Certification, with scholarships and loan forgiveness. The joint Bachelor's Completion Program is designed to serve adult students with classes offered during the evenings and weekends.
 - A loan forgiveness program, offered at OU-Tulsa, keeps graduates in Oklahoma by offering loan reduction of 25% per year for each year worked in any Oklahoma licensed early childhood program serving children birth through Grade 3. To date, 50 students have successfully completed or are currently matriculated in this program; 96% have received scholarships or loan forgiveness; 100% have received tuition waivers from OU-Tulsa. This program, recently cited as a "promising practice" in the New America Foundation's publication *Getting in Sync*³⁹, started in 2006 and has experienced steady growth. For example, OU-Tulsa added two Ph.D. level faculty in fall 2011 to support this growing program and to launch a new Ph.D. Program in ECE.
- The "Mentoring in Motion" pilot project -- which provides enhanced mentoring services to a portion of the cohort -- has completed its second year of research. Scholar coordinators at Northern Oklahoma College in Enid, Murray State College, and Connors State College are participating in the program. The mentoring project is designed to assist Certificate of Mastery students in making connections between course content and actual classroom practice with children, staff, and families. Eligible Scholars that were recruited for random assignment into a mentoring or typical group. A research team at The University of Oklahoma-Tulsa is conducting

³⁹Bornfreund, Laura. (2011). *Getting in Sync: Revamping the Preparation of Teachers in Pre-K, Kindergarten and the Early Grades*. New America Foundation. Available at http://earlyed.newamerica.net/publications/policy/getting_in_sync

a study of the “Mentoring in Motion” initiative.

Upon completion of specified education requirements an educator may be eligible for a salary supplement program called REWARD. To participate in REWARD an individual must be working at a program that rated One Star + or higher in QRIS. In 2010 the REWARD salary supplement program provided two payments per year to 1,603 participants; 1,323 teachers or family child care home providers, and 280 directors or assistant directors.

In the new QRIS, all participating providers will be eligible to participate in REWARD, which will be modified to reflect the expectations of the new system. Participation in REWARD is time limited to increase movement from one level of education to a higher level, and grant funds would be used to provide an infusion of one-time opportunities to improve credentialing; at the end of the grant period, the program would be reconfigured to a sustainable level based on the needs of the QRIS system and the existing enrollment.

Another support to early childhood practitioners are the training voucher credits. Voucher credits are provided to each licensed facility according to capacity and Star Level in the Reaching for the Stars program. The vouchers are worth \$25 and can be utilized to attend local child care conferences provided by professional organizations.

c. Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention

By the end of the grant period, funding from the Early Learning Challenge will have helped Oklahoma develop the ability to report the number of educators at each credentialing level participating in any Early Learning and Development program participating in the quality rating and improvement system. Oklahoma will develop aggregated reports on the development, advancement, and retention of credentialed educators in the system, allowing for much more nuanced understanding of how the early learning workforce operates. These reports will be used regularly by agencies and policymakers to help set ongoing policy for Early Childhood Educator development. Oklahoma is committed to making this aggregated information transparent as soon as it has the data infrastructure in place to collect and report it reliably.

Education and professional development accomplishments are currently tracked by the Oklahoma Professional Development Registry. This program works alongside REWARD Oklahoma and maintains the database for the Oklahoma Director’s Credential (required for child

care directors). The Oklahoma Registry staff processed 3445 applications last fiscal year. The Registry issued 2,385 certificates: 889 Oklahoma Directors Credentials and 1,496 Professional Development Ladders. Registry participation is voluntary, so it does not provide a complete picture of the early childhood workforce. When the quality rating and improvement system is implemented, all participating programs will be required to report workforce information, to create a stronger database for better analysis and to inform ongoing strengthening of the state's professional development system.

The Registry will allow participating individuals to track their own professional development and education milestones and be updated about professional development opportunities. Directors will be able to get training records from employees and more easily meet training record keeping requirements. Child Care Licensing Staff will be able to see facility records prior to visitation so that visits can focus less on on-site record review. Additional program information that will be stored in the database includes Environment Rating Scale visit information, technical assistance, and specific program information. The Professional Development and Workforce committee of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness will continue to review the registry to determine what additional information is needed to provide a more complete picture of Oklahoma's early childhood workforce.

The Registry will allow Oklahoma to report publicly on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention in a completely new way. Currently there are significant gaps in knowledge about the ECE workforce, but with the Registry the state will be able to provide information on workforce demographics, education level of staff, work history, and training. All participants in the new QRIS will be required to participate in the Registry, and through the Challenge Oklahoma will provide one-time supports to help programs join. Using \$100,000 in grant funds, OSDE and OCCS will work with programs joining the QRIS (or programs already involved in QRIS but not participating in the registry), providing small supports for the program to join the Registry. Programs receiving the supports would commit to participating in the Registry for a defined period of time extending beyond the grant period.

To ensure that useful data is being publicly reported, the Professional Development and Workforce workgroup will design a public report that is easily understood and can be produced with data from the Registry (and other existing sources). OPSR will develop its proposed

template for public report through public meetings in the Spring and Summer of 2012, and then propose a template in December 2012. In November 2013, OPSR will produce its first annual report on Oklahoma's early childhood workforce, and will continue to produce the annual report thereafter. Each year the workgroup will also review the template to determine whether additional information should be included, particularly new information made available by the development of Oklahoma's early childhood data system; this ongoing work will ensure that the template continues to be useful for policy development and program improvement.

- 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 such institutions, and (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.*

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

	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 (1)	58 (100%)	58 (100%)	58 (100%)	58 (100%)	58 (100%)
Total number of Early Childhood Educators credentialed by an “aligned” institution or provider (2)	Unknown	13% of ECE workforce registered	23% of ECE workforce registered	33% of ECE workforce registered	43% of ECE workforce registered

- (1) There are 29 institutions of higher education and 29 career technology districts which offer an early childhood degree or certification. All degrees and certifications that post-secondary institutions of learning offer are aligned with the workforce knowledge and competency framework.
- (2) The number of degrees and certifications issued the previous year is known, but the number of current workforce with specific credentials is unknown in the state. Targets are based on an initial 13% increase of the workforce registering with the Professional Development Registry, followed by an annual 10% increase resulting in nearly half of all ECE workforce registered.

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.										
Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	<i>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</i>									
	Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target- end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Director Certificate*	172	2.50 %	181	2.50 %	190	2.50 %	200	2.51 %	210	2.50 %
Master Teacher Certificate*	443	6.43 %	465	6.42 %	488	6.42 %	512	6.41 %	538	6.42 %
Infant/Toddler Certificate*	154	2.23 %	162	2.24 %	170	2.24 %	179	2.24 %	188	2.24 %
Teacher's Assistant Certificate*	701	10.17 %	736	10.16 %	773	10.17 %	812	10.17 %	853	10.17 %
Child Development Associate (CDA)	1,504	21.82 %	1,579	21.81 %	1,658	21.81 %	1,741	21.81 %	1,828	21.80 %
Certificate of Mastery***	444	6.44 %	466	6.44 %	489	6.43 %	513	6.43 %	539	6.43 %
Director's Certificate of Completion ***	47	.68%	49	.68%	51	.67%	54	.68%	57	.68 %
Associate's Degree <i>Specify:</i>	419	6.08 %	440	6.08 %	462	6.08 %	485	6.07 %	509	6.07 %
Infant-Toddler-Age 3 Certificate (IT3) <i>Specify:</i>	2	.03%	2	.03%	3	.04%	3	.04%	3	.04 %
Bachelor's Degree in ECE <i>Specify:</i>	2,490	36.12 %	2,615	36.11 %	2,746	36.12 %	2,883	36.11 %	3,027	36.10 %
Advanced Degree (MA, PhD, or JD) <i>Specify:</i>	517	7.5%	546	7.54 %	573	7.54 %	602	7.54 %	632	7.54 %
Baseline data is estimated from *Career Technology Center (2009-2010), (* are competency certificates typically achieved during high school) (** 2009-2010 Scholars program)(** average number of new CDAs per year), the Regents for Higher Education (2008-2009) reports of degrees and certifications										

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.										
Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	<i>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</i>									
	Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target- end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<p>conferred, and estimations provided by State Department of Education.</p> <p>Target data is based on a 5% annual increase for total degrees and certificates conferred. Although this target calculation will not affect the percentage of degrees held, the number of degreed professionals increases.</p>										

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

Note: The total available points for (E)(1) and (E)(2) = 40. The 40 available points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E), each criterion will be worth up to 20 points.

The applicant must address one or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E).

(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;

(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;

(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and

(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

Introduction

By 2014 Oklahoma will implement a statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) that informs the state's efforts to close the school readiness gap at kindergarten entry, informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades, is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards, and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness. The assessment to be used will be chosen based on its validity, reliability, and appropriateness for the target population and the intended purpose for which it will be used, including appropriate assessment of Children with High Needs. The OSDE will explore the potential of identifying a tool that can be used for both 4-year-old programs and kindergarten classrooms, to provide an opportunity to gain a more longitudinal perspective on student performance and outcomes. Oklahoma's goal will be to identify a single assessment tool that is integrated with its Comprehensive Assessment System, resulting in a standardized process that will be recorded in the Student Longitudinal Data System. Oklahoma will pilot its assessment and purchase tools largely with funds other than Challenge funds, including the State Advisory Council grant awarded to the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness.

The process of implementing a statewide KEA will build upon the already-substantial efforts Oklahoma has conducted in planning toward implementing a kindergarten entry assessment. Schools in Oklahoma are required by legislation to conduct literacy screening on kindergarten children. The current literacy screening consists of three tools that local school districts are approved to use: DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), Literacy First, and Basic Early Assessment of Reading (BEAR). Kindergarten teachers administer one of these screening tools to each child and enter the child's scores into the state-wide longitudinal data system. This literacy screening process does not meet the complete criteria for a KEA, because it only addresses one domain of development and is not aligned fully with the state's Early Development and Learning Standards or the state's kindergarten standards, known as the *Priority Academic Student Skills*. Nonetheless, the existing kindergarten literacy screening has laid the groundwork for the successful implementation of a KEA—kindergarten teachers are accustomed to assessing their students and entering data from the assessments, there is a state-wide training system in place to provide professional development to kindergarten teachers, teachers are coached to use the results to tailor their interventions, and the basic data

entry and management systems are already in place. Oklahoma will capitalize upon these existing capacities to expand the current screening into a statewide KEA that collects data on all areas of children's development to inform planning for early childhood services for children age 4 and younger and inform instruction for kindergarten students.

Oklahoma's sense of urgency is heightened by its new Reading Sufficiency Act, passed in 2011. The Reading Sufficiency Act requires children in the third grade to be reading proficiently by the end of the year. Early identification and supports in kindergarten will be an important step to ensure children develop grade appropriate reading skills. School administrators will be provided training, coordinated through the OSDE and local Smart Start Oklahoma communities, to understand that successful students require skills that span beyond pre-literacy skills. They will be able to examine their existing funding to determine the best strategies to assure third grade reading success, and the Kindergarten Entry Assessment will provide a key support.

Implementation of Oklahoma's statewide kindergarten entry assessment will build upon the programs provided to young children and their families during their first five years. Integration of information from the KEA with an integrated early childhood data system will provide valuable information to examine the impact of early childhood experiences for children from different backgrounds. This information will not be used as a high-stakes measure to be punitive to children or to programs, but rather will create better information for Oklahoma to prioritize its resources to improve outcomes for Children with High Needs.

The Early Learning Challenge application will create a system wide, tiered, quality rating improvement system that will integrate Early Learning Guidelines, and will be connected to the comprehensive assessment system. Planning for the KEA instrument will occur in conjunction with the development of the comprehensive assessment system, and information yielded by the KEA will be used to continuously improve the design of Oklahoma's quality rating and improvement system. Indeed, the KEA will play an essential and aligned role with all of Oklahoma's Early Learning Challenge work.

(a) and (b) The Kindergarten Entry Assessment will be aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness, and will be valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used

Oklahoma will work collaboratively with its stakeholders and leading experts to ensure

that it has in place a KEA that meets all of the grant standards – and, most importantly, can be administered effectively by Oklahoma teachers.

The selection of an Assessment tool will be led by the State Department of Education in consultation with the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness. As described in (C)(2), the work to develop a Kindergarten Entry Assessment will be conducted through the same process as the work to develop a Comprehensive Assessment System. Oklahoma's High-Quality Plan will include the following:

- The State Department of Education, as lead agency, will hire a program manager and an assessment program coordinator in March 2012.
 - SDE and OPSR will select tools that will work together for the Comprehensive Assessment System and Kindergarten Entry Assessment. OKDHS and OSDH will contribute information on current practice and needs assessments of their programs to ensure a seamless transition to the new Comprehensive Assessment System.
- OPSR will gather information about current assessment practice, help to determine the assessment needs of the early learning community (including students, parents, teachers, programs, and providers), and communicate with the field about the vision for the Comprehensive Assessment System.
- OSDE will name two committees (with overlapping membership), including at a minimum the following members:
 - Experts in early childhood development from Oklahoma's leading institutions of early childhood professional development who have an expertise in assessment (including OU-Tulsa's Early Childhood Institute and Oklahoma State University);
 - Out-of-state experts on assessment;
 - Early childhood staff from all Participating State Agencies;
 - Head Start staff, including staff from the regional training office;
 - Representative Early Childhood Educators from a range of programs; and
 - A representative elementary school principal and kindergarten teacher; and
 - Other additional stakeholders with expertise in this area, such as private and/or non-profit sector representatives.

- The Committees will begin a series of bi-monthly meetings in January 2012 through June 2012. Each committee will conduct the following activities relating to its scope of work (child-facing assessments or program-facing assessments):
 - Conducting a literature review that includes a review of how instruments are used in other states, technical manuals and research conducted with the assessments under consideration, and more;
 - Ensuring alignment with the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines;
 - Recommending specific tool or tools to be used that are consistent with the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines
 - Collaborating with the data system design to ensure that assessment results can be reported to the longitudinal data system;
 - Studying research about the candidate tools to ensure that they can be valid, reliable, and appropriate for Oklahoma's kindergartners and the purposes for which the assessment will be used (including ensuring that the selected tool or tools will meet professionally-dictated levels of appropriateness, validity, and reliability such as the AERA, APA, and NCME's 1999 Standards for Education and Psychological Testing; www.apa.org/science/programs/testing/standards.aspx) – and then recommending validation processes to ensure validity on a continuing basis;
 - Designing training for professionals in the proper use of the assessment – both in its administration, and in following up on the information it yields; and
 - Developing a plan to educate parents and communities about the meaning and importance of kindergarten entry assessment.
- OPSR will lead the effort to solicit feedback from the early learning community, March through May 2012, for the committees' work, which will be received by June 2012.
- By July 2012, the Committees – through OPSR -- will make recommendations to State Board of Education and OSDE on the selection of a tool or tools. The OSDE will act to release an RFP by September 2012, with responses due by October 2012.
- In November 2012 the Oklahoma State Board of Education will select the best proposal, and award contracts by December 2012.

(c) The Kindergarten Entry Assessment will be administered no later than the start of school year 2014-15

The planning process will be completed by June 2012. The State Department of Education and State Board of Education will review the Partnership's recommendations, and by September 2012 will have taken all actions necessary to approve a pilot during the 2013-14 school year and subsequent statewide implementation during the 2014-15 school year.

The pilot process will include representation of a cross section of Oklahoma schools, (rural, urban, suburban; large and small) and include a focus on schools with high numbers of Children with High Needs. Selection for participation in KEA will be by elementary school sites that have kindergarten programs, and all kindergarten programs at one elementary site will implement KEA. It will be important during the pilot phase to ensure that tool selection meets the needs of students who are most at risk for school failure and that the tool assists teachers in individualizing and offering differentiated instruction and support to facilitate success in kindergarten and beyond. Pilot sites will be selected by January 2013.

Once the pilot sites have been elected, the State Department of Education will lead the work of implementing the pilot, including assessment and data collection training for kindergarten teachers at the selected pilot sites from April to July of 2013. The initial administration of the assessment will be conducted in the fall of 2013. Throughout the 2013-14 school year, and into the 2015 school year, ongoing support will be provided at pilot sites, with professional development in large groups, small groups, and through individual coaching and mentoring. A focus will be placed on providing the necessary professional development and technical assistance as the use of the assessment information to inform and tailor instruction is critical to the success of the initiative.

The OSDE will be responsible for coordinating training and contracting with consultants in the state to provide the training. Contract will be in place by March 2013. Trainers will be contracted through Universities, private providers, and state agency staff who have expertise in guiding informed instruction in kindergarten. In order to ensure the trainers provide standardized information, a training manual will be developed for consultants by the State Department of Education with input from the Assessment Workgroup.

Between January and March of 2014, results of the pilots will be evaluated by the

Consultant with the Assessment Workgroup to make recommendations to the OSDE for an implementation plan for statewide KEA by fall of 2014-15. In addition, based on a process evaluation conducted on effects of training for KEA in the pilot, a professional development plan for statewide implementation will be developed by March 2014 and training will be conducted during April through August, 2014. The professional development will reinforce the importance of ensuring that the use of assessment results is appropriate.

(d) The Kindergarten Entry Assessment results will be reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System

Oklahoma's vision for its early childhood data system is that it link data across programs and then to its longitudinal data system, in order to improve both policy and practice. The KEA results will be an essential part of the state's data system, to inform improved practice by elementary educators and to provide information useful to system improvements in both early learning and elementary schools. The results of kindergarten screenings are already included in the longitudinal data system, and as kindergarten assessment practices are improved the state's data system will reflect those improvements.

As described further in (E)(2), Oklahoma plans to integrate its early learning data and connect that data to its longitudinal data system. (In addition to the Challenge, Oklahoma will apply for a State Longitudinal Data System grant during the fall of 2011 to support this work.) Its work on KEA will include the following:

- Developing a program to enter the KEA information electronically into the student information system, either directly or through system that can be uploaded at a later date. This system should include data elements to help identify Children with High Needs and to better inform instruction. This application will be completed prior to implementation of training on the pilot KEA by the December 2012 and data entry will be part of the training process on utilization of the KEA.
- Develop a reporting/feedback process so that kindergarten teachers are able to find the reporting system useful and informative. This should also be completed by December, 2012.
- During the spring and summer of 2013, training will be conducted for kindergarten teachers to enter the KEA information into the state-wide longitudinal data system in

conjunction with training on the KEA.

- Provide ongoing consultation and technical assistance to pilot sites to ensure data entry is reliable, conducted in a timely manner, and is useful to teachers to guide their instructions.
- The data system developed to record KEA information will be evaluated for ease of use and ability to generate information to assist kindergarten teachers in guiding instruction between January and March of 2013, and an implementation plan to launch statewide implementation will be completed by March 2014.

The OSDE will be responsible for developing, training, implementing supporting and evaluating the data entry process. The Information Technology center will be responsible for providing telephone technical assistance for data entry questions, and will develop website technical assistance and support. The Department will be responsible for ensuring coordination between the work to implement KEA and the development of the new data system.

(e) The Kindergarten Entry Assessment will be funded in significant part with resources other than those available under this grant

Oklahoma's KEA plan will be implemented with funding from a number of sources.

- First, the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness has funds that have already been set aside to promote the development of a KEA. The Partnership's funds will be used to fund the Assessment Work Group that will make recommendations on the assessment tool and the procedures for collecting the data, supported by a consultant. The Partnership grant identifies "school readiness assessment," with funds for a pilot assessment project. If possible, these grant funds will also be used to purchase assessment tools to pilot the assessments in some communities.
- The Department of Education will designate existing funding to develop a training plan and to provide ongoing support following the grant period for Kindergarten teachers. The department will support training for new teachers on how to administer the KEA and how to enter the data into the state-wide data information system. The OSDE will contribute up \$950,000 with an additional \$250,000 from OPSR for the purchase of the KEA, as well as for the purchase of instruments and to provide additional training materials once the KEA has gone to scale for the entire state. The OSDE is pursuing a

federal FY2012 SLDS grant to secure funds that will cover the professional development needed to support data entry into the state-wide student information system.

Importantly, several of the projects proposed in the Challenge will provide infrastructure that will be used to support the successful implementation of KEA:

- The Workforce Competencies will include KEA, which will form the basis for collaboration between the Oklahoma Department of Education and postsecondary institutions to design credentials and degrees that reflect mastery of KEA.
- The high-quality professional development implemented pursuant to Section D will include training to ensure that kindergarten teachers are able to deliver the assessment and act on its results appropriately. This will include ongoing support to teachers in the appropriate uses of the KEA and will be provided by contract consultants with funds from this application. The State Department of Education will deliver its professional development primarily through its existing REAC3H network.
 - The REAC3H Network is Regional Educators Advancing College, Career, and Citizen-Readiness Higher. The REAC3H Network is comprised of approximately 70 lead school districts who coordinate with stakeholders in their local communities and surrounding districts to improve education for all public school students PK-12. The purpose of the network is to provide leadership to Oklahoma --- through professional development, technical assistance, resources and collaboration --- during the transition to a new Teacher and Leader Effectiveness system, statewide reforms, and new standards and assessments in 2014-2015. One of those critical statewide reforms is development and implementation of a kindergarten readiness assessment. With its emphasis on leadership development, the REAC3H Network provides an avenue for the Department to collaborate with districts on the key elements of a kindergarten readiness assessment and appropriate implementation strategies. The Department will utilize the REAC3H Network's train-the-trainer approach to provide professional development and technical assistance to all districts in the state through highly trained educators in the lead districts. In addition, the Network is an excellent setting for the selection of districts to pilot programs and conduct research on effective strategies.

- Oklahoma state law (70 O.S. § 6-101.16) established the Oklahoma Teacher and Leaders Effectiveness, a new evaluation system for teachers and leaders designed to encourage continuous professional growth leading toward improved student achievement for all Oklahoma children. The law requires that the new system be comprised of multiple measures of teacher and administrator effectiveness. According to state law, all local board of education evaluation policies must align with the TLE by the 2013-2014 school year. Oklahoma will have an opportunity to identify supports within this system to assure ongoing competencies for Oklahoma's kindergarten teachers in administering KEA.
- The redesign of the data system will ensure that it is able to accommodate additional data provided through the new KEA.

While other resources will be used to support the KEA, it will be closely connected to a wide range of grant activities.

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

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

- (a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- (b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- (c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;
- (d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and
- (e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be

helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

Oklahoma is committed to building the infrastructure needed to support informed decision-making and the preparation of our children to enter kindergarten and be successful as they progress through our education system. Oklahoma has already made substantial progress in planning for an early learning data system – as an extension of OSDE's P12 student information system and as part of the larger Oklahoma P20 Education Data System (currently under development). The Early Learning Challenge provides an excellent opportunity to accelerate the creation of the Early Learning component and of our larger P20 effort overall. The State Department of Education is moving forward to streamline and consolidate our early learning data collections, build the infrastructure necessary for multi-agency data linking, and realize the untapped potential in the significant data we already collect and of the systems we already have in place.

The envisioned Oklahoma P20 Education Data System will extend from Early Learning through K12, Career Tech, Higher Education and into the workforce. Through its Early Learning partnership Health and OKDHS and its P20 partnership with Career Tech, the Regents and OESC, the OSDE will establish a P20+ Education Data Portal that will provide secure access to stakeholders to data, analyses and reports they need to make informed decisions and to improve instruction. Stakeholders will be able to view and search data, as well as create and download custom reports from the P20+ Education Data Portal.

Through the set of governance frameworks and data sharing memoranda of understanding discussed below (**Appendix 20**), the six agencies will develop policies and procedures to establish and maintain secure access to the data across the agency systems and

interagency data linking marts while also protecting privacy and confidentiality.

Because Oklahoma lacks an integrated multi-agency P20 longitudinal data system, we have significant and persistent challenges to overcome, especially with regard to the linking of Early Learning data between agencies. Early Learning data in Oklahoma are generated by a wide array of programs, collected by different agencies, spread across a number of separate data systems, and reported through different portals or on different websites if reported at all. In addition, the state-level collections are incomplete; there is not a system in place to capture critical Early Learning data that remain isolated at the local level. Finally, until quite recently, the P12 student information system within OSDE has been disjointed and inefficient, yielding very little data of any value. As a result, the student information system contributes to the inability of the OSDE to measure at the state level Early Learning student outcomes and track student progress, and to use data for the evaluation of policies and programs.

(a) An early learning data system that has all of the Essential Data Elements;

Oklahoma's Early Learning Data are scattered across a number of different collections. These collections are inconsistent with regard to their inclusion of Essential Data Elements – see **Table (A)(1)-13** above for information on which collections include which of the data elements. The most robust system with the most Essential Data Elements is the OSDE's P12 Student Information System, an enhanced version of that has been known as the "Wave." The P12 student information system is a transactional system that collects real-time data from LEAs: school and district system across the state automatically submit data the OSDE system using the Schools Interoperability Framework.

Two critical deficiencies of the P12 student information system have been the inadequate processes to validate the data in the system – even as the system has been collecting an expanding array of student-level indicators – and to improve statewide data reporting. The P12 student information system staff is currently developing solutions that address these issues.

To ensure that the collection of data for the Early Learning data system (including the Essential Data Elements) meets the needs of policymakers and practitioners, the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness formed a Data Systems and Coordination Workgroup.⁴⁰ To

⁴⁰ One of the Workgroup's key efforts has been to identify the key questions the Early Learning Data System will be required to answer and the data indicators that that system will need to collect in order to provide those answers.

gather input from across the state, the workgroup organized a Data Roundtable in December 2010 attended by more than 75 stakeholders representing all constituencies within the early learning community. (**Appendices 21, 22, and 23**). The Roundtable identified six critical policy goals as the top priorities for a linked Early Learning data system:

1. Identify which children participate in which programs;
2. Connect young children to services they need;
3. Create a dashboard of indicators to measure the developmental progress of children;
4. Identify and understand family circumstances;
5. Learn about the backgrounds of child development personnel; and
6. Follow program design characteristics and coordination among programs.

To maintain focus, the Data Systems and Coordination workgroup examined all questions discussed during the Roundtable event and synthesized a list of the most meaningful data indicators required to answer these questions and to determine child's School Readiness, the principal outcome for Early Learning. **Appendix 24** includes a flow chart that outlines the three categories of data elements critical to understand school readiness: Program Quality, Children and Families, and Providers and Personnel.

For collected data elements currently missing and critical Early Learning data that remain isolated at the local level, we will work through the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness – and its Early Learning Governance Committee and Data Stewards Committee – to develop the additional elements for the program Quality Rating and Improvement System that will need to be collected and analyzed through the envisioned Oklahoma P20 Education Data System.

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

The P12 Student Information System collects data automatically. The student level information is transmitted from the local systems to the state system without requiring the local administrators to take any actions beyond entering the data into their local systems. As the OSDE expends the data collected at the student level in the P12 Student Information System and integrates separate P12 data collections – including those detailed in **Table (A)(1)-13** above – into OSDE's P12 student information system, the efficiency of collections and reporting to the

OSDE increases. The process of expanding data collection at the student level through the P12 Student Information System (while shrinking the aggregate collections districts have been producing) shift the challenge from collection to certification.

OSDE is also working to strengthen the certification process so that the P12 student information system will become the source of these student-level collections for linking and reporting purposes.⁴¹ Beginning in the fall 2011 and continuing through the spring 2012, the OSDE will pilot a more robust and periodic data certification process to ensure that the data system is accurate and true. In addition, with the development of the new P20+ Education Data Portal, described above, OSDE will allow teachers, school leaders and service providers to access the state data system with expended collections and reporting tools.

Finally, OSDE is pursuing resources through the FY2012 SLDS grant competition to develop a true state information system that will allow (likely) small and medium size districts—as well as charter schools and other education service providers -- to manage their data not in a local system, but with the new state information system. Collections for participating districts and other sites in such an environment would be unnecessary as the data would exist only within the P20 Education Data System and be available from OSDE through the Data Portal to stakeholders.

(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

The Data Systems and Coordination Workgroup has begun exploring the potential within existing systems to link data across agencies. Using the names, demographics and unique student identifiers, the Education, Health and Human Service agencies have tested our ability to match data. The results of these matching tests will inform the work of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness' newly created Data Stewards Committee as it develops common data definitions. As stated in the Oklahoma Early Learning Data Governance

⁴¹ This expansion of the P12 Student Information System is supported by a key piece of recently enacted legislation – Oklahoma's IT Consolidation and Coordination Act (HB1304). The OSDE has begun a multi-year, multi-phase plan to enhance the existing P12 Student Information System in partnership with the Information Services Division (ISD) of the Office of State Finance (OSF). Consolidation of OSDE systems and migration of the IT equipment to ISD have already produced an annual savings of approximately more than \$600,000, that has been reinvested into the P12 Student Information System and the further expansion to the envisioned P20 Education Data System.

Framework (**Appendix 25**), the Data Stewards Committee will, among other responsibilities,

1. “Develop and document common data standards needed to link data – including definition, format, source, provenance, element level and contextual integrity rules – and maintain/monitor these common data definitions.”
2. “Monitor federal and national efforts to develop or revise data standards, as well as seek opportunities to coordinate with other states in order to facilitate Early Learning, intra-state and inter-state data sharing.”

For a true Early Learning data system, Oklahoma will need to expand beyond the data collected – or that needs to be collected – by the OSDE alone. To move from the P12 student information system – a real-time, transactional system linked to local districts – it will be necessary to establish procedures for generating and transmitting certified point-in-time data to a data warehouse for analysis and reporting. We will be able to link the P12 data from this warehouse with data from other agencies for analysis and reporting.

- Linking certified point-in-time student level data from the OSDE data warehouse with data from Health and OKDHS will be directed by the Early Learning Data Governance Committee, established under the authority of the Partnership for School Readiness and the authority of the three Early Learning data generating agencies (OKDHS, Health, and OSDE).

Overall, the Oklahoma P20 Education Data System – including Early Learning Data System component and the P20 Education Data Portal – will need a longitudinal perspective on adults and children in our schools. Such a system will need to be able to follow a preschool teacher or Early Learning service provider from their postsecondary education or training back in the preschool classroom or Early Learning service organization. It will also need to be able to determine the impact of that adult on the preparation of children to be ready to start school and on the long term success of those children in school. With additional resources an RTTT-ELC award, Oklahoma will procure and implement key components of a comprehensive and effective state longitudinal data system:

- **Enterprise Service Bus:** to integrate data from disparate systems and load the data into the data warehouse. Key functions of the enterprise service bus include data cleansing, identity management, and rules creations via a business rules engine. This

piece of software resides between the business applications -- such as the Quality Rating and Improvement System, Comprehensive Assessment, Student Information System, -- and enables communication and data exchange among diverse business applications and across technology platforms.

- **Enterprise Intelligence** (a.k.a., “Statewide Identity, Credential and Access Management” (SICAM)): the HPIAA- and FERPA-compliant privacy protection solution that will manage identity and access throughout the P20 Education Data System. SICAM will enable agency unique identifiers to be translated across the system, increasing the power and efficiency of data linking and creating a true P20 longitudinal system. Based on privacy and access policies established through the system – from Early Learning through P20 – agencies and external stakeholders will have appropriate levels of access to relevant data.
- **Data Warehouse**: the main source where data is validated, transformed, catalogued and made available for use. Data Warehouse includes business intelligence tools, tools to extract, transform and load data into the repository. The Early Childhood data warehouse will interface with many different data sources to populate the Early Childhood Comprehensive System. The user interaction with the data warehouse will be real-time, receiving and responding to business professionals for data mining, online analytical processing, research and provide historical, current and predictive views for reporting.
- **Common Program/QRIS Application**: will connect program information systems with each agency and provide a single source with the P20 Education Data Portal for parents and others to compare Early Learning programs and sites. Based on recommendations regarding existing QRIS systems, agency system enhancements may be required, in addition to the Common QRIS Application that will compile information for the P20 Education Data Portal.
- **Enterprise Learning Management (ELM)**: an integrated system providing a learning environment allowing designated staff to define training curriculum, set prerequisites for training courses, monitor license expiration and renewal dates (future), control class enrollments, calculate training costs, and automating enrollment

notifications. ELM integrates with Human Resources (HR) and has Self Service functions. Managers have access to online real-time information, allowing upper management to make informed decisions regarding all aspects of training requirements and objectives. Enterprise Learning Management solution would provide a variety of information on Early Childhood educator professional development and quality rating and improvement system.

- **Grant Management application:** a fully integrated project costing and management solution that provides State agencies with the ability to budget, collect, analyze and report on all project related expenditures and revenues. Project Costing also facilitates federal grant administration through cost collection, revenue tracking, reporting and federal billing. Project Costing integrates with other State supported modules including Purchasing, Accounts Payable, General Ledger, Commitment Control, HCM Time and Labor, Human Resources, Payroll, Contracts, Billing and Asset Management. Through project costing, state users have access to timely and easy-to-use project information, allowing them to make informed decisions regarding performance, planning and utilization.

(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;

Oklahoma is pursuing a multi-track approach to gathering input from stakeholders across the state to ensure that decision-makers are informed by actionable data that leads to improved outcomes for students:

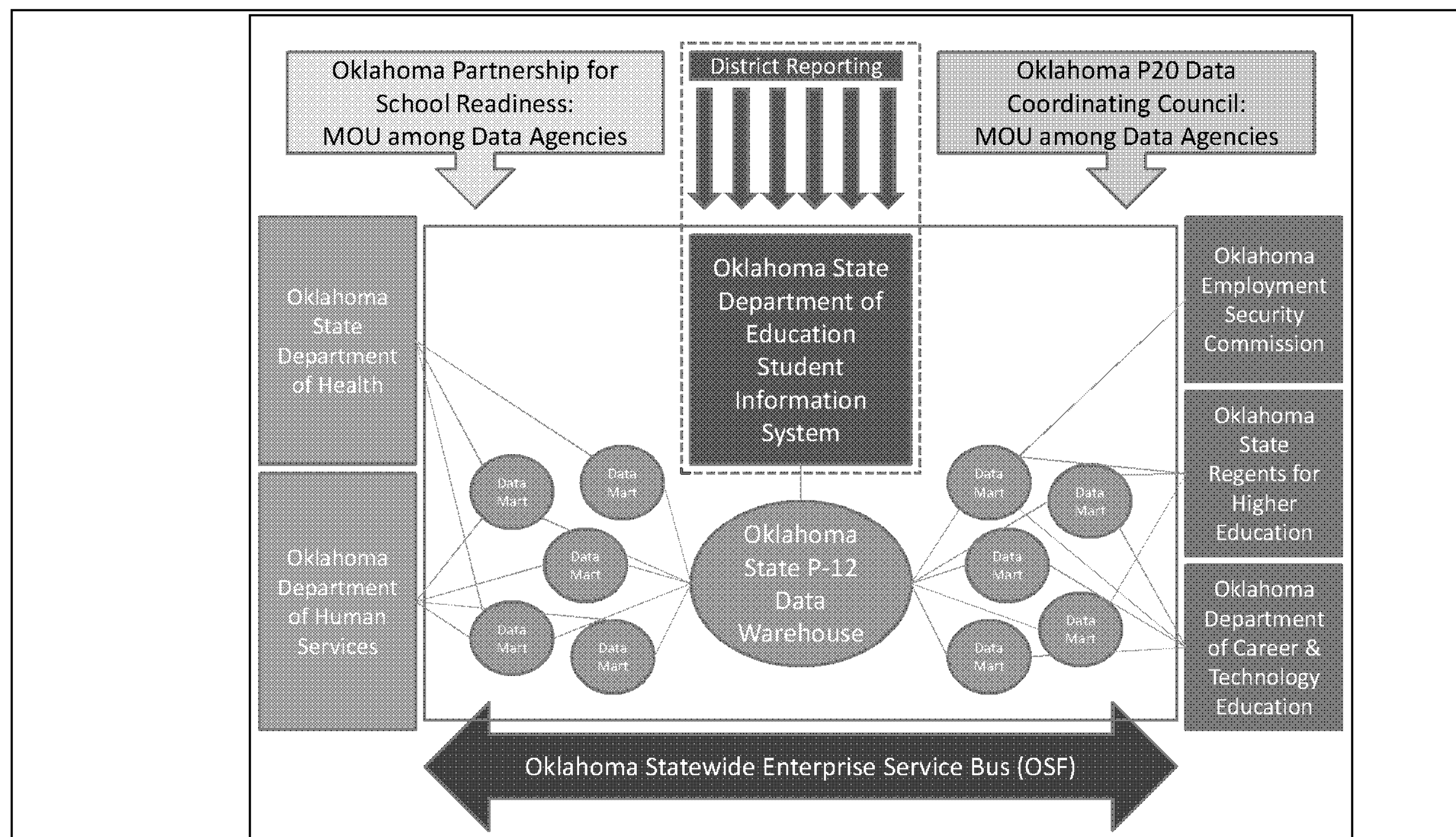
- To date planning for the P20 Education Data System has included conversations with an array of stakeholders through the P20 Data Coordinating Council, and similar conversations have been held through the Partnership for School Readiness.
- In addition, the OSDE has taken two key steps to organize itself to support its central role in the design and development of the P20 Education Data System: the formation

of the REAC³H Network and the establishment of a formal data governance process within the OSDE.⁴²

The data and analyses for stakeholder reports will be drawn from the OSDE P12 Data Warehouse and from a series of data marts that will be created to facilitate interagency data linkages. The Early Learning data linkages and the P20 data linkages will be coordinated by the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness and the Oklahoma P20 Data Coordinating Council respectively. Through the governance framework and data sharing memoranda of understanding discussed below, the six agencies will establish common data standards, including common structures, formats and definitions required to establish and maintain the required data linkages.

Stakeholders will also have access to data, analyses and reports from the six agencies posted to or linked through the P20+ Education Data Portal. The P20+ Education Data Portal will be supported by a series of data linkages show in the **Oklahoma P20+ Data Functions Chart**:

⁴² The REAC³H [Regional Educators Advancing College, Career, and Citizenship Readiness Higher] Network was started at the end of August -- it is comprised of 75 rural and urban/suburban district superintendents and their senior staff. Representatives of the REAC³H SLDS committee will be included in data governance discussions within OSDE – along with representatives of the Partnership for School Readiness, the P20 Data Coordinating Council and the Office of State Finance’s Information Systems Division.



(e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws. Data System Oversight Requirements means policies for ensuring the quality, privacy, and integrity of data contained in a data system, including—

Any components of the Oklahoma P20 Education Data System procured using RTTT Early Learning Challenge funds will be integrated to a multi-faceted process to develop such a system already underway: one within the Early Learning community, and one within the P20 education/workforce community. The work on these two ends of the education system reflect a new consensus about the need for a statewide P20 Education Data System that has emerged among the leadership of six key state data generating agencies. This leadership consensus is in part the result of the agencies working together through the Partnership for School Readiness and the P20 Data Coordinating Council.

Through agency leadership, a common vision of a federated P20 Education Data System has developed, one that builds on the existing agency systems and links the systems together. This common vision is reflected in the parallel data sharing memoranda of understanding for both the Early Learning and the P20 education/workforce agencies and their corresponding data governance frameworks. **(Appendix 25)**

The stated purpose of the RTTT-ELC data sharing memoranda of understanding is to “provide a framework of collaboration, and to define the roles and responsibilities required to share and/or link data among participating state agencies and support of the implementation of an approved Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (ELC) grant project.” The mission of the Early Learning Data Governance Committee as stated in the Oklahoma Early Learning Data Governance Framework is “to establish policies and provide guidance related to the management of the ELLDS consistent with the vision and direction of the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness.” While the policies to not yet exist to address the specific Data System Oversight Requirements listed in the RTTT-ELC RFA, the Early Learning data agencies have committed through the MOU and will work through the Governance Framework to create the policies and procedures that do meet these requirements. **(Appendix 20)** The State Department of Education's P-12 student information system database already addresses the Data System Oversight Requirements:

a. Governance

- On April 28, 2011, the OSDE released online through the P12 student information system website version 1.3 of the data elements collected and maintained in the OSDE's P12 student information system.
- SDE Student Information System staff provides ongoing training throughout the year through on-site and video conferencing for LEA administrative and data staff responsible for reporting data to the OSDE through the P12 student information system. Regional training sessions conducted at the state of each school year to address recently updates to the requirements of the P12 student information system.
- The OSDE grants access to the P12 student information system to the LEA superintendents. The LEA Superintendents are authorized to extend access to onsite staff necessary to fulfill data reporting requirements. An annual review of access grant is required, to ensure that only the individuals charged at the local level to submit data do so.
- Within the OSDE, access to student level data is restricted to only those staff who have need of the data and have signed confidentiality/non-disclosure agreements kept on file by P12 student information system staff.

- All data requests are submitted to the OSDE general counsel for review.
- The P12 student information system operates a validation process to ensure that data submit by the LEAs meets the v1.3 data requirements describe above. In the fall 2011, the OSDE P12 Student Information System is developing a new, more robust comprehensive certification process that will be piloted in the spring 2012 through which LEAs will routinely certify the accuracy of the submit data. This will include the full, integrated data sets described above in (E)(2)(b) above.
- Before the OSDE moves to make data available through the new P20 Education Data Portal, OSDE will work with coordinate with the ELC and P20 governance committees to conduct a risk assessment for the data elements to be shared, establish procedures to tracking the performance of the P20 Education Data System and Portal, and conduct accountability audits of the system and procedures.

b. Transparency

- Through the activities of the REAC3H Network and the ongoing series of focus groups with school leaders, teachers and parents, the OSDE will keep stakeholders abreast of step being taken to develop P20 Education Data System and to gather their feedback on the work new systems and tools already in place. Included in these discussions will be information about the existence of personally identifiable information in P20 Education Data System and the procedures for parents to control access to data and information about their children.
- In addition the OSDE will continue to discuss data use policies and procedures with stakeholder groups.

The OSDE is currently developing an RFP to hire a consultant to work with the OSDE data governance committee through the fall to define the policies and procedures necessary to operating and maintain the student information system in the manner described in the Data System Oversight Requirements of the RTTT-ELC RFA. Discussions are already underway with the P20 Data Coordinating Council to produce as similar RFP to hire a consultant for the same purpose – the P20 data sharing MOU has been signed and the P20 governance framework will be considered for approval by the P20 Data Coordinating Council at its October 20, 2011 meeting. The governance consultant would ideally be the same as the OSDE consultant or would

coordinate with the OSDE to ensure compatible and complementary approaches to data governance.

The ELC data sharing MOU has likewise been signed and the draft ELC governance framework will be presented for discussion at the November 2, 2011 meeting of the Data Systems and Coordination Workgroup in order to propose a final draft of the ELC governance framework for consideration by the Partnership for School Readiness Board at its January 2011 meeting. Discussions are also planned regarding hiring a governance consultant to work with the ELC governance committee to ensure that Oklahoma has a comprehensive data governance from ELC through to P20, supporting a strong federated data system.

The heavy overlap of the membership of the Partnership for School Readiness and the P20 Data Coordinating Council, the central role of the OSDE in coordinating across the ELA and P20 communities, and the common vision of a federated P20 Education Data System have facilitated efforts to move together in parallel with a shared understanding of how we will develop the P20 Education Data System and a shared commitment to doing what will be necessary to operate and maintain such a system. This shared commitment includes the quality, privacy, and integrity of data in the P20 Education Data System and the transparency necessary to build trust and confidence among Oklahoma stakeholders.

High-Quality Work Plan

The State Department of Education will lead the process of developing an enhanced early learning data system that can connect information about students, personnel, and programs. Other agencies that manage data – particularly OKDHS and OSDH – will work closely with OSDE in developing and implementing plans. The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness and its Data System & Coordination Workgroup will provide ongoing feedback to the process, providing stakeholder input on both design and usage issues.

- Building on the data sharing MOU agreed to in October 2011, the Participating State Agencies will agree to a data governance framework in December 2011.
- The ELC Data Governance Committee and Data Steward Committee will convene in January 2012.
- Beginning in February 2012, an RFP will be developed to hire a data governance consultant to work with the Governance Committee to document governance

policies and procedures. The contract will be awarded April 2012.

- By July 2012, the P20 Data Coordinating Council will adopt a long-term strategic plan for integrating early learning data.
- By September 2012, the OSDE and the Committees will conduct a baseline analysis of the challenges, necessary enablement, and improvements needed to support the early learning data system, including a Grant Management Solution, Enterprise Intelligence Solution, Enterprise Service Bus Solution, Data Warehouse Solution, and an Enterprise Learning Management System.
 - By December 2012 OSDE will have purchased whatever technology is required to address the needs identified.
- The design and implementation of the technology solutions will proceed starting when technology is purchased, and continuing through 2013 and 2014 for some of the areas requiring an ongoing implementation period (Enterprise Intelligence Solution, Data Warehouse, and Enterprise Learning Management System).
- Recognizing the significant up-front costs associated with the development of the system, Oklahoma has budgeted \$11,748,208 to support its work plan.

VII. COMPETITION PRIORITIES

Note about the Absolute Priority: The absolute priority describes items that a State must address in its application in order to receive a grant. Applicants do not write a separate response to this priority. Rather, they address this priority throughout their responses to the selection criteria. Applications must meet the absolute priority to be considered for funding. A State meets the absolute priority if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the absolute priority

Priority 1: Absolute Priority – Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Note about Competitive Preference Priorities: Competitive preference priorities can earn the applicant extra or "competitive preference" points.

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority – Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. (10 points)

Competitive Preference Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State's licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will receive points for this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30, 2015--

(a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will score this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and

(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

If the State chooses to respond to this competitive preference priority, the State shall write its full response in the text box below. The State may also include any additional information it believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. If the State has included relevant attachments in the Appendix, these should be described in the narrative below and clearly cross-referenced to allow the reviewers to locate them easily.

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

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority – Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. (10 points)

In Element (B) Oklahoma has shown how it will build on one of the nation's most effective licensing systems and a leading QRIS to include all ELDPs within the scope of licensing or equivalent state regulation and inspection, include all center-based ELDPs in its new Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and develop appropriate QRIS participation for home-based programs.

(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

Oklahoma presently licenses or regulates the vast majority of programs described by the criteria.

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) is charged with licensing center- and home-based care. All centers are licensed, regardless of the number of children in care. Exemptions are available only for programs operating 15 hours or less per week, during typical school hours by a public or private school that offers elementary education from kindergarten through third grade, and facilities on tribal country land or federal property. Head Start and Early Head Start centers are required to be licensed unless they meet one of the exemptions above. While tribal Head Start and child care centers located on tribal country land are exempt, an estimated 95 percent of such facilities currently participate voluntarily in licensing. Other legally exempt programs choose to be licensed as well to ensure the health and well being of children in care (**Appendix 26**). OKDHS licenses all family child care homes without regard to the number of children cared for. Exemptions are available for care provided in a child's own home or by relatives; informal arrangements which parents make with friends or neighbors for the occasional care of their children, and homes operating fifteen or fewer hours per week. (**Appendix 27**) A license ensures the health and safety of children outside the home for the purpose of child care; exemptions do not meet the definition of "Child Care" in the Oklahoma Child Care Facilities Licensing Act.

All remaining programs that operate in a provider setting are operated by school districts

under the regulation of the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE). This includes Universal pre-kindergarten, programs funded by Title I of the ESEA and programs funded by Part B of the IDEA.

All remaining ELDPs in Oklahoma are in home settings, not provider settings. However, all are either directly operated by the state (Part C of the IDEA, Children First Home Visiting program) or regulated by the state (OCAP Start Right home visiting is operated by contract with Oklahoma State Department of Health and Parents as Teachers home visiting is operated by school districts under regulation of OSDE).

The table below summarizes status of state ELDP licensing and regulation in Oklahoma currently and at the conclusion of this project.

Program type	Operator	Current Status	Status at end of Project
Non-exempt child care centers, 1 or more child	Private, public, non-profit	Licensed by OKDHS	Licensed by OKDHS
Exempt child care centers, 15 hours or less/week, 1 or more child	Public, Private, non-profit	Not licensed or regulated by state.	Not licensed or regulated. Oklahoma is excluding these facilities from consideration for this project
Exempt child care centers, school-day, Age 3 and over, 1 or more child	Public and private schools.	Exempt from OKDHS licensing, regulated by OSDE	Exempt from OKDHS licensing, regulated by OSDE
Exempt child care centers, tribal country land, 1 or more child	Tribes, private, non-profit	Exempt from OKDHS, 95% voluntary compliance	Exempt from OKDHS, 100% voluntary compliance
Exempt child care centers and family child care homes, federal property, 1 or more child	Federal government	Not licensed or regulated. Oklahoma allows these facilities to participate in QRIS as they are licensed and monitored by DoD	Not licensed or regulated. Oklahoma allows these facilities to participate in QRIS as they are licensed and monitored by DoD
Family child care homes, 1 or more child	Private	Licensed by OKDHS	Licensed by OKDHS
Head Start/Early Head Start	Public, non-profit	Licensed by OKDHS	Licensed by OKDHS

Head Start/Early Head Start	Public, non-profit	Exempt from OKDHS licensing. Regulated by OSDE	Exempt from OKDHS licensing. Regulated by OSDE
Pre-K	Public schools	Regulated by OSDE	Regulated by OSDE
ESEA Title I	Public schools	Regulated by OSDE	Regulated by OSDE
IDEA Part B	Public schools	Regulated by OSDE	Regulated by OSDE
State Pilot Program	Offered in Head Start, public schools, or child care centers and licensed or regulated as described above		
Home-based programs:			
IDEA Part C	OSDE/OSDH	OSDE/OSDH	OSDE/OSDH
Children First	OSDH	OSDH	OSDH
Start Right	Non-profit	OSDH	OSDH
Parents as Teachers	Public schools	OSDE	OSDE

Except for programs Oklahoma is excluding from this project, all center- and home-based ELDPs are state-licensed or regulated with the exception of ten or fewer tribal facilities.

Oklahoma will recognize tribal programs with the following High-Quality Plan:

- The tribal programs not licensed by OCCS are licensed and monitored by their own tribe. OCCS will recognize their established monitoring policy and procedures when comparable. OCCS will verify QRIS criteria and their ability to demonstrate compliance with applicable requirements.
- Oklahoma Tribal Child Care Association will participate in QuASA for the development of QRIS criteria.

(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate

At the conclusion of the grant period, Oklahoma will include all programs in its new QRIS. These providers will be encouraged to continually improve quality ratings and to achieve higher tiers in the QRIS through a coordinated strategy of financial incentives to improve, technical assistance, bonuses for achieving higher tiers, and evaluation and

consideration of restructuring program funding to provide incentives for both programs and parents to seek higher quality. This effort will be informed by research and developed in close collaboration with all Participating State Agencies, ELDPs and other stakeholders.

Oklahoma presently enjoys wide participation and high levels of achievement by both programs and Children with High Needs in its QRIS, as indicated in tables (B)((2)(c), (B)(4)(c)(1) and (B)(4)(c)(2). The table below summarizes current status of QRIS participation by program type and status of participation at the conclusion of the project period.

Program type	Current QRIS Status and Issues	QRIS Status at end of Project
Child care centers, 1 or more child	Participating in QRIS	Participating in QRIS with access to incentives, T/A, bonuses to encourage quality
Family child care homes, 1 or more child	Participating in QRIS	Participating in QRIS with access to incentives, T/A, bonuses to encourage quality
Head Start/Early Head Start	Participating in QRIS. 62% have not sought higher rating because they do not receive CCDF subsidy or recruit from the general public.	Participating in QRIS. Will be rated and placed on appropriate quality tier, with access to incentives, T/A, and bonuses.
Pre-K	Not participating in QRIS	Participating in QRIS with access to incentives, T/A, bonuses and disclosure of quality tier in school accountability reports.
ESEA Title I	Not participating in QRIS	Participating in QRIS with access to incentives, T/A, bonuses and disclosure of quality tier in school accountability reports.
IDEA Part B	Not participating in QRIS	Participating in QRIS with access to incentives, T/A, bonuses and disclosure of quality tier in school accountability reports.
State Pilot Program	Offered in Head Start, public schools, or child care centers with current and future QRIS participation as described above.	
Home-based programs:		
IDEA Part C Children First	Not participating in QRIS	Participating in QRIS as associate members, with access to

Start Right Parents as Teachers		incentives, technical assistance, and bonuses.
<p>Except for programs Oklahoma is excluding from this project, all provider- and home-based ELDPs are state-licensed or –regulated with the exception of ten or fewer tribal facilities. As explained in (B)(2), Oklahoma's State Department of Education will propose regulations to phase in QRIS participation by all Pre-K programs.</p>		

Priority 3: Competitive Preference Priority – Understanding the Status of Children’s Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry. (10 points)

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

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

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

For Competitive Preference Priority 3, a State will earn all ten (10) competitive preference priority points if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the competitive preference priority. A State earns zero points if a majority of reviewers determines that the applicant has not met the competitive preference priority.

Applicants do not write a separate response to this priority. Rather, applicants address Competitive Preference Priority 3 either in Table (A)(1)-12 or by writing to selection criterion (E)(1).

Under option (a) below, an applicant does not earn competitive preference points if the reviewers determine that the State has not implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1); under option (b) below, an applicant does not earn competitive preference points if the State earns a score of less than 70 percent of the maximum points available for selection criterion (E)(1).

Specify which option the State is taking:

(a) Applicant has indicated in Table (A)(1)-12 that all of selection criterion (E)(1) elements are met.

(b) Applicant has written to selection criterion (E)(1).

Note about Invitational Priorities: Invitational priorities signal areas the Departments are particularly interested in; however addressing these priorities will not earn applicants any additional points.

Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades.

The Departments are particularly interested in applications that describe the State's High-Quality Plan to sustain and build upon improved early learning outcomes throughout the early elementary school years, including by--

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

(b) Ensuring that transition planning occurs for children moving from Early Learning and Development Programs to elementary schools;

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

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

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

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

Oklahoma is known for our high-quality Early Childhood Education programs, especially with regards to our standards established for student learning. Our state's 4-year-old Pre-K program is a part of the public school system with the current standards aligned to both the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines as well as Oklahoma's Kindergarten through 12th grade student standards, also known as the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS). All curriculum areas within Pre-K through 12th grade follow a six-year revision cycle for the comprehensive local education plan. Revisions are currently being reviewed and proposed to Oklahoma's Social Studies curriculum standards, including a critical analysis of the standards within the Pre-K and Kindergarten PASS. This review cycle ensures vertical alignment, rigorous and current standards, while meeting student needs so that all Oklahoma students may be prepared for college, career, and citizenship.

With Oklahoma's adoption and implementation of new K-12 standards in 2014, a validation of alignment to our Early Learning Guidelines and our State Pre-K PASS will be essential. This alignment will ensure continuity across grade levels and state-wide alignment. If a child was to move from Tulsa after his Kindergarten year to rural Hollis beginning in the 1st grade, that child would be in the same place as her new classmates. The Early Learning Challenge grant will provide the opportunity for a consultant to review, update, and validate the alignment of all of our Early Learning Standards ((C)(1)).

(b) Ensuring that transition planning occurs for children moving from Early Learning and Development Programs to elementary schools

Children who experience successful transitions to school are more likely to be behaviorally prepared for school, more confident in the classroom, and more likely to succeed. Even with quality preschool interventions, at-risk children can experience a "fade out" of learning gains without continued appropriate instruction in primary grades. This "fade out" is less likely in schools that connect Pre-K to Kindergarten and primary grades through a Pre-K through grade 3 education program (Graves, 2006). While there are some transition planning efforts currently in place, transition from the various early learning environments could improve. With the implementation of our work plan from the Early Learning Challenge grant, we intend to communicate more effectively across agencies and across programs. Transition planning teams will be established within communities, to increase the frequency and intensity of connections between all stakeholders. It will be the responsibility of the adults to ensure a successful transition, so that the children will be the least impacted.

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

New partnerships established and existing collaborations strengthened through the Early Learning Challenge grant will assist our state in an increase of the promotion of health and family engagement in the early grades. We know that if children are not healthy, they cannot learn and of the importance of family engagement in relation to the education of young children. Jones (2011) notes there is no early childhood program that exists – local, state, or federal – that would be successful without fully engaging families in the development, implementation, and process. Families are a vital part of a child's education. Engaging families early and effectively will be the key to continued successful family engagement. Current parent engagement within

the K-3 system includes two parent conferences or home visits annual, parent involvement activities, health services for children, information about nutrition, and referral to social services.

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

In the 2011 Oklahoma State Legislative session, Senate Bill 346 was passed. This bill focuses on early intervention, so that educators can identify problems and adopt individualized learning strategies with children in Pre-K. Senate Bill 346 is an overhaul of the state's former Reading Sufficiency Act, and is a set of reforms designed to ensure that all third graders are reading on grade level by the end of third grade. The specific requirements of this Bill include conducting a series of assessments and a review of the reading instruction for all students -- Kindergarten through third grades -- and providing intensive interventions to those students identified as having a reading deficiency until they are reading on grade level. An individualized reading plan will be designed for every struggling student with ongoing progress monitoring. Private conferences with the school team and the parents and consistent written communication to the parents are a major focus of this new law.

References

Graves, B. (2006). *PK-3: What is it and how do we know it works?* New York, NY: Foundation for Child Development.

Jones, J. (2011). *An update on federal early childhood programs*. Presented at the Early Childhood Collaboration meeting, Washington, DC.

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.

One of Oklahoma's greatest strengths in its early childhood system has been the strong and sustained support from a wide range of private sector participants. The business leaders in the state have seen investments in early childhood as a sound and important investment to

improving the state's economic status. Philanthropic organizations, business leaders, and individuals support Early Childhood programs and services through direct donations, participation in both state and local systems-building and by advocating on a legislative and public policy framework. This support has resulted in Oklahoma being able to implement systems and services that would not have existed if they were solely dependent on public funding. Letters of Support and Intent have been provided by private sector partners that describe their ongoing commitment to supporting early childhood efforts in Oklahoma. Oklahoma has established the Oklahoma Champions for Early Opportunities (OK-CEO) network, an organization comprised of business leaders and private sector professionals that is supported by the Potts Family Foundation, the Oklahoma Business Roundtable, and Smart Start Oklahoma. Currently approximately 40 professionals from across Oklahoma have received training on delivering a public message about the importance and value of early childhood investments. This program is a model for other states in establishing a strong network of informed advocates who not only increase public awareness on the importance of early childhood issues, but also serve as advocates in their local communities. They are involved in both state and local efforts to ensure that Oklahoma recognizes and support its youngest children.

Oklahoma has a broad network of private foundations and businesses that provide both financial and volunteer support to the early childhood efforts. The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness Act in 2003 provided for the establishment of a Foundation to accept private funding on behalf of early childhood programs. Through Smart Start Oklahoma, the agency that staffs the School Readiness initiative, local coalitions have been established in 18 communities. Both the Foundation and the local Smart Start Communities raise funds to support early childhood. Since its inception, the total private contributions have exceeded \$8.7 million.

In addition to funds that go directly to the Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness, private sector support has been provided to create two very large early childhood program initiatives in Oklahoma.

- One is the establishment of Educare schools -- state-of-the-art, full-day, year-round schools, serving at-risk children from birth to 5 years. Oklahoma has three Educare centers – with a fourth center nearing completion. Oklahoma leads the country in the number of Educare programs. This program is meant to serve as a foundation for states to

learn more about the quality environments that are foundational for Children with High Need. Educare participates in a national network of evaluation that will help inform and develop the types of quality early childhood programs to narrow or close the achievement gap for children who are low income.

- The second is the match that is provided to the Oklahoma State Department of Education for the Oklahoma State Pilot Program. Private funding for the SPP matches state funding to provide an enhanced, high quality program for early childhood programs who serve children live in low income families. Additional private support in addition to the two programs mentioned above is provided for a wide variety of early childhood and family support activities. In total, combined efforts of private support is estimated to exceed \$20 million a year.

Finally Oklahoma is supported by private sector individuals through a wide range of volunteer efforts that include participation on state and local planning efforts, participation in local literacy initiatives, and other varied and supportive activities to families of young children. The early childhood movement in Oklahoma in the late 1990's was in large part supported by key private individuals who had a vision of building our economic growth through an investment in early childhood. This vision and support has been sustained for 20 years – an amazing testimony to the importance that Oklahoma has placed in early childhood. The private sector's partners are interested and supportive in Oklahoma applying for and being awarded an Early Learning Challenge Grant. They are excited about the opportunity to build on our strengths and lessons learned to build a better system for Oklahoma's youngest children.

VIII. BUDGET

AWARD INFORMATION

Budget Requirements: To support States in planning their budgets, the Departments have developed the following budget caps for each State. The Secretaries will not consider for funding an application from a State that proposes a budget that exceeds the applicable cap set for that State. The Departments developed the following categories by ranking every State according to its share of the national population of children ages birth through five years old from Low-Income families and identifying the natural breaks in the rank order. Then, based on population, budget caps were developed for each category⁴³.

Category 1--Up to \$100 million--California, Florida, New York, Texas.

Category 2--Up to \$70 million--Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania.

Category 3--Up to \$60 million--Alabama, Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin.

Category 4--Up to \$50 million--Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Wyoming.

In addition to considering other relevant factors (see 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3)), the selection of grantees may consider the need to ensure that early learning and development systems are developed in States with large, high-poverty, rural communities (including States with high percentages of high-poverty populations in rural areas and States with high absolute numbers of high-poverty individuals in rural areas). Awards may be granted to high-quality applications out of rank order to meet this need.

Grant Period: The grant period for this award is December 31, 2011 through December 31, 2015.

⁴³ Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, 2009. American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data.

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

In the following budget section, the State is responding to selection criterion (A)(4)(b). The State should use its budgets and budget narratives to provide a detailed description of how it plans to use Federal RTT-ELC grant funds and funds from other sources (Federal, State, private, and local) to support projects under the State Plan. States' budget tables and narratives, when taken together, should also address the specific elements of selection criterion (A)(4)(b), including by describing how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan and do so in a manner that

- (1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;
- (2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and
- (3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan

The budget narratives should be of sufficient scope and detail for the Departments to determine if the costs are necessary, reasonable, and allowable. For further guidance on Federal cost principles, an applicant may wish to consult OMB Circular A-87. (See www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars).

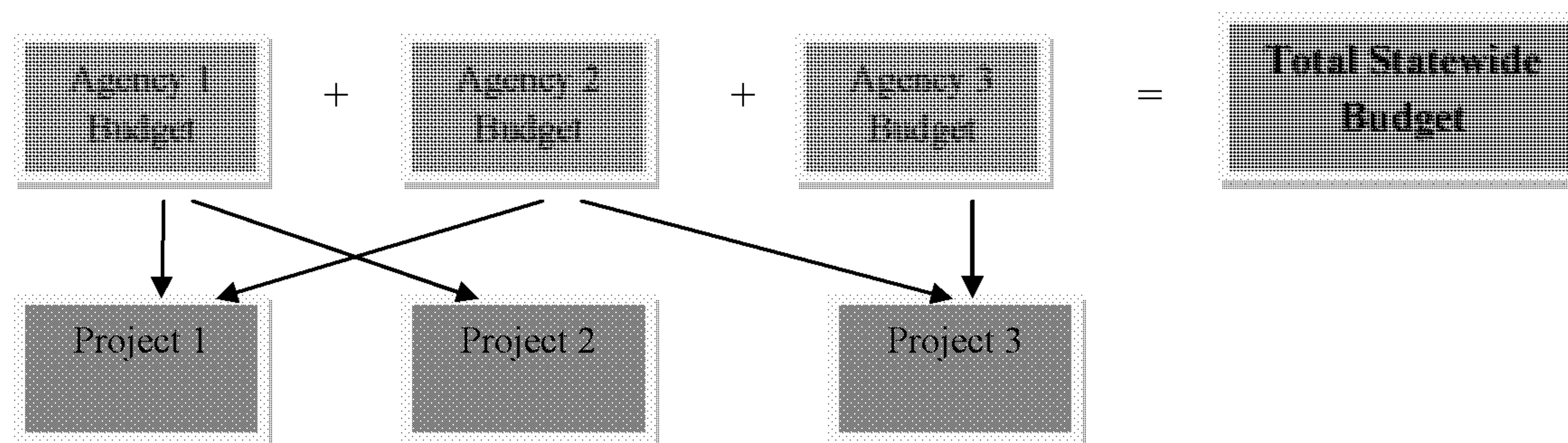
We expect the State to provide a detailed budget by category for each Participating State Agency that rolls up into the total statewide budget. We further expect that the budgets of each Participating State Agency reflect the work associated with fully implementing the High-Quality Plans described under the selection criteria and Competitive Preference Priority 2 and describe each Participating State Agency's budgetary role⁴⁴ in carrying out the State Plan.

For purposes of the budget, we expect that the State will link its proposed High-Quality Plans to "projects" that the State believes are necessary in order to implement its plans. The State might choose to design some projects that address only one criterion's High-Quality Plan, while other projects might address several similarly-focused criteria as one group. For example, the State might choose to have one "management project" focused on criterion (A)(3), organizing and aligning the early learning and development system to achieve success. It might have another "workforce project" that addresses criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) under the Great Early Childhood Education Workforce section.

Some projects may be done entirely by one Participating State Agency, while others may be done by multiple agencies in collaboration with one another. The State, together with its

⁴⁴ Participating State Agency's budgetary roles should be consistent with the scope of work outlined in the Participating State Agency's MOU or other binding agreement.

Participating State Agencies, will define the projects required to implement the State Plan and will determine which Participating State Agencies will be involved in each project, as shown below.



To support the budgeting process, we strongly suggest that applicants use the RTT-ELC budget spreadsheets prepared by the Departments to build their budgets. These spreadsheets must be submitted together with, but in a file separate from, the application.⁴⁵ These spreadsheets have formulas built into them that are intended to help States produce the budget tables required within this section.

The following information must be included in the State's budget:

- I. **Budget Summaries**: In this section, the State provides overall budget summary information by budget category, Participating State Agency, and project.
 - a. **Budget Summary by Budget Category**. This is the cover sheet for the budget. (See Budget Table I-1.) States should complete this table as the final step in their budgeting process, and include this table as the first page of the State's budget. (Note: Each row in this table is calculated by adding together the corresponding rows in each of the Participating State Agency Budget by Category tables. If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these "roll-up" calculations are done automatically.)
 - b. **Budget Summary by Participating State Agency**. This summary lists the total annual budget for each Participating State Agency. (See Budget Table I-2.) States should complete this table after completing Budget Table II-1 for each Participating State Agency (see Part II: Participating State Agency Budgets). If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these "roll-up" calculations are done automatically for the State.
 - c. **Budget Summary by Project**. This summary lists the total annual budget for each of the projects. (See Budget Table I-3.) States should complete this table after completing Budget Table II-2 for each Participating State Agency (see Part II:

⁴⁵ See Application Submission Procedures, section XV. Please note that the RTT-ELC budget spreadsheets will not be used by the reviewers to judge or score the State's application. However, these spreadsheets do produce tables that States may use in completing the budget tables that the State submits as part of its application. In addition, the budget spreadsheets will be used by the Departments for budget reviews.

Participating State Agency Budgets). If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these “roll-up” calculations are done automatically for the State.

- d. Budget Summary Narrative. This budget narrative accompanies the three Budget Summary Tables and provides the rationale for the budget. The narrative should include, for example, an overview of each Participating State Agency’s budgetary responsibilities and descriptions of each project that the State has included in its budget.
- II. Budgets for Each Participating State Agency. In this section, the State describes each Participating State Agency’s budgetary responsibilities.⁴⁶ The State should replicate this section for each Participating State Agency and for each Participating State Agency complete the following:
- a. Participating State Agency By Budget Category. This is the budget for each Participating State Agency by budget category for each year for which funding is requested. (See Budget Table II-1.)
 - b. Participating State Agency By Project. This table lists the Participating State Agency’s proposed budget for each project in which it is involved. (See Budget Table II-2.)
 - c. Participating State Agency Budget Narrative. This budget narrative describes the Participating State Agency’s budget category line items and addresses how the Participating State Agency’s budget will support the implementation of each project in which it is involved.

The State should replicate Budget Part II for each Participating State Agency as follows:

- For Participating State Agency 1: Budget by Category, Budget by Project, Narrative
- For Participating State Agency 2: Budget by Category, Budget by Project, Narrative

⁴⁶ Participating State Agency’s budgetary roles should be consistent with the scope of work outlined in the Participating State Agency’s MOU or other binding agreement.

BUDGET PART I: SUMMARY**BUDGET PART I-TABLES**

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category--*The State must include the budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant. These line items are derived by adding together the corresponding line items from each of the Participating State Agency Budget Tables.*

<u>Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category</u> (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	591,197	591,197	591,197	591,197	2,364,788
2. Fringe Benefits	349,884	349,884	349,884	349,884	1,399,536
3. Travel	0	0	0	0	0
4. Equipment	8,152,913	2,683,925	622,264	622,264	12,081,366
5. Supplies	7,813,630	6,213,630	13,630	13,630	14,054,520
6. Contractual	485,000	900,000	900,000	900,000	3,185,000
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	2,905,000	5,200,000	5,000,000	4,750,000	17,855,000
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	20,297,624	15,938,636	7,476,975	7,226,975	50,940,210
10. Indirect Costs*	0	0	0	0	0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	180,000	2,680,000	2,680,000	2,680,000	8,220,000
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	400,000
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	20,577,624	18,718,636	10,256,975	10,006,975	59,560,210
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	0	0	0	0	0
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	20,577,624	18,718,636	10,256,975	10,006,975	59,560,210

<u>Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category</u> (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through 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.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p>					

Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency--*The State must include the budget totals for each Participating State Agency for each year of the grant. These line items should be consistent with the totals of each of the Participating State Agency Budgets provided in Budget Tables II-1.*

Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Participating State Agency	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
OSDE	14,458,250	11,384,262	5,122,601	5,122,601	36,087,714
OKDHS	3,077,118	4,377,118	2,977,118	2,977,118	13,408,472
OSDH	2,393,694	2,033,694	1,033,694	1,033,694	6,494,776
OPSR	648,562	923,562	1,123,562	873,562	3,569,248
Total Statewide Budget	20,577,624	18,718,636	10,256,975	10,006,975	59,560,210

Budget Table I-3: Budget Summary by Project--*The State must include the proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant. These line items are the totals, for each project, across all of the Participating State Agencies' project budgets, as provided in Budget Tables II-2.*

Budget Table I-3: Budget Summary by Project (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Projects	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
QRIS	437,052	3,687,052	3,937,052	3,687,052	11,748,208
Workforce Early Childhood Educators	969,174	2,544,174	2,094,174	2,094,174	7,701,696
Comprehensive Assessment	8,112,625	7,012,625	812,625	812,625	16,750,500
Healthy Practices	613,519	703,519	703,519	703,519	2,724,076
Strengthening Families	1,294,178	1,294,178	1,294,178	1,294,178	5,176,712
ELDS	951,689	776,689	776,689	776,689	3,281,756
Data System	8,199,387	2,700,399	638,738	638,738	12,177,262
Total Statewide Budget	20,577,624	18,718,636	10,256,975	10,006,975	59,560,210

BUDGET PART I -NARRATIVE

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

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

A list of each Participating State Agency, together with a description of its budgetary and project responsibilities

The Oklahoma State Department of Education (SDE) is the lead agency for the grant. The State Education Agency, it oversees the state's Pre-K program, IDEA Part B and Part, and Title I of ESEA. Its responsibilities as lead agency will include the responsibility to: Work collaboratively with and support the Participating State Agencies in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scopes of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of the Memoranda of Understanding:

- Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for each Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with each Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with each Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
- Provide feedback on each Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- Keep each Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from each Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the

State Plan; and

- Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS) has responsibility for licensing child care, TANF CCDF, and the State Advisory Council grant. Its responsibilities include overall coordination of the enhancements of the quality rating and improvement system, and expansion of the early childhood workforce professional development system.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health is responsible for home visiting, and the Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant. Its responsibilities include the overall coordination of the integration of health promotion standards, efforts to work with children in group environments struggling with social/emotional challenges, family engagement strategies, and working in close coordination with the OSDE in the development of a comprehensive assessment system related to overall health promotion standards.

The Oklahoma Department of Commerce is responsible for the state's Head Start State Collaboration Grant. It will be responsible for overseeing the integration of the State Plan with the Head Start/Early Head Start Performance Standards, quality rating and improvement, professional development, and data systems.

A list of projects and a description of how these projects taken together will result in full implementation of the state plan, and designation of the selection criterion or competitive preference priority the project addresses

As described in (A)(4), Oklahoma's Early Learning Challenge Grant application is organized into seven projects:

- *\$11,748,208 to expand the Quality Rating and Improvement System.* The new QRIS is meant to serve as the state's primary engine of improvement. While implementing the new QRIS will draw heavily on existing resources – and lead to improved efficiency in the expenditure of current dollars – there will be startup costs associated with ramping up the quality and focus of the system. The QRIS expenditures will make possible the transition from the existing legacy system to the next-generation system described here.
- *\$16,750,500 to develop a Comprehensive Assessment System.* As described in (C)(2), one of the major focuses of this grant for Oklahoma is to improve its existing early learning assessments. Assessments are an essential aspect in personalizing service to

Children with High Needs. Given that this is an area where Oklahoma has very limited infrastructure at this time, Oklahoma will invest significantly in the assessment system's startup costs, including tools and initial training.

- *\$12,177,262 to develop an Early Learning Data System.* Oklahoma has a significant underutilized resource in its existing agency data systems. By creating a linked system, Oklahoma will be able to better unlock the power of its existing information. New data systems have significant startup costs, and Oklahoma will use this grant to address many of those costs.
- *\$7,701,696 to implement the Early Learning Consortium for professional development.* Throughout the grant criteria is a consistent theme: the importance of having Early Childhood Educators who are able to meet the needs of children. The Early Learning Challenge – and Oklahoma's application – envision Early Childhood Educators mastering numerous competencies: assessment, the use of learning standards, supporting health and development, and engaging with families, among others. Oklahoma will help Early Childhood Educators meet those needs by creating an Early Childhood Consortium to provide high-quality TA in a thoughtful and organized manner. This budget will be used to cover start-up costs for the Consortium, as it brings coherence to a policy area that has long needed it.
- *\$5,176,172 for Strengthening Families.* Family engagement is a critical priority for Oklahoma. Given its success with the Strengthening Families model, Oklahoma has chosen to make Strengthening Families a focus of its Early Learning Challenge work.
- *\$3,281,756 for Early Learning and Development Standards.* Oklahoma has Early Learning Guidelines that meet the criteria for high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards. However, with expectations for the early childhood system changing, the Guidelines will need to be updated. This budget will allow Oklahoma to update and support the implementation of its guidelines.
- *\$2,724,076 to improve health practices.* Because improving the health of Children with High Needs is a key priority for Oklahoma, this line-item has been included to provide additional support for efforts to improve child health, as described in (C)(3).

While each of these projects has a key focus (identified in the table below), we see all of these

projects as deeply interconnected and impacting (or impacting by) work on all of the grant criteria.. Indeed, one of Oklahoma's major goals in the grant is to build strong connections among policy areas, with the QRIS acting as a "firing piston" for the conduct of work in every area. The table below shows that all of these projects will address, to varying degrees, almost all of the criteria in the grant. Each project will lead to a fundamental shift in practice in at least one area; some of the other connections may be more peripheral, but are still important. For example, the Early Learning Consortium will provide professional development on almost all aspects of the work of the grant.

Criteria	QRIS	Assess.	Data	Consortium	Strengthening Families	Standards	Health
<i>Key Focus</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C2</i>	<i>E2</i>	<i>D2</i>	<i>C4</i>	<i>C1</i>	<i>C3</i>
B1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B3	X	X	X	X		X	
B4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B5	X	X	X	X		X	
C1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
C4	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
D1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
D2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
E1	X	X	X	X		X	
E2	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
P1	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
P2	X	X	X	X		X	

While the projects will have a broad impact, they will be tightly managed in a collaborative structure. The Department of Education will serve as the lead agency for the grant as a whole, but other agencies will play leading roles in different projects.

An explanation of how each 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

The specific role of each agency is described in greater detail in response to the grant criteria and in Section XIII, the Memorandum of Understanding Scope of Work. In general, as described above, OSDE will be the lead agency for the grant, but other Participating State Agencies will take the lead on specific projects. The role of each agency will vary from project to project, but each will play an active role in overall project management and at least a collaborative role in every individual project.

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY

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

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

BUDGET PART II - TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--*The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Oklahoma State Department of Education</i>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	319,805	319,805	319,805	319,805	1,279,220
2. Fringe Benefits	185,010	185,010	185,010	185,010	740,040
3. Travel	0	0	0	0	0
4. Equipment	8,121,785	2,652,797	591,136	591,136	11,956,854
5. Supplies	4,501,650	4,001,650	1,650	1,650	8,506,600
6. Contractual	275,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	2,375,000
7. Training Stipends					0
8. Other	1,030,000	2,250,000	2,050,000	2,050,000	7,380,000
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	14,433,250	10,109,262	3,847,601	3,847,601	32,237,714
10. Indirect Costs*	0	0	0	0	0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	0	1,250,000	1,250,000	1,250,000	3,750,000
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	0

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Oklahoma State Department of Education</i>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	14,458,250	11,384,262	5,122,601	5,122,601	35,987,714
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	0	0	0	0	0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	14,458,250	11,384,262	5,122,601	5,122,601	36,087,714
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--*The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Oklahoma State Department of Education					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
QRIS	271,872	2,021,872	2,021,872	2,021,872	6,337,488
Workforce Early Childhood Educators	310,030	1,060,030	860,030	860,030	3,090,120
Comprehensive Assessment	4,771,871	4,771,871	771,871	771,871	11,087,484
Healthy Practices	160,030	160,030	160,030	160,030	640,120
Strengthening Families	410,030	410,030	410,030	410,030	1,640,120
ELDS	335,030	260,030	260,030	260,030	1,115,120
Data System	8,199,387	2,700,399	638,738	638,738	12,177,262
Total Budget	14,458,250	11,384,262	5,122,601	5,122,601	36,087,714

BUDGET PART II - NARRATIVE

Describe, in the text box below, the Participating State Agency's budget, including--

- *How the Participating State Agency plans to organize its operations in order to manage the RTT-ELC funds and accomplish the work set forth in the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work;*
- *For each project in which the Participating State Agency is involved, and consistent with the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work:*
 - *An explanation of the Participating State Agency's roles and responsibilities*
 - *An explanation of how the proposed project annual budget was derived*
- *A detailed explanation of each budget category line item, including the information below.*

1) Personnel

Provide:

- The title and role of each position to be compensated under this grant.
- The salary for each position.

- The amount of time, such as hours or percentage of time, to be expended by each position.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The importance of each position to the success of specific. If curriculum vitae, an organizational chart, or other supporting information will be helpful to reviewers, attach in the Appendix and describe its location.

2) Fringe Benefits

Provide:

- The fringe benefit percentages for all personnel.
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

3) Travel

Provide:

- An estimate of the number of trips.
- An estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs for each trip.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the travel, how it relates to project goals, and how it will contribute to project success.

4) Equipment

Provide:

- The type of equipment to be purchased.
- The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased.
- The definition of equipment used by the State.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The justification of the need for the items of equipment to be purchased.

5) Supplies

Provide:

- An estimate of materials and supplies needed, by nature of expense or general category (*e.g.*, instructional materials, office supplies).
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

6) Contractual

Provide:

- The products to be acquired and/or the professional services to be provided.
- The estimated cost per expected procurement.

- For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to this proposed grant award.
- A brief statement that the State has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose and relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

7) Training Stipends

Note:

- The training stipend line item only pertains to costs associated with long-term training programs and college or university coursework that results in a credential or degree, not workshops or short-term training supported by this program.
- Salary stipends paid to teachers and other early learning personnel for participating in short-term professional development should be reported in Personnel (line 1).

Provide:

- Descriptions of training stipends to be provided, consistent with the “note” above.
- The cost estimates and basis for these estimates.

Explain:

- The purpose of the training.

8) Other

Provide:

- Other items by major type or category.
- The cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the expenditures.

9) Total Direct Costs

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in lines 1-8, for each year of the budget.

10) Indirect Costs

Provide:

- Identify and apply the indirect cost rate. (See the section that follows, Budget: Indirect Cost Information.)

11) Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

Provide:

- The specific activities to be done by localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners.
- The estimated cost of each activity.
- The approximate number of localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners involved in each activity.
- The total cost of each activity (across all localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of each activity and its relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: 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 expects 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.

12) Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

Provide:

- The amount per year set aside for this Participating State Agency.

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

13) Total Funds Requested

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 9-12, for each year of the budget.

13) Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan

Provide:

- A description of the sources of other funds the State is using to support the projects in the State Plan.

- A description of how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used for activities and services described in the State Plan, if applicable.
- Any financial contributions being made by private entities such as foundations.

Explain:

- Each funding source, the activities being funded and their relation to the State Plan or specific project, and any requirements placed on the use of funds or timing of the activity.

14) Total Budget

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 13 and 14, for each year of the budget

Agency Budget Narrative – Oklahoma State Department of Education

Personnel

The Oklahoma State Department of Education will employ a **Program Manager** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$77,800** annually. This individual will be a time-limited OSDE FTE and will expend 100% of their effort in managing and supporting RTT-ELC grant activities. The Program Manager will report directly to the Oklahoma Department of Education, Chief Executive Officer and will provide leadership, inter-agency grant coordination, and guidance in the planning development and implementation of the RTT-ELC Program. Additional responsibilities will include oversight for the distribution of the RTT-ELC grant awards and ensures post-award compliance; oversight for compiling financial and non-financial data for the preparation of internal reports and compliance reports; multi-project coordination for grant reporting to ensure that the plans for achieving the RTT-ELC grant run smoothly and efficiently.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education will employ a **Program Coordinator, QRIS System** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$70,000** annually. This individual will be a time-limited OSDE FTE and will expend 100% of their effort in managing and supporting RTT-ELC grant activities. Their job duties will include advising and providing support to the Program Manager on all phases of the implementation of the newly expanded Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) as it relates to the RTT-ELC grant. This individual will provide information about education requirements and education policies and procedures related to the QRIS and other RTT-ELC grant goals. The Program Coordinator-QRIS

will work with the Program Coordinator-Comprehensive Assessments and Early Learning Development Program (CAELDP) and the Program Manager to coordinate and support the work of the Early Learning Cooperative for PD.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education will employ a **Program Coordinator, Comprehensive Assessments and Early Learning Development Program** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$70,000** annually. This individual will be a time-limited OSDE FTE and will expend 100% of their effort in managing and supporting RTT-ELC grant activities. Their job duties will include advising and providing support to the Program Manager on all phases of Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) and Early Learning Development Programs (ELDP) development and implementation as it relates to the RTT-ELC grant. This individual will provide education requirements and information about education policies and procedures related to the CAS and other RTT-ELC grant goals. The Program Coordinator-CAELDP will work with the Program Coordinator-QRIS and the Program Manager to coordinate and support the work of the Early Learning Cooperative Oklahoma for PD.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education will employ a **Fiscal Manager** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$70,000** annually. This individual will be a time-limited OSDE FTE and will expend 100% of their effort in managing and supporting RTT-ELC grant financial activities. Job duties will include advising and providing support and pertinent financial data for the preparation of internal reports, compliance reports, grant billings and overall RTT-ELC grant financial accountability.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education will employ an **Administrative Assistant** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$32,000** annually. This individual will be a time-limited OSDE FTE and will expend 100% of their effort in managing and supporting ELC grant activities. Their job duties will include administrative and clerical duties necessary to run the RTT grant efficiently. The Administrative Assistant will serve as information and communication lead; plan and schedule meetings and appointments; organize and maintain paper and electronic files; conduct research; and disseminate information by using the telephone, mail services, Web sites, and e-mail. All relevant travel and guest arrangements related to development and implementation of the RTT-ELC program will be completed by this individual.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits for the Program Manager will be approximately 55% of annual salary, or **\$41,640**, and will include all payroll taxes, insurance, and retirement benefits.

Fringe benefits for the Program Coordinator will be approximately 65% of annual salary, or **\$39,025 each**, and will include all payroll taxes, insurance, and retirement benefits.

Fringe benefits for the Fiscal Manager will be approximately 55% of annual salary, or **\$39,025**, and will include all payroll taxes, insurance, and retirement benefits.

Fringe benefits for the Administrative Assistance will be approximately 50% of annual salary, or **\$30,720**, and will include all payroll taxes, insurance, and retirement benefits.

Travel

N/A

Equipment

The annual equipment amount of **\$12,430** is calculated based on standard OSDE I/T start-up, rental and equipment costs. For this amount, equipment will be made available to each of the five grant employees including laptop or desktop computers, desk telephones, mobile telephones, and multi-function copier/fax/scanners.

Supplies

OSDE estimates a cost of **\$1,650** per year for general office supplies and software for use by the five grant employees.

A total of **\$8,506,000** for inform and strengthen Early Learning programs and educators regarding the purpose and use of each component of the comprehensive Early Learning assessment system. **\$4,500,000** has been identified in year one and **\$4,000,000** identified for year two.

Contractual

\$100,000 annually has been identified to contract with an outside consultant for grant and system compliance.

\$75,000 has been identified in year one to contract with an outside consultant for a thorough review of the state's current Early Learning Guidelines to ensure unified standards for Early Childhood Development.

A total of **\$1,900,000** has been identified over four years to contract with an outside consultant for a complete review and validation of OKDHS QRIS and provide recommendations to build this system with a tiered set of standards.

Training Stipends

N/A

Other

\$30,000 has been identified in year one Governance.

A total of **\$1,900,000** has been identified over four years for training Early Childhood Educators, and Parents on the Quality Rating Improvement System, Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment System and providing support structure to families.

Total Direct Costs

Year One -	\$ 3,052,118
Year Two -	\$ 3,102,118
Year Three -	\$ 1,702,118
Year Four -	\$ 1,702,118
Total Direct Costs for OSDE -	\$9,558,472

Indirect Costs

N/A

Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

\$1,250,000 has been identified per year for years two through three to provide incentives to Early Learning and Development Programs to promote higher QRIS rating levels.

Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

\$25,000 per year has been set aside for OSDE by the state for participation in grantee technical assistance.

Total Funds Requested

Year One -	\$ 3,077,118
Year Two -	\$ 4,377,118
Year Three -	\$ 2,977,118
Year Four -	\$2,977,118
Total Request for OSDE -	\$9,558,472
Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan	
N/A	
Total Budget	
Year One -	\$ 3,077,118
Year Two -	\$ 4,377,118
Year Three -	\$ 2,977,118
Year Four -	\$2,977,118
Total OSDE Budget -	\$13,408,472

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency					
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Oklahoma Department of Human Services					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	144,792	144,792	144,792	144,792	579,168
2. Fringe Benefits	82,666	82,666	82,666	82,666	330,664

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Oklahoma Department of Human Services</i>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
3. Travel					0
4. Equipment	23,670	23,670	23,670	23,670	94,680
5. Supplies	1,800,990	1,200,990	990	990	3,003,960
6. Contractual	100,000	0	0	0	100,000
7. Training Stipends					0
8. Other	900,000	1,650,000	1,450,000	1,450,000	5,450,000
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	3,052,118	3,102,118	1,702,118	1,702,118	9,558,472
10. Indirect Costs*	0	0	0	0	0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.		1,250,000	1,250,000	1,250,000	0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	0
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	3,077,118	4,377,118	2,977,118	2,977,118	9,558,472
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	0	0	0	0	0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	3,077,118	4,377,118	2,977,118	2,977,118	13,408,472
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated evenly across the four years of the grant.</p>					

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Oklahoma Department of Human Services</i>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Oklahoma Department of Human Services					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
QRIS	96,790	1,346,790	1,346,790	1,346,790	4,137,160
Workforce Early Childhood Educators	270,885	1,020,885	820,885	820,885	2,933,540
Comprehensive Assessment	1,820,885	1,220,885	20,885	20,885	3,083,540
Healthy Practices	120,883	120,883	120,883	120,883	483,532
Strengthening Families	370,885	370,885	370,885	370,885	1,483,540
ELDS	396,790	296,790	296,790	296,790	1,287,160
Data System	0	0	0	0	0
Total Statewide Budget	3,077,118	4,377,118	2,977,118	2,977,118	13,408,472

BUDGET PART II - NARRATIVE

Describe, in the text box below, the Participating State Agency's budget, including--

- *How the Participating State Agency plans to organize its operations in order to manage the RTT-ELC funds and accomplish the work set forth in the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work;*
- *For each project in which the Participating State Agency is involved, and consistent with the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work:*
 - *An explanation of the Participating State Agency's roles and responsibilities*
 - *An explanation of how the proposed project annual budget was derived*
- *A detailed explanation of each budget category line item, including the information below.*

1) Personnel

Provide:

- The title and role of each position to be compensated under this grant.
- The salary for each position.
- The amount of time, such as hours or percentage of time, to be expended by each position.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The importance of each position to the success of specific. If curriculum vitae, an organizational chart, or other supporting information will be helpful to reviewers, attach in the Appendix and describe its location.

2) Fringe Benefits

Provide:

- The fringe benefit percentages for all personnel.
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

3) Travel

Provide:

- An estimate of the number of trips.
- An estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs for each trip.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the travel, how it relates to project goals, and how it will contribute to project success.

4) Equipment

Provide:

- The type of equipment to be purchased.
- The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased.

- The definition of equipment used by the State.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The justification of the need for the items of equipment to be purchased.

5) Supplies

Provide:

- An estimate of materials and supplies needed, by nature of expense or general category (*e.g.*, instructional materials, office supplies).
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

6) Contractual

Provide:

- The products to be acquired and/or the professional services to be provided.
- The estimated cost per expected procurement.
- For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to this proposed grant award.
- A brief statement that the State has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose and relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

7) Training Stipends

Note:

- The training stipend line item only pertains to costs associated with long-term training programs and college or university coursework that results in a credential or degree, not workshops or short-term training supported by this program.
- Salary stipends paid to teachers and other early learning personnel for participating in short-term professional development should be reported in Personnel (line 1).

Provide:

- Descriptions of training stipends to be provided, consistent with the “note” above.
- The cost estimates and basis for these estimates.

Explain:

- The purpose of the training.

8) Other

Provide:

- Other items by major type or category.
- The cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the expenditures.

9) Total Direct Costs

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in lines 1-8, for each year of the budget.

10) Indirect Costs

Provide:

- Identify and apply the indirect cost rate. (See the section that follows, Budget: Indirect Cost Information.)

11) Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

Provide:

- The specific activities to be done by localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners.
- The estimated cost of each activity.
- The approximate number of localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners involved in each activity.
- The total cost of each activity (across all localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of each activity and its relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: 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 Department expects 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.

12) Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

Provide:

- The amount per year set aside for this Participating State Agency.

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

13) Total Funds Requested

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 9-12, for each year of the budget.

13) Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan

Provide:

- A description of the sources of other funds the State is using to support the projects in the State Plan.
- A description of how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used for activities and services described in the State Plan, if applicable.
- Any financial contributions being made by private entities such as foundations.

Explain:

- Each funding source, the activities being funded and their relation to the State Plan or specific project, and any requirements placed on the use of funds or timing of the activity.

14) Total Budget

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 13 and 14, for each year of the budget

Agency Budget Narrative – Oklahoma Department of Human Services

Personnel

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services will employ a **Program Administrator** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$61,368** annually. This individual will be a time-limited OKDHS FTE and will expend 100% of their effort in support of ELC grant activities. Their job duties will include oversight of the development, implementation and ongoing evaluation of a statewide professional development system, QRIS and fiscal accountability in relation to the Race To The Top Grant. This individual will plan, organize and direct the major child care multi-functional programs in correlation with the grant goals and

objectives. Responsibilities will also include developing rules and guidelines consistent with federal and state laws pertaining to the administration of the grant. As applied to this grant, this employee will plan and coordinate activities, including assessment of assigned work, the effective use of resource staff, and the establishment of standards of performance; and ensure and manage the integration of activities between stakeholders, contractors, division personnel, parents, public and providers. As applied to this grant, this individual will also provide direction and interpretation of child care professional development and performance; provide direction and interpretation of the QRIS; and assist in developing policy to meet the changing needs of QRIS and Professional Development. The employee will proactively plan and develop strategies to meet the criteria of the RTT grant with benchmarks and periodically report progress to stakeholders.

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services will employ a **Program Field Representative – Professional Development** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$41,712** annually. This individual will be a time-limited OKDHS FTE and will expend 100% of their effort in support of ELC grant activities. Their job duties will include advising and providing technical support to the Programs Administrator on all phases of Professional Development as it relates to the Race to The Top grant. The individual will assist with meetings, provide information about policies and procedures and consult with and coordinate efforts between stakeholders.

The Oklahoma Department of Human Services will employ a **Program Field Representative – QRIS** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$41,712** annually. This individual will be a time-limited OKDHS FTE and will expend 100% of their effort in support of ELC grant activities. Their job duties will include advising and providing technical support to the Programs Administrator on all phases of Quality Rating Improvement System as it relates to the Race to The Top grant. The individual will assist with meetings, provide information about policies and procedures and consult with and coordinate efforts between stakeholders.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits for the Program Administrator will be approximately 50% of annual salary, or **\$30,720**, and will include all payroll taxes, insurance, and retirement benefits.

Fringe benefits for the Program Field Representatives will be approximately 62% of annual salary, or **\$25,973 each**, and will include all payroll taxes, insurance, and retirement benefits.

Travel

N/A

Equipment

The annual equipment amount of **\$23,670** is calculated based on standard OKDHS I/T start-up, rental and equipment costs. For this amount, equipment will be made available to the each of the three grant employees including laptop or desktop computers, desk telephones, mobile telephones, and multi-function copier/fax/scanners.

Supplies

OKDHS estimates a cost of **\$990** per year for general office supplies and software for use by the three grant employees.

Contractual

\$100,000 has been identified in year one to contract with an outside consultant for a thorough review of the state's current high-quality standards and ensure alignment of the standards beginning with home visitation programs and extending through the early elementary grades.

Training Stipends

N/A

Other

A total of **\$5,450,000** has been identified over four years for training Early Childhood Educators, and Parents on the Quality Rating Improvement System, Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment System and providing support structure to families.

Total Direct Costs

Year One -	\$ 3,052,118
Year Two -	\$ 3,102,118
Year Three -	\$ 1,702,118
Year Four -	\$ 1,702,118

Total Direct Costs for OKDHS - \$9,558,472**Indirect Costs**

N/A

Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

\$1,250,000 has been identified per year for years two through three to provide incentives to Early Learning and Development Programs to promote higher QRIS rating levels.

Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

\$25,000 per year has been set aside for OKDHS by the state for participation in grantee technical assistance.

Total Funds Requested

Year One - \$ 3,077,118

Year Two - \$ 4,377,118

Year Three - \$ 2,977,118

Year Four - \$ 2,977,118

Total Request for OKDHS -\$9,558,472**Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan**

N/A

Total Budget

Year One - \$ 3,077,118

Year Two - \$ 4,377,118

Year Three - \$ 2,977,118

Year Four - \$2,977,118

Total OKDHS Budget - \$13,408,472

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Oklahoma State Department of Health					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	81,600	81,600	81,600	81,600	326,400
2. Fringe Benefits	61,462	61,462	61,462	61,462	245,848
3. Travel					0
4. Equipment	4,972	4,972	4,972	4,972	19,888
5. Supplies	1,510,660	1,010,660	10,660	10,660	2,542,640
6. Contractual	110,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	710,000
7. Training Stipends					0
8. Other	600,000	650,000	650,000	650,000	2,550,000
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	2,368,694	2,008,694	1,008,694	1,008,694	6,394,776
10. Indirect Costs*	0	0	0	0	0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.					0
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	0
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	2,393,694	2,033,694	1,033,694	1,033,694	6,394,776
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	0	0	0	0	0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	2,393,694	2,033,694	1,033,694	1,033,694	6,494,776
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the</p>					

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Oklahoma State Department of Health</i>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p>end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Oklahoma State Department of Health					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
QRIS					0
Workforce Early Childhood Educators	269,869	319,869	319,869	319,869	1,229,476
Comprehensive Assessment	1,519,869	1,019,869	19,869	19,869	2,579,476
Healthy Practices	214,216	304,216	304,216	304,216	1,126,864
Strengthening Families	169,871	169,871	169,871	169,871	679,484
ELDS	219,869	219,869	219,869	219,869	879,476
Data System	0	0			0
	2,393,694	2,033,694	1,033,694	1,033,694	6,494,776

BUDGET PART II - NARRATIVE

Describe, in the text box below, the Participating State Agency's budget, including--

- *How the Participating State Agency plans to organize its operations in order to manage the RTT-ELC funds and accomplish the work set forth in the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work;*
- *For each project in which the Participating State Agency is involved, and consistent with the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work:*
 - *An explanation of the Participating State Agency's roles and responsibilities*
 - *An explanation of how the proposed project annual budget was derived*
- *A detailed explanation of each budget category line item, including the information below.*

1) Personnel

Provide:

- The title and role of each position to be compensated under this grant.
- The salary for each position.
- The amount of time, such as hours or percentage of time, to be expended by each position.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The importance of each position to the success of specific. If curriculum vitae, an organizational chart, or other supporting information will be helpful to reviewers, attach in the Appendix and describe its location.

2) Fringe Benefits

Provide:

- The fringe benefit percentages for all personnel.
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

3) Travel

Provide:

- An estimate of the number of trips.
- An estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs for each trip.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the travel, how it relates to project goals, and how it will contribute to project success.

4) Equipment

Provide:

- The type of equipment to be purchased.

- The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased.
- The definition of equipment used by the State.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The justification of the need for the items of equipment to be purchased.

5) Supplies

Provide:

- An estimate of materials and supplies needed, by nature of expense or general category (*e.g.*, instructional materials, office supplies).
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

6) Contractual

Provide:

- The products to be acquired and/or the professional services to be provided.
- The estimated cost per expected procurement.
- For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to this proposed grant award.
- A brief statement that the State has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose and relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

7) Training Stipends

Note:

- The training stipend line item only pertains to costs associated with long-term training programs and college or university coursework that results in a credential or degree, not workshops or short-term training supported by this program.
- Salary stipends paid to teachers and other early learning personnel for participating in short-term professional development should be reported in Personnel (line 1).

Provide:

- Descriptions of training stipends to be provided, consistent with the “note” above.
- The cost estimates and basis for these estimates.

Explain:

- The purpose of the training.

8) Other

Provide:

- Other items by major type or category.
- The cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the expenditures.

9) Total Direct Costs

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in lines 1-8, for each year of the budget.

10) Indirect Costs

Provide:

- Identify and apply the indirect cost rate. (See the section that follows, Budget: Indirect Cost Information.)

11) Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

Provide:

- The specific activities to be done by localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners.
- The estimated cost of each activity.
- The approximate number of localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners involved in each activity.
- The total cost of each activity (across all localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of each activity and its relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: 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 Department expects 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.

12) Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

Provide:

- The amount per year set aside for this Participating State Agency.

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

13) Total Funds Requested

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 9-12, for each year of the budget.

13) Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan

Provide:

- A description of the sources of other funds the State is using to support the projects in the State Plan.
- A description of how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used for activities and services described in the State Plan, if applicable.
- Any financial contributions being made by private entities such as foundations.

Explain:

- Each funding source, the activities being funded and their relation to the State Plan or specific project, and any requirements placed on the use of funds or timing of the activity.

14) Total Budget

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 13 and 14, for each year of the budget

Personnel

The Oklahoma State Department of Health will employ a **Program Coordinator** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$40,800** annually. This individual will expend 100% of their effort in support of ELC grant activities. They will provide leadership, coordination, and guidance in the implementation of the RTT-ELC grant goals and priorities. This position will be headquartered at the Oklahoma State Department of Health Child Guidance Service, and will be responsible for the overall coordination of the integration of health promotion standards, family engagement strategies and will work in close coordination with the OSDE to development of a comprehensive assessment system.

The Oklahoma State Department of Health will employ a **Program Coordinator** for this

grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$40,800** annually. This individual will expend 100% of their effort in support of ELC grant activities. This position will serve as an expansion position for the Child Care Warmline to include a Parent Line for parents of children currently enrolled in home visitation programs in Oklahoma. Duties of the position will include providing telephone consultation to parents and child care providers on issues related to the care and guidance of young children, and to diffuse anger and frustration in difficult and possibly volatile situations. This position will provide referrals to appropriate resources for information, consultation and training. Other primary duties will include assisting in the promotion and publicity of the Warmline by attending child care and home visitation conferences.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits for the Program Coordinator will be approximately 75% of annual salary, or **\$61,462**, and will include all payroll taxes, insurance, and retirement benefits.

Travel

N/A

Equipment

The annual equipment amount of **\$4,972** is calculated based on standard OSDH I/T rental and equipment costs. For this amount, equipment will be made available to the Program Coordinator including a laptop or desktop computer, desk telephone, mobile telephone, and a multi-function copier/fax/scanner.

Supplies

OSDH estimates a cost of **\$660** per year for general office supplies and software for use by the Program Coordinator.

A total of **\$2,500,000** to inform and strengthen Early Learning programs and educators regarding the purpose and use of each component of the comprehensive Early Learning assessment system.

OSDH estimates a cost of **\$10,000** for a screen tool for outreach to physician offices.

Contractual

A total of **\$110,000** has been identified to contract with an organization for promoting health lifestyles and eating habits.

Training Stipends

N/A

Other

A total of **\$2,550,000** has been identified over four years for training Early Childhood Educators, and Parents on the Quality Rating Improvement System, Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment System and providing support structure to families.

Total Direct Costs

Year One - \$ 2,393,694

Year Two - \$ 2,033,694

Year Three - \$ 1,008,694

Year Four - \$ 1,008,694

Total Direct Costs for OSDH - \$ 6,394,776**Indirect Costs**

N/A

Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

N/A

Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

\$25,000 per year has been set aside for OSDH by the state for participation in grantee technical assistance.

Total Funds Requested

Year One - \$ 2,393,694

Year Two - \$ 2,033,694

Year Three - \$ 1,033,694

Year Four - \$ 1,033,694

Total Direct Costs for OSDH - \$ 6,494,776

Total Budget	
Year One -	\$ 2,393,694
Year Two -	\$ 2,033,694
Year Three -	\$ 1,033,694
Year Four -	\$ 1,033,694
Total OSDH Budget -	\$ 6,494,776

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--The State must include the Participating State Agency's budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	45,000	45,000	45,000	45,000	180,000
2. Fringe Benefits	20,746	20,746	20,746	20,746	82,984
3. Travel					0
4. Equipment	2,486	2,486	2,486	2,486	9,944
5. Supplies	330	330	330	330	1,320
6. Contractual					0
7. Training Stipends					0
8. Other	375,000	650,000	850,000	600,000	2,475,000
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	443,562	718,562	918,562	668,562	2,749,248
10. Indirect Costs*	0	0	0	0	0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	180,000	180,000	180,000	180,000	720,000
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	0
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	648,562	923,562	1,123,562	873,562	3,469,248
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	0	0	0	0	0
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	648,562	923,562	1,123,562	873,562	3,569,248
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the</p>					

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness</i>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p>end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--*The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
QRIS	68,390	318,390	568,390	318,390	1,273,560
Workforce Early Childhood Educators	118,390	143,390	93,390	93,390	448,560
Healthy Practices	118,390	118,390	118,390	118,390	473,560
Strengthening Families	343,392	343,392	343,392	343,392	1,373,568
Total Budget	375,000	650,000	850,000	600,000	2,475,000

BUDGET PART II - NARRATIVE

Describe, in the text box below, the Participating State Agency's budget, including--

- *How the Participating State Agency plans to organize its operations in order to manage the RTT-ELC funds and accomplish the work set forth in the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work;*
- *For each project in which the Participating State Agency is involved, and consistent with the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work:*
 - *An explanation of the Participating State Agency's roles and responsibilities*
 - *An explanation of how the proposed project annual budget was derived*
- *A detailed explanation of each budget category line item, including the information below.*

1) Personnel

Provide:

- The title and role of each position to be compensated under this grant.
- The salary for each position.
- The amount of time, such as hours or percentage of time, to be expended by each position.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The importance of each position to the success of specific. If curriculum vitae, an organizational chart, or other supporting information will be helpful to reviewers, attach in the Appendix and describe its location.

2) Fringe Benefits

Provide:

- The fringe benefit percentages for all personnel.
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

3) Travel

Provide:

- An estimate of the number of trips.
- An estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs for each trip.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the travel, how it relates to project goals, and how it will contribute to project success.

4) Equipment

Provide:

- The type of equipment to be purchased.

- The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased.
- The definition of equipment used by the State.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The justification of the need for the items of equipment to be purchased.

5) Supplies

Provide:

- An estimate of materials and supplies needed, by nature of expense or general category (*e.g.*, instructional materials, office supplies).
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

6) Contractual

Provide:

- The products to be acquired and/or the professional services to be provided.
- The estimated cost per expected procurement.
- For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to this proposed grant award.
- A brief statement that the State has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose and relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

7) Training Stipends

Note:

- The training stipend line item only pertains to costs associated with long-term training programs and college or university coursework that results in a credential or degree, not workshops or short-term training supported by this program.
- Salary stipends paid to teachers and other early learning personnel for participating in short-term professional development should be reported in Personnel (line 1).

Provide:

- Descriptions of training stipends to be provided, consistent with the “note” above.
- The cost estimates and basis for these estimates.

Explain:

- The purpose of the training.

8) Other

Provide:

- Other items by major type or category.
- The cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the expenditures.

9) Total Direct Costs

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in lines 1-8, for each year of the budget.

10) Indirect Costs

Provide:

- Identify and apply the indirect cost rate. (See the section that follows, Budget: Indirect Cost Information.)

11) Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

Provide:

- The specific activities to be done by localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners.
- The estimated cost of each activity.
- The approximate number of localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners involved in each activity.
- The total cost of each activity (across all localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of each activity and its relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: 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 Department expects 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.

12) Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

Provide:

- The amount per year set aside for this Participating State Agency.

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

13) Total Funds Requested

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 9-12, for each year of the budget.

13) Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan

Provide:

- A description of the sources of other funds the State is using to support the projects in the State Plan.
- A description of how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used for activities and services described in the State Plan, if applicable.
- Any financial contributions being made by private entities such as foundations.

Explain:

- Each funding source, the activities being funded and their relation to the State Plan or specific project, and any requirements placed on the use of funds or timing of the activity.

14) Total Budget

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 13 and 14, for each year of the budget

*Agency Budget Narrative – Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness***Personnel**

The Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness will employ a **Program Coordinator** for this grant. The salary for this position is expected to be **\$45,000** annually. This individual will expend 100% of their effort in support of ELC grant activities. They will be responsible for coordinating all inter-agency grant activities as well as convening and facilitating meetings involving multiple stakeholders. Additional responsibilities will include assisting in the mobilization of new Smart Start communities and management of public engagement efforts

required by certain grant projects.

OPSR employees are employed and abide by personnel policies of the University of Central Oklahoma. Salaries are determined in accordance with the University's compensation schedule. Salaries for personnel may vary upon readjustment of the University's compensation schedule for employees each state fiscal year.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits for the Program Coordinator will be approximately 46% of annual salary, or **\$20,746**, calculated as follows:

Insurance	\$6,137.00
Retirement	11,099.00
Taxes	3,510.00
Total	<hr/>
Benefits	\$20,746.00

Due to the contractual relationship between OPSR and the University of Oklahoma, an additional indirect cost rate of 13.175% will also be included for the total cost of this position. Calculated on the total value of salary plus fringe benefits, that amount will be **\$8,662.00** annually.

Travel

N/A

Equipment

Through legislation and MOU, OPSR office space and equipment are provided by OKDHS. Therefore the annual equipment amount of **\$2486** is calculated based on standard OKDHS I/T rental and equipment costs. For this amount, equipment will be made available to the Program Coordinator including a laptop or desktop computer, desk telephone, mobile telephone, and a multi-function copier/fax/scanner.\

Supplies

OPSR estimates a cost of **\$330** per year for general office supplies and software for use by the Program Coordinator.

Contractual

N/A

Training Stipends

N/A

Total Direct Costs

Year One - \$ 443,562

Year Two - \$ 718,562

Year Three - \$ 918,562

Year Four - \$ 668,562

Total Direct Costs for OPSR - \$ 2,749,248**Indirect Costs**

N/A

Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

An amount of **\$180,000** per year has been identified for distribution to localities to expand the number of Smart Start communities from 18 to 24 with \$30,000 start-up awards. Smart Start communities provide local community coalition and planning activities to support implementation of QRIS and comprehensive assessment systems across all early learning and development programs, develop 4-year-old collaboration models and facilitate training for the early childhood workforce.

Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

\$25,000 per year has been set aside for OPSR by the state for participation in grantee technical assistance.

Total Funds Requested

Year One - \$ 648,562

Year Two - \$ 923,562

Year Three - \$ 1,123,562

Year Four - \$ 873,562

Total Request for OPSR - \$ 2,475,000

Total Budget	
Year One -	\$ 648,562
Year Two -	\$ 923,562
Year Three -	\$ 1,123,562
Year Four -	\$ 873,562
Total OPSR Budget -	\$ 2,475,000

IX. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(a) The State's application must be signed by the Governor or an authorized representative; an authorized representative from the Lead Agency; and an authorized representative from each Participating State Agency. The State must provide the required signatures in section IV, Application Assurances and Certifications of the application.

(b) The State must submit a certification from the State Attorney General or an authorized representative 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. The State must provide this certification in section IV, Application Assurances and Certifications of the application.

(c) The State must complete the budget spreadsheets that are provided in the application package and submit the completed spreadsheet as part of its application. These spreadsheets should be included on the CD or DVD that the State submits as its application.

Note: The budget spreadsheets will be used by the Departments for budget reviews. However, the reviewers will not judge or score these budget spreadsheets. Reviewers will limit their evaluation of the State's response to (A)(4)(b) to the information provided by the State in the budget section of the application (see section VIII, Budget).

(d) The State must submit preliminary scopes of work for each Participating State Agency as part of the executed MOU or other binding agreement. (See section XIII in this application.) Each preliminary scope of work must describe the portions of the State's proposed plans that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement. If a State is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, the State will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work for each Participating State Agency. (See section (k) of the Program Requirements, section XI in this application.)

(e) The State must include a budget that details how it will use grant funds awarded under this competition, and funds from other Federal, State, private, and local sources to achieve the outcomes of the State Plan (as described in selection criterion (A)(4)(a)), and how the State will use funds awarded under this program to--

(1) Achieve its targets for increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs that are participating in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criterion (B)(2)(c)); and

(2) Achieve its targets for increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criterion (B)(4)(c)).

(f) The State must provide an overall summary for the State Plan and a rationale for why it has chosen to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area, including—

- How the State's choices build on its progress to date in each Focused Investment Area (as outlined in Tables (A)(1)6-13 and in the narrative under (A)(1)); and
- Why these selected criteria will best achieve the State's ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers.

(g) The State, within each Focused Investment Area, must select and address--

- Two or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; and
- One or more selection criteria within Focused Investment Areas (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.

(h) Where the State is submitting a High-Quality Plan, the State must include in its application a detailed plan that is feasible and has a high probability of successful implementation and includes, but need not be limited to--

(1) The key goals;

(2) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up over time to eventually achieve statewide implementation;

(3) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;

(4) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;

(5) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan;

(6) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;

(7) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable;

(8) How the State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and

(9) How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs, as well as the unique needs of special populations of Children with High Needs.

X. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A State receiving funds under an RTT-ELC grant must submit an annual report that must include, in addition to the standard elements, a description of the State's progress to date on its goals, timelines, and budgets, as well as actual performance compared to the annual targets the State established in its application with respect to each performance measure. Further, a State receiving funds under this program is accountable for meeting the goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets established in the application; adhering to an annual fund drawdown schedule that is tied to meeting these goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets; and fulfilling and maintaining all other conditions for the conduct of the project. The Departments will monitor a State's progress in meeting the State's goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets and in fulfilling other applicable requirements. In addition, we may collect additional data as part of a State's annual reporting requirements.

To support a collaborative process with the State, we may require that applicants who are selected to receive an award enter into a written performance or cooperative agreement. If we determine that a State is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, we will take appropriate action, which could include establishing a collaborative process or taking enforcement measures with respect to this grant, such as placing the State in high-risk status, putting the State on reimbursement payment status, or delaying or withholding funds.

XI. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A State that receives a grant must meet the following requirements:

(a) The State must continue to participate in the programs authorized under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA; in the CCDF program; and in the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program (pursuant to 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)) for the duration of the grant.

(b) The State is prohibited from spending funds from the grant on the direct delivery of health services.

(c) The State must participate in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS, individually or in collaboration with other State grantees in order to share effective program practices and solutions and collaboratively solve problems, and must set aside at least \$400,000 from its grant funds for this purpose.

(d) The State must--

(1) Comply with the requirements of any evaluation sponsored by ED or HHS of any of the State's activities carried out with the grant;

(2) Comply with the requirements of any cross-State evaluation--as part of a consortium of States--of any of the State's proposed reforms, if that evaluation is coordinated or funded by ED or HHS, including by using common measures and data collection instruments and collecting data necessary to the evaluation;

(3) Together with its independent evaluator, if any, cooperate with any technical assistance regarding evaluations provided by ED or HHS. The purpose of this technical assistance will be to ensure that the validation of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and any other evaluations conducted by States or their independent evaluators, if any, are of the highest quality and to encourage commonality in approaches where such commonality is feasible and useful;

(4) Submit to ED and HHS for review and comment its design for the validation of its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criteria (B)(5)) and any other evaluations of activities included in the State Plan, including any activities that are part of the State's Focused Investment Areas, as applicable; and

(5) Make widely available through formal (*e.g.*, peer-reviewed journals) or informal (*e.g.*, newsletters) mechanisms, and in print or electronically, the results of any evaluations it conducts of its funded activities.

(e) The State must have a longitudinal data system that includes the 12 elements described in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act by the date required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) grant and in accordance with Indicator (b)(1) of its approved SFSF plan.

(f) The State must comply with the requirements of all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws, including the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act, and the privacy requirements in IDEA, and their applicable regulations.

(g) The State must ensure that the grant activities are implemented in accordance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws.

(h) The State must provide researchers with access, consistent with the requirements of all applicable Federal State, and local privacy laws, to data from its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the State's coordinated early learning data system (if applicable) so that they can analyze the State's quality improvement efforts and answer key policy and practice questions.

(i) Unless otherwise protected as proprietary information by Federal or State law or a specific written agreement, the State must make any work (*e.g.*, materials, tools, processes, systems) developed under its grant freely available to the public, including by posting the work on a Web site identified or sponsored by ED or HHS. Any Web sites developed under this grant must meet government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility.

(j) Funds made available under an RTT-ELC grant must be used to supplement, not supplant, any Federal, State, or local funds that, in the absence of the funds awarded under this grant, would be available for increasing access to and improving the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs.

(k) For a State that is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, the State will have up to 90 days from the grant award notification date to complete final scopes of work for each Participating State Agency. These final scopes of work must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with their corresponding preliminary scopes of work and with the State's grant application, and must include the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures for the portions of the State's proposed plans that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement.

XII. CONTRACTING FOR SERVICES

Generally, all procurement transactions by State or local educational agencies made with RTT-ELC grant funds must be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition, consistent with the standards in section 80.36 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). This section requires that grantees use their own procurement procedures (which reflect State and local laws and regulations) to select contractors, provided that those procedures meet certain standards described in EDGAR.

Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

XIII. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**RACE TO THE TOP-EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE
PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
MODEL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING****(Appendix C of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge
Notice Inviting Applications)****Background for Memorandum of Understanding**

Each Participating State Agency identified in a State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) State Plan is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement with the State's Lead Agency that specifies the scope of the work that will be implemented by the Participating State Agency. The purpose of the MOU or other binding agreement is to define a relationship between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency that is specific to the RTT-ELC competition; the MOU or other binding agreement is not meant to detail all typical aspects of grant coordination or administration.

To support States in working efficiently with their Participating State Agencies to affirm each Participating State Agency's participation in the State Plan, ED and HHS have produced a model MOU, which is attached. This model MOU may serve as a template for States; however, States are not required to use it. States may use a document other than the model MOU, as long as it includes the key features noted below and in the model MOU. States should consult with their State attorneys on what is most appropriate. States may allow multiple Participating State Agencies to sign a single MOU or other binding agreement, with customized exhibits for each Participating State Agency, if the State so chooses.

At a minimum, an RTT-ELC MOU or other binding agreement should include the following key features, each of which is described in detail below and exemplified in the attached model MOU: (i) terms and conditions; (ii) a scope of work; and, (iii) authorized signatures.

(i) Terms and conditions: Each Participating State Agency must sign a standard set of terms and conditions that includes, at a minimum, key roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency; State recourse for non-performance by the Participating State Agency; and assurances that make clear what the Participating State Agency is agreeing to do.

(ii) Scope of work: RTT-ELC MOUs or other binding agreements must include a preliminary scope of work (included in the model RTT-ELC MOU as Exhibit I) that is completed by each Participating State Agency. The scope of work must be signed and dated by an authorized Participating State Agency official and an authorized Lead Agency official. In the interest of time and in consideration of the effort it will take for the Lead Agency and Participating State Agencies to develop detailed work plans for RTT-ELC, the scope of work submitted by Participating State Agencies and Lead Agencies as part of a State's application may be preliminary. Preliminary scopes of work must, at a minimum, identify all applicable

portions of the State Plan that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement and include the required assurances. (Note that in order for a State to be eligible for the RTT-ELC competition, the Lead Agency must have executed with each Participating State Agency an MOU or other binding agreement, which the State must attach to its application and which must describe the Participating State Agency's level of participation in the grant and must include the required assurances.)

If a State is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, Participating State Agencies will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work, which must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with each Participating State Agency's preliminary scope of work and with the State's grant application, and must include the Participating State Agencies' specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel.

(iii) Authorized Signatures: The signatures on the MOU or other binding agreement demonstrate an acknowledgement of the relationship between the Participating State Agency and the Lead Agency. With respect to the relationship between the Participating State Agency and the Lead Agency, the Lead Agency's counter-signature on the MOU or other binding agreement indicates that the Participating State Agency's commitment is consistent with the requirement that a Participating State Agency implement all applicable portions of the State Plan.

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between _____ (“Lead Agency”) and _____ (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in the Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

- 1) Work collaboratively with, and support the Participating State Agency in carrying out the Participating State Agency Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Timely award the portion of Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant funds designated for the Participating State Agency in the State Plan during the course of the project period and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work, as identified in Exhibit I, and in accordance with the Participating State Agency's Budget, as identified in section VIII of the State's application;
- 3) Provide feedback on the Participating State Agency's status updates, any interim reports, and project plans and products;
- 4) Keep the Participating State Agency informed of the status of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project and seek input from the Participating State Agency, where applicable, through the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;
- 5) Facilitate coordination across Participating State Agencies necessary to implement the State Plan; and
- 6) Identify sources of technical assistance for the project.

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or

initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

Signature Date

Print Name Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

Signature Date

Print Name Title

XIV. SCORING RUBRIC

I. Introduction

To help ensure inter-reviewer reliability and transparency for the RTT-ELC applicants, ED and HHS have created and are publishing a rubric for scoring State applications. The pages that follow detail the rubric and allocation of point values that reviewers will be using. The rubric will be used by reviewers to ensure consistency across and within review panels.

The rubric allocates points to each criterion. In all, the RTT-ELC scoring rubric includes 17 selection criteria and two competitive preference priorities. These collectively add up to 300 points. The selection criteria are divided into two sections: Core Areas and Focused Investment Areas.

- Applicants must respond to all of the selection criteria within each of the two Core Areas: (A) Successful State Systems and (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs.
- Applicants have more flexibility within each of the Focused Investment Areas: (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress. In these sections, applicants may select which selection criteria to address, focusing on those that the State believes will have the most impact on school readiness for its Children with High Needs, given that State's context and the current status of its early learning and development activities. The Focused Investment Areas must be addressed as follows.

Focused Investment Areas

- The applicant must select and address--
 - At least two selection criteria from Focused Investment Area (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; and
 - At least one selection criterion each from Focused Investment Areas (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.
- Each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E) is worth a specific number of points; these points will be evenly divided across the selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that section.

Priorities

Applicants address the absolute priority throughout their applications; they do not write separately to this priority. The absolute priority must be met in order for an applicant to receive funding.

Applications that choose to address a competitive preference priority will earn extra points under that priority if the reviewers determine that the response is of high quality. Applicants may choose to write to invitational priorities to extend the scope of the application; applicants are invited to address these and may apply funds from this grant to implement activities under them, but do not earn additional points for doing so.

Reviewers will be required to make thoughtful judgments about the quality of the State's application and will be assessing, based on the criteria, the comprehensiveness, feasibility, and likely impact of the State's application. Reviewers will also be asked to evaluate, for example, the extent to which the State has set ambitious but achievable annual targets in its application. Reviewers will also need to make informed judgments about the State's goals, the rationales for the Focused Investment Areas, the activities the State has chosen to undertake, and the timelines and credibility of the State's plans.

This appendix includes information about the point values for each criterion and priority, guidance on scoring, and the rubric that we will provide to reviewers.

II. Points Overview

The chart below shows the maximum number of points that are assigned to each criterion.

	Points Available	Percent
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge: Points Overview		
A. Successful State Systems		
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development.	20	
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating work across the State	10	
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work	15	
Core Area A Subtotal	65	23
B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs		
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs	20	
(B)(5) Validating the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	
Core Area B Subtotal	75	27
C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children		
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards	60 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems		
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing health, behavioral, and developmental needs		
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families		

	Points Available	Percent
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge: Points Overview		
Focused Investment Area C Subtotal	60	21
D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce		
(D)(1) Developing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials	40 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators		
Focused Investment Area D Subtotal	40	14
E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress		
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children at kindergarten entry	40 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system		
Focused Investment Area E Subtotal	40	14
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	
Competitive Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS	10	
Competitive Priority 3: Understanding status of learning and development at Kindergarten Entry	10	
Grand Total	300	

III. About Scoring

General Notes about Scoring

There are two terms that we use repeatedly in the notice: High-Quality Plan and “ambitious yet achievable” goals or targets. These are anchor terms for both applicants to understand and reviewers to use in guiding their scoring. We discuss each below.

- *A High-Quality Plan.* In determining the quality of a State’s plan for a given selection criterion or competitive preference priority, reviewers will assess the extent to which the plan meets the definition (as provided in the notice) of a High-Quality Plan, including whether it is feasible and has a high probability of successful implementation and contains the following components--
 - (a) The key goals;
 - (b) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up to achieve statewide implementation;

- (c) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;
- (d) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;
- (e) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan;
- (f) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;
- (g) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable;
- (h) How the State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and
- (i) How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs, as well as the unique needs of special populations of Children with High Needs.

Using the information provided to them in the application, reviewers will assess the extent to which the proposed plan in a specific selection criterion is a High-Quality Plan that is credible, feasible to implement, and likely to result in the outcomes the State has put forward.

- *Ambitious yet achievable.* In determining whether a State has ambitious yet achievable goals or targets for a given selection criterion, reviewers will examine the State's goals or targets in the context of the State's plan and the evidence submitted (if any) in support of the plan. Reviewers will not be looking for any specific targets nor will they necessarily reward higher targets above lower ones with higher scores. Rather, reviewers will reward States for developing goals and targets that, in light of each State's plan and the current context and status of the work in that State, are shown to be "ambitious yet achievable."

About Assigning Points

Reviewers will assign points to an application for each selection criterion in Core Areas (A) and (B) and for each selection criterion that the State has chosen to address within Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E). Reviewers will also assign points to the competitive preference priorities. Points for a selection criterion or priority (e.g., (B)(4) or Priority 2) are assigned by reviewers for the totality of the applicant's response; that is, reviewers need not divide the total available points equally across the sub-criteria.

There are two scoring rubrics to guide reviewers when awarding points:

- The Quality Rubric, which provides guidance on how to allocate points for high-, medium-, and low-quality responses to specified selection criteria; and
- The Quality and Implementation Rubric, which provides guidance on how to allocate points for selection criteria and competitive preference priority two where reviewers are assessing the quality of both plans and existing implementation.

The chart below indicates which rubric the State will use for each criterion or competitive preference priority.

A. Successful State Systems		
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development.	20	Quality
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	Quality
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating work across the State	10	Quality and Implementation
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work	15	Quality
B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs		
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	Quality and Implementation
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	Quality and Implementation
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	Quality and Implementation
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs	20	Quality and Implementation
(B)(5) Validating the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	Quality
C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children		
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards	60 (divided evenly across criteria addressed)	Quality and Implementation
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems		
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing health, behavioral, and developmental needs		
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families		
D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce		
(D)(1) Developing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials	40 (divided evenly across criteria addressed)	Quality and Implementation
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators		
E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress		
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children at kindergarten entry	40 (divided evenly across criteria addressed)	Quality and Implementation
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system		

Competitive Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS	10	Quality and Implementation
Competitive Priority 3: Understanding the status of children at kindergarten entry	10	Addressed in Table (A)(1)-12 or in selection criterion (E)(1)

Quality Rubric

The following scoring rubric will be used to guide the reviewers in scoring selection criteria governed by the Quality Rubric. (See “General Notes about Scoring” for more information about how reviewers will assess High-Quality Plans and “ambitious yet achievable” targets and goals.)

	Percentage of Available Points Awarded
High-quality response	80-100%
Medium/high-quality response	50-80%
Medium/low-quality response	20-50%
Low-quality response	0-20%

Quality and Implementation Rubric

This scoring rubric provides guidance on how to allocate points for selection criteria and Competitive Preference Priority 2 where reviewers are assessing both plans and existing implementations. In reviewing the elements for each selection criterion, reviewers will need to consider the degree of implementation; more points are awarded for implementation efforts in the implementation phase than those that are in the planning stages, and more points are awarded for efforts where implementation is complete or closer to completion. When evaluating the degree of implementation, reviewers will consider:

- The extent to which each element in the selection criterion is implemented in the State;
- The extent to which the State has implemented each element across different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and
- The extent to which the State has implemented each element across the State’s special populations of Children with High Needs, if applicable.

The reviewers will also need to make a determination about the quality of the response to each element. High-quality responses are rewarded over low-quality responses. Therefore, elements that are fully implemented with high quality are rewarded over plans that are of fully implemented but of lower quality. (See “General Notes About Scoring” for more information about how reviewers will assess High-Quality Plans and “ambitious yet achievable” targets and goals.) The chart below shows how points will be awarded.

	Not or Minimally Implemented	Partially Implemented	Substantially or Fully Implemented
High-quality response	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
Medium-quality response	1-40%	10-60%	20-80%
Low-quality response	0%	0-10%	0-20%

About Priorities

There are three types of priorities in the RTT-ELC competition.

- Applicants should address the absolute priority across the entire application and should not address it separately. It will be assessed by reviewers after they have fully reviewed and evaluated the entire application, to ensure that the application has met the priority. If an application has not met the priority, it will be eliminated from the competition. A State meets the absolute priority if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the absolute priority.
- The competitive preference priorities earn points in a manner similar to selection criteria.
 - Competitive Preference Priority 2 is worth up to 10 points and will be assessed using the Quality and Implementation Rubric.
 - Competitive Preference Priority 3 is worth 10 points; all 10 points are earned if the competitive preference priority is met. A State will earn competitive preference priority points if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the competitive preference priority. No points are earned if a majority of reviewers determine that the applicant has not met the competitive preference priority.
A State meets the competitive preference priority for—
 - Demonstrating , by verifying that all elements in Table (A)(1)-12 have been met, that the State has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1); or
 - Writing to selection criterion (E)(1) and earning a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.
- The invitational priorities are addressed in their own separate sections. While applicants are invited to write to the invitational priorities, these will not earn points.

In the Event of a Tie

If two or more applications have the same score and there is not sufficient funding to support all of the tied applicants, the applicants' overall scores on Core Area (B) will be used to break the tie

XV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Please note that you must follow the Application Procedures as described in the Federal Register notice announcing the grant competition.

Submission Information and Deadline.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted by mail or hand delivery. The Departments strongly recommends the use of overnight mail. Applications postmarked on the deadline date but arriving late will not be read.

The deadline for submission of applications is October 19, 2011.

Application Submission Format.

The Secretaries strongly request the applicant to limit the application text narrative to no more than 150 pages and limit appendices to no more than 150 pages. A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. Line spacing for the narratives is set to 1.5 spacing, and the font used is 12 point Times New Roman. Each page in the application should have a page number. The Secretaries strongly requests that applicants follow the recommended page limits, although the Secretaries will consider applications of greater length.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted in electronic format on a CD or DVD, with CD-ROM or DVD-ROM preferred. In addition, applicants must submit a signed paper original of section IV of the application and one copy of that signed original. Autopen, copies, .PDFs (Adobe Portable Document Format), and faxed copies of signature pages are not acceptable originals. Section IV of the application includes the Application Assurances and Certifications.

We strongly request the applicant to submit a CD or DVD of its application that includes the following files:

1. A single file that contains the body of the application, including required budget tables, that has been converted into a .PDF (Portable Document) format so that the .PDF is searchable. Note that a .PDF created from a scanned document will not be searchable.

2. A single file in a .PDF format that contains all of the required signature pages. The signature pages may be scanned and turned into a PDF.

3. Copies of the completed electronic budget spreadsheets with the required budget tables, which should be in a separate file from the body of the application. The spreadsheets will not be reviewed by peer reviewers but will be used by the Departments for budget reviews.

Each of these items must be clearly labeled with the State's name and any other relevant identifying information. States must not password-protect these files.

We must receive all grant applications by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. ***We will not accept an application for this competition after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.*** Therefore, we strongly recommend that applicants arrange for mailing or hand delivery of their application in advance of the application deadline date.

Submission of Applications by Mail.

States choosing to submit their application (*i.e.*, the CD or DVD, the signed paper original of section IV of the application, and the copy of that original) by mail (either through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) should use the following mailing address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

We must receive applications on or before the application deadline date. Therefore, to avoid delays, we strongly recommend sending applications via overnight mail. ***If we receive an application after the application deadline, we will not consider that application.***

Submission of Applications by Hand Delivery.

States choosing to submit their application (*i.e.*, the CD or DVD, the signed paper original of section IV of the application, and the copy of that original) by hand delivery (including via a courier service) should use the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

If we receive an application after the application deadline, we will not consider that application.

Envelope Requirements and Receipt.

When an applicant submits its application, whether by mail or hand delivery--

(1) It must indicate on the envelope that the CFDA number of the competition under which it is submitting its application is 84.412; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to the applicant a notification of receipt of the grant application. If the applicant does not receive this notification, it should call the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

In accordance with 34 CFR 75.216(b) and (c), an application will not be evaluated for funding if the applicant does not comply with all of the procedural rules that govern the submission of the application or the application does not contain the information required under the program.

XVI. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Please use the following checklist to ensure that your application is complete:

Formatting Recommendations (page 11)

- Are all the pages 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides?
- Are all pages numbered?
- Is the line spacing for the narratives set to 1.5 spacing, and the font to 12 point Times New Roman?

Application Assurances and Certifications (page 20)

- Is all of the requested information included on the Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge Application Assurances and Certifications page?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Governor or his/her authorized representative signed and dated the Application Assurances and Certifications?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has an authorized representative from the Lead Agency signed the Application Assurances and Certifications?
SIGNATURE REQUIRED -- Has an authorized representative from each Participating State Agency signed the Application Assurances and Certifications? (Note: all Participating State Agencies must sign the application. See definition of Participating State Agency, page 17)

State Attorney General Certification (page 22)

- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the State Attorney General or his/her authorized representative signed the Certifications?

Accountability, Transparency, Reporting, and Other Assurances and Certifications (page 23)

- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Governor or his/her authorized representative signed the other Assurances and Certifications?

Eligibility Requirements (page 24)

- Has the State Provided a list of the Participating State Agencies?
- Has the State completed an MOU with each Participating State Agency?
- Does each MOU include the necessary assurances?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has every Participating State Agency signed an MOU that includes a preliminary Scope of Work, using Exhibit I or an equivalent model?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Lead Agency counter-signed every MOU and preliminary Scope of Work?
- Has the State certified that it has an operational State advisory council that meets the necessary requirements?

- Has the State certified that it is participating in the home visiting program, consistent with the requirement on page 25?

Selection Criteria

Core Areas (page 26)

(A) Successful State Systems and (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs

- Has the State responded to each of the selection criteria in Core Areas (A) and (B)?

Focused Investment Areas

(C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children (page 56)

- Has the State responded to at least two of the selection criteria in section (C)?

(D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce (page 64)

- Has the State responded to at least one of the selection criteria in (D)?

(E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress (page 68)

- Has the State responded to at least one of the selection criteria in (E)?

OPTIONAL: Competition Priorities (page 71)

- Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, if the State has chosen to respond.
- Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry, if the State has chosen to respond.
 - If yes, has the State provided the necessary information in Table (A)(1)-12 or written to (E)(1)?
- Invitational Priority 4: Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades
- Invitational Priority 5: Encouraging Private-Sector Support

Budget (page 75)

- Has the State completed the following elements of the Budget?
 - Budget Part I: Summary Tables and Narratives
 - Budget Part II: Participating State Agency Budget Tables and Narratives, for each Participating State Agency
 - Indirect Costs form
- Has the State created its budget spreadsheets?

Appendix (page 117)

- Has the State created a table of contents for its appendix?
- Has the State included all required documents per the instructions in the application?
- OPTIONAL: Has the State included supporting information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers?

Application Requirements (page 92)

- Has the State fulfilled all of the application requirements?

Application Submission Procedures (page 111)

- Has the State complied with the submission format requirements, including the application deadline for submission?
- Has the State submitted a single .PDF file of the entire application that was created in a format that is searchable? Note that a .PDF created from a scanned document will not be searchable.
- Has the State submitted originals of all the required Signature pages?
- Has the State submitted its budget spreadsheets?

XVII. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs (Executive Order 12372)

This program falls under the rubric of Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to strengthen federalism--or the distribution of responsibility between localities, States, and the Federal government--by fostering intergovernmental partnerships. This idea includes supporting processes that State or local governments have devised for coordinating and reviewing proposed Federal financial grant applications.

The process for doing this requires grant applicants to contact State Single Points of Contact for information on how this works.

Further information about the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) process and a list of names by State can be found at: www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc

Absent specific State review programs, applicants may submit comments directly to the Department. All recommendations and comments must be mailed or hand-delivered by the date indicated in the actual application notice to the following address: The Secretary, EO 12372--CFDA# 84.412, U.S. Department of Education, room 7E200. 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202.

Proof of mailing will be determined on the same basis as applications (see 34 CFR §75.102). Recommendations or comments may be hand-delivered until 4:30 p.m. (eastern time) on the closing date indicated in the notice.

Important note: The above address is not the same address as the one to which the applicant submits its completed applications. **Do not send applications to the above address.**

Not all States have chosen to participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located in a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to the Department as described in the *Federal Register* notice.