

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
MOU between Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and Department of Public Welfare (DPW). This MOU designates the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) as the “Lead Agency.”	Appendix (A)(3)-2	PDE: 619 of part B of IDEA, State-funded preschool, Title I of ESEA, State Education Agency. DPW: CCDF, part C of IDEA, home visiting, Head Start State Collaboration Grant, State’s Child Care Licensing Agency
MOU between Departments of Education and Public Welfare, on OCDEL’s behalf, and the Department of Health.	Appendix (A)(3)-2	Title V Maternal and Child Care Health Services Block Grant
MOU between Departments of Education and Public Welfare, on OCDEL’s behalf, and the Early Learning Council, PA’s State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care.	Appendix (A)(3)-2	State Advisory Council

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

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

Yes

No

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

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

Yes

No

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VI: SELECTION CRITERIA

CORE AREA (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)(1): Demonstrating Past Commitment to Early Learning and Development

Education is the foundation of our country and our state: it drives our economy, it prepares our children to be full-engaged citizens and to compete in the global marketplace, and it leads to economic growth and job creation. Our children need a solid educational foundation before Kindergarten if we expect them to succeed in school, work, and life. Their success becomes our success as they fill the 21st century jobs that drive our economy.

The United States once stood unrivaled in the world in educational achievement. Now among the 30 most developed countries, the U.S. places 25th in math achievement, 16th in reading, and 12th in science and it ranks 10th in the number of young people obtaining postsecondary degrees. If these trends continue, by 2018, America will face a 3 million graduate gap to fill 21st century jobs.¹ Education statistics in Pennsylvania follow a similar trend: almost one quarter of the state's third graders are not proficient in reading² and nearly one fifth of high school seniors either do not graduate on time³, or drop out before graduation. If Pennsylvania cannot appropriately educate its young people well enough so that they graduate qualified to fill high-quality jobs, it will fail in its commitment to provide a robust workforce and economy today and in the future.

Pennsylvania recognizes that education begins at birth and, since 2007, has led the nation in investment and success in high-quality and accessible Early Learning and Development programs. Pennsylvania is at the forefront of national efforts to create seamless birth through grade 12 experiences, aligning its education system for children from birth to age 5 with that of traditional K-12 learning to reach its ultimate goal: an educational system that prepares children to succeed in school.

(a): History of Pennsylvania's Commitment to Early Learning and Development

Pennsylvania's commitment to providing high-quality early education programs for high-needs children spans nearly a decade and three state Administrations. In 2002, Pennsylvania commissioned a study of the quality of Pennsylvania's early childhood programs as part of his

¹ "Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements through 2018," Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University, June 2010.

² As indicated by results from the 2010-11 Pennsylvania State School Assessment test.

³ Pennsylvania Department of Education, the preliminary 2009-10 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate for the State is at 78.73%

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Task Force on Early Childhood Care and Education.⁴ This study, the Pennsylvania Early Childhood Quality Study, revealed two disturbing trends: a decline in the quality of child care between the 1980s and 2000, and significant decreases in quality ratings for both child care centers and family child care homes during the same period.⁵ The study also noted a corresponding drop in the overall qualifications of staff between 1996 and 2000.

Based on recommendations from the 2002 study, Pennsylvania piloted a voluntary statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) for Early Learning and Development programs, Keystone STARS. Designed to improve the quality of these programs, Keystone STARS articulates a comprehensive set of performance standards that programs must meet. More than 4,200 Early Learning and Development programs (nearly 70% of child care centers) in the state now participate in STARS.

The previous Administration continued to make Early Learning and Development a priority and established the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) to create a cohesive organizational structure for all of the state's Early Learning and Development programs. The Administration also created multiple funding streams for Early Learning and Development, including two new streams targeted to programs that serve high-needs children.

Since taking office in January 2011, the state's current Governor, Tom Corbett, has made early childhood education a priority during his campaign and continued the commitment to early learning as Governor. Even in the face of a \$4.2 billion budget deficit, Governor Corbett proposed to maintain or increase funding for nearly every Early Learning and Development program in his proposed FY11-12 budget for the state. Although the enacted FY11-12 budget represents an overall four percent reduction from the previous year's budget, reductions for Early Learning and Development programs were less than the average reductions for other programs and the state committed more than \$1.3 billion to Early Learning and Development – demonstrating the governor's commitment to Pennsylvania's youngest and most vulnerable youth. Appendix (A)(1)-1: History of Pennsylvania's Commitment to Early Learning and Development Programs, on page 1 of the [searchable .pdf appendices file](#), provides a detailed

⁴ "Early Care and Education: The Keystone of Pennsylvania's Future Quality Study," November 2002

⁵ In both cases, classroom quality as measured by the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale - Revised (ECERS-R) and the Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS) dropped from a 4.50 level (adequate quality) to just below 4.00 (minimal quality).

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timeline of the activities the state has undertaken since 2000 to invest in quality Early Learning and Development programs. Appendix (A)(1)-2: OCDEL Annual Report 2009-2010 Summary (on page 3 of the appendices) provides additional information about the state's successful history of providing leadership in this critical arena.

(b): Description of PA's Early Learning and Development System and the Children it Serves

According to the National Association of Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies, nearly three quarters of the state's 740,000 children under age five use some form of care outside the home while their parents work. According to data from the 2010 Census, more than 58% of the state's children under age five are considered to be "children with high needs" because they live in low-income families,⁶ are English language learners, or have disabilities or developmental delays. Many of these high-needs children arrive at Kindergarten lacking the skills they need for school success. Research shows that, without significant intervention, children who enter Kindergarten behind never catch up to their peers.⁷ Consequently children in 69% of Pennsylvania's counties are at moderate to high risk of school failure, according to OCDEL's Program Reach and Risk Report for 2009-2010, which identifies the state's highest-risk communities and children and determines how many children are being reached through the state's quality early education programs. Appendix (A)(1)-3: Program Risk and Reach Report Summary, on page 10 of the appendices, describes the type of information included in this report. The evidence tables that begin on page 19 provide specific information on the status of Pennsylvania's children.

Pennsylvania administers nine Early Learning and Development programs to address the gap in Kindergarten readiness among different groups of children and ensure that all children – including children with high needs – are fully prepared to succeed in Kindergarten and beyond. More than three quarters of Pennsylvania's Early Learning and Development programs provide specific supports for children with high needs. Below is a brief description of these programs:

⁶ Earning up to 300% of the poverty level. Pennsylvania recognizes children living in families earning between 200%-300% of the poverty level as high needs based on the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) analysis of data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS-K), which showed that children in this income group are underperforming, compared to their peers from *lower* income families, in the area of math and they are also significantly underperforming compared to their peers with family incomes *above* 300% of the federal poverty line.

⁷ Data from pre[k]now, a campaign of the Pew Center on the States. Accessed at <http://www.preknow.org/media/faq.cfm>.

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- 1). The Keystone STARS, the state's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, promotes quality in child care and Head Start programs. Programs that participate in Keystone STARS earn STAR designations according to their integration of STARS program quality standards, which are based on the state's Learning Standards for Early Childhood. Requirements for standards integration become more stringent at each successive STAR level.
- 2). Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts provides high quality Pre-Kindergarten at no cost to families of children from age three until the entry age for Kindergarten who live in families earning up to 300% of the federal poverty level. More than half of children enrolled in PA Pre-K Counts in 2011-2012 were also affected by risk factors other than poverty, including living in foster care, having limited English skills, or having disabilities or developmental delays.
- 3). Child Care Works subsidized child care program provides financial help to pay for child care for high-needs children living in families who meet work and income requirements. Families earning up to 200% of the federal poverty level are eligible.
- 4). Early Intervention provides children from birth to age five who have disabilities or developmental delays with services to help promote their development so they are successful in any early education setting. Services may include parent education, developmental therapies and other support services.
- 5). Head Start provides comprehensive early learning services to high-needs children and families who are most at risk of academic failure. Families earning up to 100% of the federal poverty level are eligible to apply. Pennsylvania also invests in Head Start through its Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program.
- 6). The Nurse-Family Partnership Program provides registered nurses to work with low-income first-time expectant mothers through the child's early years to ensure a healthy pregnancy and engage in activities with the baby after birth that will promote healthy development, and make plans for the future.
- 7). The Parent Child Home Program provides a home visitor to help parents of high-needs children learn how to read and play with their children in a way that promotes early learning and builds a positive parent-child bond.

- 8). Child Care Certification inspects and certifies family and group child care homes as well as all child care centers in the state to make sure that they meet basic health and safety standards.
- 9). Pennsylvania's Children's Trust Fund gives resources to community-based organizations to provide supportive services that help pregnant teens, teen parents, and young parents learn skills for strengthening families to prevent child abuse and neglect.

In addition to administering these nine programs, Pennsylvania is also a grantee for the Early Head Start and Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Programs.

(c): Pennsylvania's Financial Investment in Early Learning and Development Programs

Over the past decade, Pennsylvania has more than doubled its investment in Early Learning and Development programs, increasing funding from approximately \$600 million in 2000 to more than \$1.3 billion today. This substantial increase provided a financial foundation that has enabled the state to significantly increase children's participation in its Early Learning and Development programs. As shown in Table (A)(1)-4 on page 22, the state's investment growth included an increase of nearly 7% between 2007 and 2011.

In 2004, Pennsylvania focused its early learning investment strategy to make financial commitments targeted to increasing access to quality Early Learning and Development programs for high-needs children. These commitments included:

- 1). Establishing two new funding streams targeted to children with high needs. In 2004, Pennsylvania began offering state-funded Head Start services through the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program. In 2007, Pennsylvania created the state-funded preschool program Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts. Together, these programs served approximately 17,000 high-needs children in 2010-2011.
- 2). Fully implementing the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) program. This program provides child-specific consultation services to Keystone STARS programs to address the social/emotional concerns of young children in order to reduce expulsions and promote healthy development. In 2010, the program served nearly 600 children in 300 Early Learning and Development programs in 52 of the state's 67 counties.
- 3). Introducing tiered reimbursement for Keystone STARS programs serving children who receive Child Care Works subsidies. These tiered reimbursements, for programs at STAR

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Level 2 and above, offset some of the additional costs for programs to provide high-quality care. Since its introduction in 2008, the subsidy add-on has increased 25% for STAR 4 programs serving children who are enrolled full-time.

4). Establishing a federal-funded Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

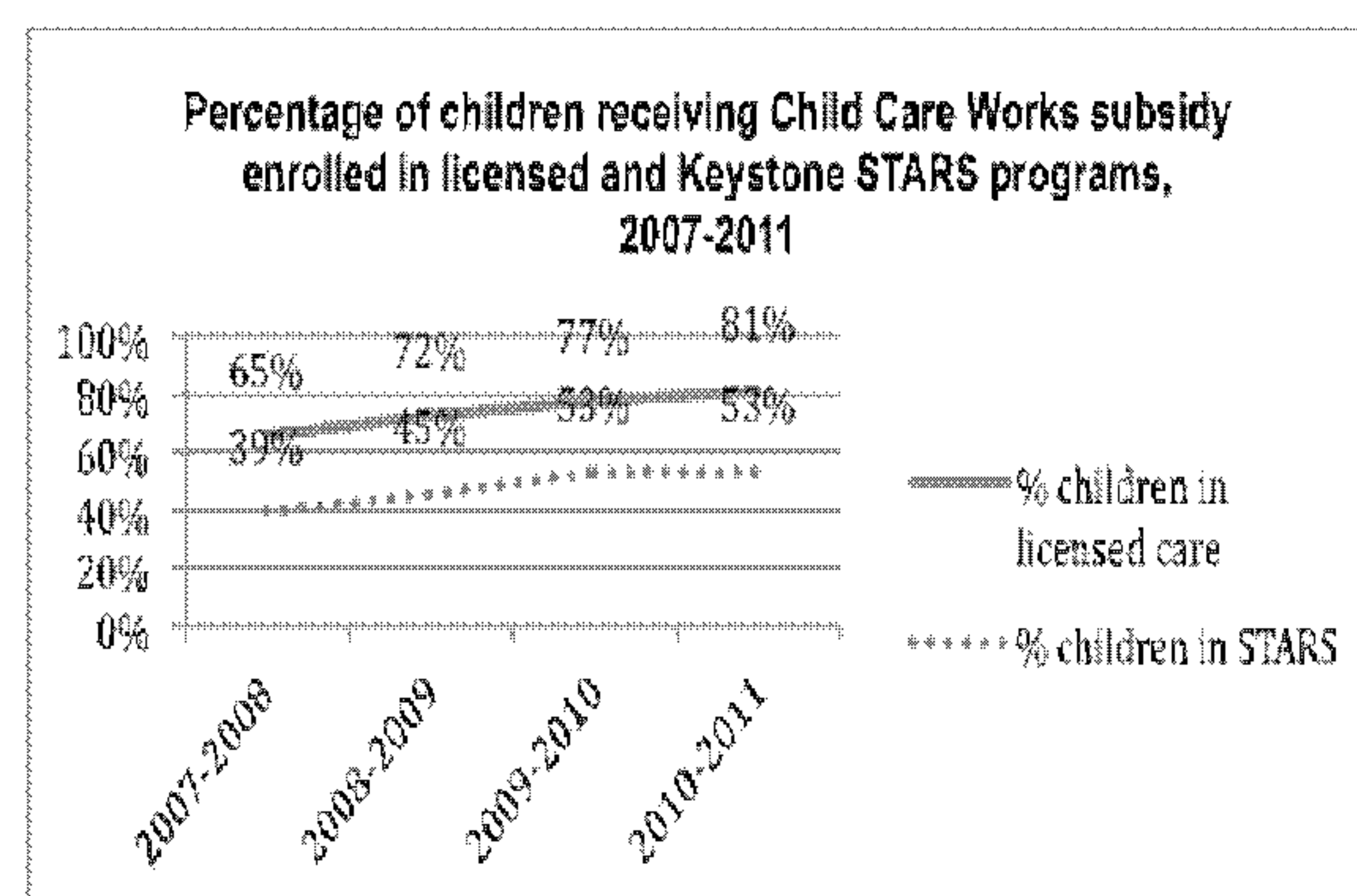
Initiated in 2011, this program will provide home visiting services to approximately 1,850 high-needs children each year for four years.

(d): Increasing the Number and Percentage of Children with High Needs in Early Learning and Development Programs

Through its increased investment in Early Learning and Development programs, Pennsylvania has successfully increased access to quality programs and improved child outcomes for high-needs children, as demonstrated by the following accomplishments:

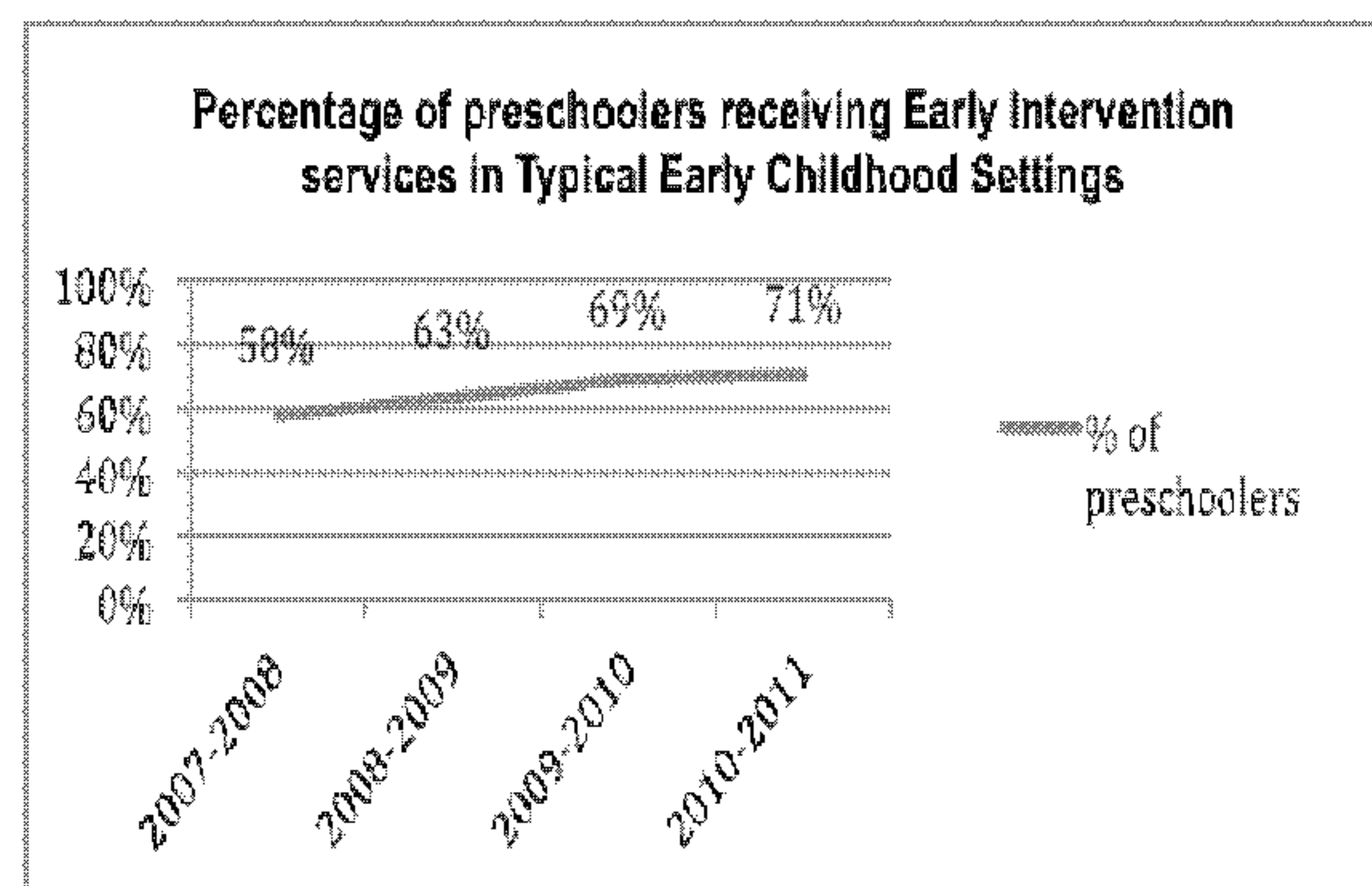
1). *The significant increase in the number and percentage of high-needs children participating in quality Early Learning and Development*

programs. As illustrated in Table (A)(1)-5 on page 23, the number of high-needs children participating in such programs grew approximately 20% between 2007 in 2011.⁸ As the chart to the right shows, more high-needs children receiving Child Care subsidies are enrolled in state-licensed child care and quality Keystone STARS programs than ever before.



⁸ The children served figure is not an unduplicated count; children may be served in more than one Early Learning and Development program at a time.

2). *The increase in the percentage of children with disabilities or developmental delays receiving Early Intervention services in typical Early Learning and Development settings.* Inclusion in typical settings maximizes children’s opportunities for development. As the chart to the right illustrates, the percentage of the state’s children receiving Early Intervention services in typical settings grew from less than 60% in 2007 to more than 70% in 2011.



(e): Existing Early Learning and Development Legislation, Policies, and Practices

In 2007, Pennsylvania established the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) to create a coherent organizational structure for all of the state’s Early Learning and Development programs. Funded jointly by the Departments of Education and Public Welfare, and structured as a dual depute, OCDEL administers and unifies child-serving systems. The way in which OCDEL works with these two state agencies and with the Governor to oversee Early Learning and Development programs is described further in section (A)(3), which begins on page 58. This section includes three organizational charts that illustrate these governance relationships.

Through its established governance structure, OCDEL has instituted specific policies and practices that govern Early Learning and Development programs in the state. These policies and procedures guide the development of practices in each of the following RTT-ELC-defined areas: Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, Health Promotion Practices, Family Engagement Strategies, Development of Early Childhood Educators, Program Performance, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and Effective Data Practices. The current status of these policies and practices is described in the following section.

(f): Current Status in Key Areas

Pennsylvania’s leadership is evident in the many Early Learning and Development policies and practices it has established, including each of the following:

(1): Early Learning and Development Standards

As part of its mission, OCDEL has developed a comprehensive set of Early Learning and Development Standards to inform curriculum and child assessment. The standards include nine domains, which encompass the five domains identified by the U.S. Department of Education as essential to school readiness. Table (A)(1)-6 on page 24 outlines the current status of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and Appendices (A)(1)-4a, 4b, and 4c, which begin on page 12 of the appendices, provide copies of the state's Learning Standards for Infant/Toddler, Pre-K, and Kindergarten programs.

The state's Learning Standards for Early Childhood are being integrated into its Standards Aligned System (SAS), a comprehensive, research-based online resource designed to provide educators with a framework and integrated tools to enhance their teaching effectiveness (see Appendix (A)(1)-5: Standards Aligned Systems Fact Sheet, on page 158 of the appendices). The Standards demonstrate sequential learning through a Continuum of Learning framework. All nine OCDEL programs are required to use the standards.

These Standards are also integrated into the performance standards for the Keystone STARS. Appendices (A)(1)-6a, 6b, and 6c, which begin on page 159 of the appendices, provide copies of the Program Standards for Centers, Group Homes, and Family Child Care Homes. Appendix (A)(1)-7: Standards Continuum, on page 192 of the appendices, demonstrates the sequential elements of the standards. Early Learning and Development programs that participate in Keystone STARS must meet more stringent requirements for use of the standards and these requirements intensify at each progressive STAR level. This Keystone STARS system is further described in section (B)(1), which begins on page 86. Appendix (A)(1)-8: Keystone STARS Program Report, on page 213 of the appendices, provides an overview of the system.

OCDEL makes information about the standards accessible to families, providers, and community-members through family-friendly activity calendars and Early Learning Standards wheels. The calendars and supplemental activities are published in English and Spanish, distributed statewide through Early Learning and Development providers and the Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN) teams, which conduct local community outreach, and available on the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Pennsylvania's Promise for

Children websites. Samples of these companion materials are included in Appendix (A)(1)-9a and 9b, which begin on page 221 of the appendices.

(2): A Comprehensive Assessment System

Pennsylvania has developed and implemented a Comprehensive Assessment System to ensure that its Early Learning and Development programs meet the quality expectations defined in program performance standards. Table (A)(1)-7 on page 24 outlines the components of this assessment system, which includes several critical quality-control elements:

- a). *Developmental screening.* OCDEL requires all state-funded Early Learning and Development programs to administer developmental screening to all children, and make referrals when necessary. In addition, Keystone STARS programs have access to Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Services for children with behavior issues, which serves as another screening mechanism.
- b). *Formative assessments.* Currently, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Head Start Supplemental programs, Early Intervention, and Keystone STAR 3 and 4 programs use OCDEL-approved authentic assessment tools, which incorporate teacher observation to measure child progress, and report assessment outcomes into the Pennsylvania Early Learning Network (ELN) statewide data collection system. Appendix (A)(1)-10: Pennsylvania Early Learning Network, on page 229 of the appendices, provides additional information on the ELN. Through ELN, OCDEL collected assessments for more than 27,000 children in 2010-11. In 2007, Pennsylvania began developing a common assessment and reporting system, described further in section (E)(1), to monitor child outcomes from formative assessments.
- c). *Measures of Environmental Quality.* Pennsylvania uses the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) to measure classroom quality. An age-appropriate version of the ERS is used in Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Head Start Supplemental, and Keystone STARS classrooms. OCDEL uses ERS ratings of environment, curriculum, schedule, and supervision and interaction, help to identify program quality across different Keystone s and Early Learning and Development programs.
- d). *Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions.* OCDEL encourages Head Start classrooms to use the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) to monitor the

quality of adult-child interactions and is piloting the tool for use in Keystone STARS 3 and 4 classrooms to determine the feasibility of statewide implementation in all Early Learning and Development programs. Pennsylvania's 2009-2010 study of initial stages of the CLASS™ pilot showed strong positive results. Based on the results of that study, Pennsylvania intends to implement CLASS™ as a supplemental assessment statewide in the future.

In addition, Pennsylvania is partnering with the U.S. Department of Education to include a sample of the state's children in its Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2011-2012 (ECLS K-2011). Pennsylvania will expand this partnership to include an oversampling of children in the state so that Pennsylvania can produce state-specific information on Kindergarten readiness as the ECLS K-2011 produces national data.

(3): Health Promotion Practices

Pennsylvania uses multiple measures to ensure the health and safety of young children in Early Learning and Development programs:

- a). Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards include two domains that address health promotion: the Physical-Health domain and the Social-Emotional domain;
- b). Pennsylvania has established extensive professional development for Early Learning and Development programs that focus specifically on nutrition and physical activity;
- c). The state recommends that Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts programs include educational activities and information that focus on nutrition and healthy eating for preschoolers as part of family engagement activities;
- d). Head Start and Early Head Start programs are required to provide information and supports to parents regarding a range of health and safety issues;
- e). Keystone STARS requires programs to provide parents with an increasing intensity of health promotion information at each STAR level; and
- f). Pennsylvania's licensed family, group and child care centers must follow Child Care Certification Staff regulations⁹, which define standards for protecting child health & safety.

⁹ (Title 55, Chapters 3270, 3280, 3290).

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In 2011, the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA), ranked Pennsylvania 7th in the nation for quality regulation requirements.

Table (A)(1)-8 on page 25 outlines the high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the state.

(4): Family Engagement Strategies

Pennsylvania has integrated family engagement strategies through all Early Learning and Development programs:

- a). The Program and Family Partnership domain of Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards includes specific requirements for programs to implement family engagement strategies;
- g). Pennsylvania has adopted the nationally-acclaimed Strengthening Families framework and, in 2008, was one of seven states invited to develop a plan to integrate the framework into its system;
- h). Pennsylvania's Promise for Children is a statewide public awareness campaign that educates families about how to promote their child's quality Early Learning and Development;
- i). the state has established a Parent Advisory Council and appointed a Special Assistant for Family Engagement to coordinate family engagement strategies across programs;
- j). PA Pre-K Counts programs are required to develop a Family Involvement Plan that includes a variety of engagement strategies and practices;
- k). Keystone STARS performance standards focuses on Partnerships with Families and Community;
- l). State-funded Head Start programs are required to follow federal Head Start program standards, which include parent engagement strategies;
- m). Early Intervention programs are required to help families become lead team members in the planning and delivery of services for their children;
- n). Child care licensing regulations require parent communications and opportunities for parent participation; and
- o). Pennsylvania's evidence-based home visitation programs build strong and sustainable relationships with families to promote positive outcomes for children.

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Table (A)(1)-9 on page 26 outlines the elements of the high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State. In 2010-2011, Pennsylvania administered a cross-program Family Survey to more than 78,000 families participating in its Early Learning and Development programs to measure satisfaction with these strategies. The survey, which achieved a return rate of nearly 24%, showed a very high level of satisfaction on a number of factors across all programs. See Appendix (A)(1)-11: OCDEL Family Survey, on page 234 of the appendices, for an overview of the survey.

(5): Development of Early Childhood Educators

Pennsylvania has set high standards for early childhood educator quality and created a professional development system and supports that makes these standards achievable for early childhood educators.

- a). Pennsylvania has developed both an Early Childhood Education Career Lattice, which provides a guide to the education levels required for many different positions in the early care and education field and a Core Body of Knowledge (CBK), which is the state's Workforce Competencies Framework. Together, these protocols provide a framework for pursuing a career in early childhood education. Pennsylvania is currently aligning the CBK with standards for the state's Teacher Certification in Early Childhood.¹⁰
- p). Pennsylvania has created three professional credentials for early childhood educators – the Pennsylvania Director Credential, the Pennsylvania School-Age Professional Credential, and the Early Intervention Language Coach credential. Pennsylvania's Director Credential is one of 24 state-defined director credential programs approved by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- q). Pennsylvania is increasing early childhood educators' access to institutions of higher education (IHEs) through partnerships with leading Pennsylvania foundations and universities designed to make it easier for early-childhood students to transfer two-year Associate's Degree credits to four-year programs. As of 2011, the state had developed 56 articulation agreements providing for such credit transfer.

¹⁰ Chapter 49-2 of state board of education regulations.

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- r). In partnership three local foundations, Pennsylvania issued its first grants to nine IHEs in 2009-2010 to help “open the gates of higher education” to early childhood educators. Through these “Gate Opener Grants,” colleges and universities work with early childhood professionals to address challenges they face as they earn Bachelor’s degrees.
- s). Pennsylvania provides financial assistance to early childhood educators to earn credentials and college degrees through a voucher program and offers needs-based professional development opportunities based on community needs assessment.

Table (A)(1)-10 on page 29 outlines the status of all Early Learning and Development workforce credentials currently available in the State. Table (A)(1)-11 on page 29 provides a summary of current postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators.

(6): Program Performance

To make the best use of public resources and produce positive outcomes for young children, OCDEL continues to refine its system of accountability. The performance standards established for Keystone STARS, Early Intervention, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, and Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies articulate quality expectations for staff qualifications and professional development, learning activities, parent and community engagement, and best business practices. OCDEL regularly monitors adherence to performance standards and fiscal requirements. In addition, regional specialists conduct site visits to monitor programs and provide technical assistance to help programs continue to improve their quality. OCDEL and regional specialists work with programs that are not meeting the requirements to help them develop and successfully implement a corrective action plan. OCDEL also collects customer satisfaction surveys from parents and providers.

(7): Kindergarten Entry Assessments

Pennsylvania is designing a Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework to provide a common statewide reporting tool for child outcomes. The framework will measure outcomes across the five essential domains of school readiness: language and literacy development; cognitive and general knowledge, including early math and scientific development; approaches to learning; physical well-being and motor development; and social and emotional development. Beginning

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in the fall of 2011-2012, the state is piloting a version of this framework in 24 schools in seven school districts [see section (E)(1) for details]. Table (A)(1)-12 on page 32 describes the current status of the state's Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework and shows how the assessments align with the five essential domains of school readiness.

(8): Effective Data Practices

Pennsylvania is the only state that currently meets all 10 fundamentals of coordinated state Early Learning and Development data systems identified by the Early Childhood Data Collaborative. Pennsylvania has established uniform data collection through Pennsylvania's Enterprise to Link Information for Children Across Networks (PELICAN), a network of subsystems that manage data for PA Pre-K Counts, Keystone STARS, Child Care Works Subsidy, Provider Certification, Head Start, Early Intervention. PELICAN also includes an Early Learning Network (ELN) subsystem designed to guide instruction, inform state policies, and increase efficiencies across all programs overseen by OCDEL. Through ELN, OCDEL collects two types of information:

- a). Child-level data, which is keyed to a unique child identifier common to both state public welfare and education data systems. This information includes each child's family demographics, health information, service referrals, and attendance and enrollment details. Personally identifiable information is delinked from service and outcome data so it remains
- t). Program-level data, which is keyed to a unique provider identifier, which is the same teacher identifier system used in the K-12 system. This information includes program and workforce data such as teacher qualifications, benefits, and turnover rates, and classroom quality rating scores.

PA Pre-K Counts, Head Start Supplemental, Early Intervention, Keystone STARS, Child Care Certification and Child Care Works all use the ELN data system to enter child and program data. These child outcomes help to inform program quality across Early Learning and Development programs. Table (A)(1)-13 on page 33 profiles all Early Learning and Development data systems currently used in the State.

(g): Results of Efforts to Improve the Quality of Early Learning and Development Programs

Pennsylvania's drive to increase financial investment in Early Learning and Development programs, establish policies and procedures to align systems, and target support to children with

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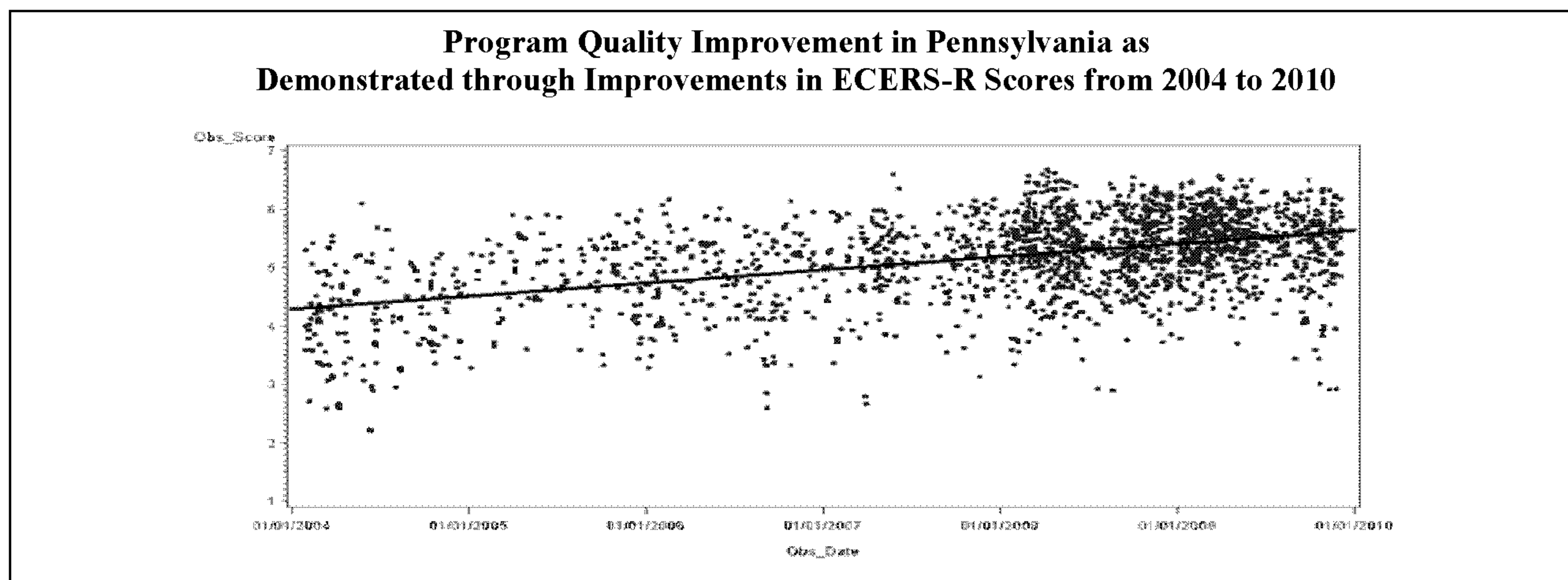
high needs has resulted in both significant improvements in the programs across the state and in positive child outcomes.

Through these efforts, the state has successfully improved the quality of services through three core Early Learning and Development programs: Keystone STARS, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, and Head Start. Keystone STARS programs reversed a 10-year trend of declining quality, as shown by a 2006 evaluation conducted by Pennsylvania State University and University of Pittsburgh. This study showed improvements in child care quality overall based on average ERS scores between 2002 and 2006, and progression through the STARS system appears to be a reliable predictor of attaining higher program quality.¹¹ More than 100,000 high-needs children under age five are enrolled in Keystone STARS programs.

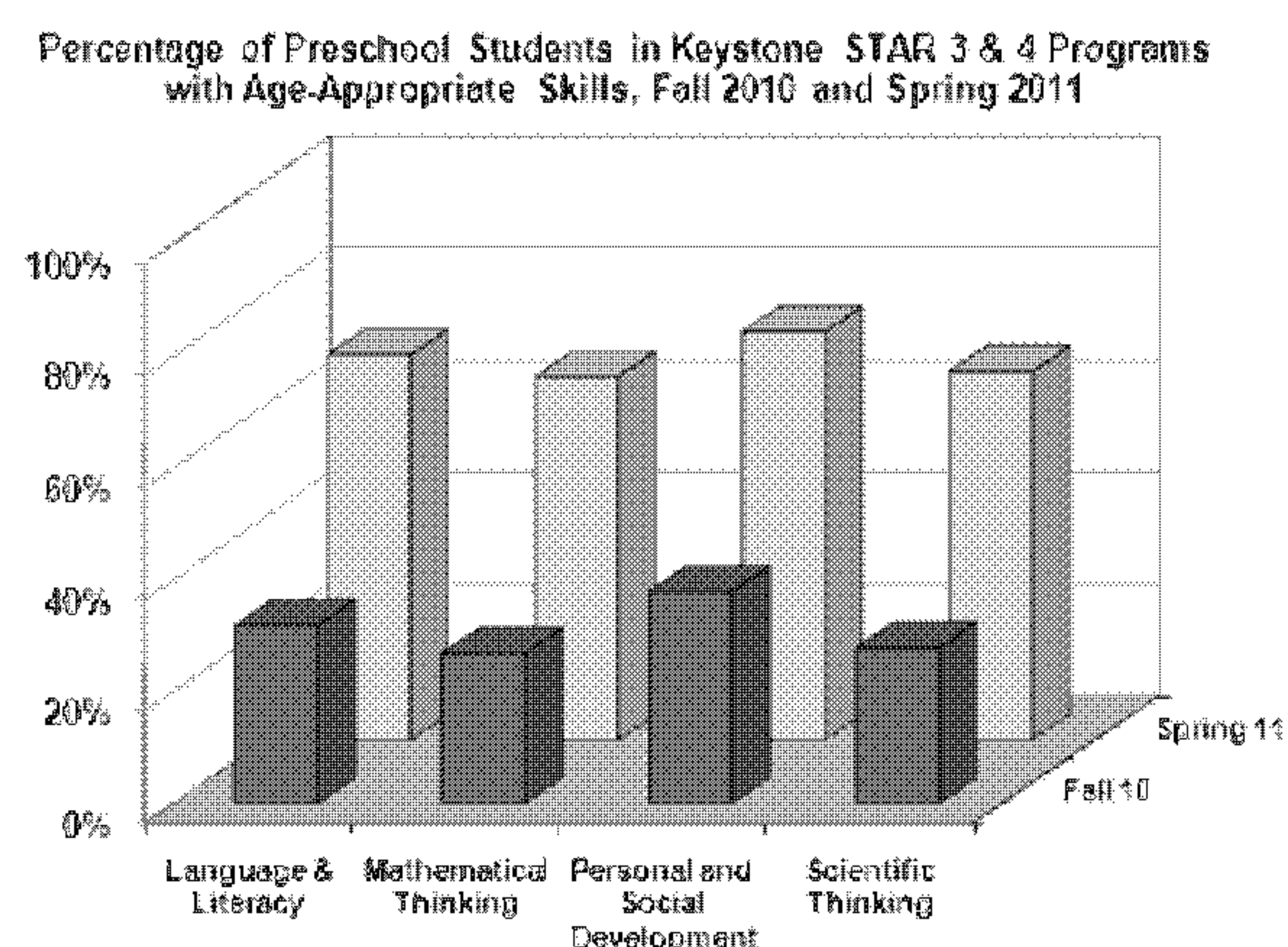
Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Head Start, and Keystone STARS classrooms have shown a seven-year trend improving classroom quality, as shown through increasing scores on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scales-Revised (ECERS-R), the version of the Environment Rating Scale that measures program quality for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Classroom (ERS tools are also available for including infant and toddler programs, school age child care program, and family child care home providers).

The following chart illustrates the outcomes of the ECERS-R assessments over time; each point in the figure represents a single classroom assessment. The increasing number of points over time represents the increase in the number of assessment administered and the upward trend shows that the average ECERS-R score is improving, demonstrating programs' increasing quality in preschool settings over time. Similar, consistent upward trends were also found for other classroom settings, using the appropriate setting-specific versions of the ERS.

¹¹ "Evaluation of Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS Quality Rating System in Child Care Settings," December 2006.



Pennsylvania has also successfully increased outcomes for children enrolled in Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program, and Keystone STAR 3 and 4 programs. As illustrated in the chart below, data from 2010-2011 showed that children are progressing throughout the year and are entering Kindergarten ready to learn. Each program showed a significant increase, from fall to spring, in the percentage of preschoolers with age-appropriate language, math, and social skills. In addition, nearly every child showed age-appropriate or emerging age-appropriate language, math, and social skills by the end of the year. Data on Program Quality Across Early Learning and Development Programs on page 21 includes the percentages of children who showed age-appropriate proficiency at the beginning and end of the 2010-11 school year in each program.



Appendix (A)(1)-12: Keystone STARS Outcomes, on page 235 of the appendices, provides further information about the success of Keystone STAR 3 and 4 programs. These strong outcomes and positive trends show that Pennsylvania’s leadership and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development programs is paying off. The state’s strong foundation provides a solid basis for launching its ambitious plan to increase access to high quality early education for families in high-risk communities, improve instruction in early childhood education classrooms, refine the alignment between early childhood education, Kindergarten and beyond, and document how many of our young children enter Kindergarten with age-appropriate skills.

(h): Evidence for (A)(1)

(1): Pennsylvania’s Baseline Data Tables

Table (A)(1)-1: The Number and Percentage of Children from Low-Income¹² Families in the State, by Age

	Number of children from Low-Income families in the State	Children from Low-Income families as a percentage of all children in the State
Infants under age 1 and Toddlers ages 1 through 2	178,203 ^a	41% ^a
Preschoolers ages 3 to Kindergarten entry	170,593 ^a	39% ^a
Total number of children, birth to Kindergarten entry, from low-income families	348,796 ^a	40% ^a

^a CLASP analysis of American Community Survey data (2007 and 2008) and data from the National Center for Children in Poverty (2009)

Table (A)(1)-2: The Number and Percentage of Children with High Needs from Special Populations in the State. 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.

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	82,914 ^a	9.5%
Are English learners¹⁴	19,193 ^b	2.63% ^b
Reside on “Indian Lands”	0	0%
Are migrant¹⁵	901 ^c	<1%
Are homeless¹⁶	832 ^d	4.57%
Are in foster care	8,314 ^e	1%
Other as identified by the State. Describe: Families at or below 300% of the Federal Poverty Level^g	426,175 ^f	58.4% ^f

^a # of children in programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619. ^b # based on total PA population under 5 (2010 U.S. Census) & % of PA school enrollments that are ELL/LEP (2010-2011). ^c PA Department of Education, 6/30/11. ^d PA’s Consolidated State Performance Report, 2009-2010 (only includes data for children ages 3-5). ^e PA Department of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth and Families, 4/1/09 to 3/31/10. ^f # based on total PA population under 5 (2010 U.S. Census) & % of total PA population under 6 at or below 300% of FPL (2005-2009 American Communities Survey). ^g Pennsylvania recognizes children in families earning between 200%-300% of the poverty level as high needs based on analysis of data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS-K) that showed that children in this income group significantly.

For purposes of this application:

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

¹³ 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 Children who are English learners are children birth through Kindergarten entry who have home languages other than English.

¹⁵ 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)).

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Table (A)(1)-3: The Number of Children with High Needs in the State who are Enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs, by Age. Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.

	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until Kindergarten entry	Total	
State-funded preschool <i>Specify:</i> PA Pre-K Counts <i>Data Source and Year:</i> PELICAN, May 2011	0	0	11,359	11,359	
Early Head Start and Head Start¹⁷ <i>Data Source and Year:</i> Federal PIR, 2010-2011	1,792	4,142	27,048	32,982	
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 <i>Data Source and Year:</i> PELICAN EI and Penn Data, Fiscal Year-End, June 30, 2011	6,631	27,466	48,817	82,914	
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA <i>Data Source and Year:</i> Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2009-2010 School Year ^a	0	0	5,997	5,997	
Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program	Child Care Works <i>Data Source and Year:</i> PELICAN Child Care Works query, March 2011	5,421	12,002	50,673	68,096
	Keystone STARS <i>Data Source and Year:</i> Estimated from PELICAN Child Care Works and Keys to Quality data, June 2011 ^b	8,038	17,796	75,134	100,968
Other <i>Specify:</i> Head Start Supplemental <i>Data Source and Year:</i> PELICAN, 2010-2011	0	0	5,465	5,465	
Other <i>Specify:</i> Home Visiting Programs <i>Data Source and Year:</i> NFP: CIS Year-End Report 2010-2011 Funded Slot Distribution; PCHP: MIS Year-End Report 2010-2011; PAT: MIS Year-End Report 2010-2011	Not available	Not available	Not available	5,821 ^d	
Other <i>Specify:</i> Licensed Nurseries <i>Data Source and Year:</i> Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2010-2011	Not available	Not available	Not available	22,960 ^e	

^a 2010-2011 Data Currently Not Available. ^b The full estimate of children is included because the number of children with high needs receiving services in a Keystone STARS program is unknown. ^c Includes Parents as Teachers, Nurse Family Partnership, and Parent Child Home Program. ^d Total is not broken down by age; NFP number served not available; PCHP only had 3 grantees in FY 10-11. ^e Licensed Nursery Schools are estimated enrollment number based on actual locations with an average enrollment of 40 children per location.

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

(2): Data on the Status of Children at Kindergarten Entry

Specific data on the status of children at Kindergarten entry is not currently collected on a statewide basis in Pennsylvania. A key focus of the state's RTT-ELC Early Learning and Development Plan is to develop the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework, which will enable the state to collect and report on this data across all essential domains of school readiness, including data on the readiness gap between the state's high-needs children and their peers. This framework is described in section (E)(1), which begins on page 232.

(3): Data on Program Quality Across Early Learning and Development Programs

One of Pennsylvania's measures of program quality is the Environment Rating Scales. Keystone STAR 3 and 4 centers, and PA Pre-K Counts programs receive independent ERS assessments. In 2009, additional ERS data was collected on a sample of STAR 1 and STAR 2 programs as well. The chart below shows an increase in ERS scores at higher STAR levels.

Average Environment Rating Scale (ERS) Scores across STAR levels and PA Pre-K Counts					
	STAR 1*	STAR 2*	STAR 3	STAR 4	PA Pre-K Counts
ERS Score	3.92	4.70	5.30	5.64	5.86
* STAR 1 and 2 programs typically do not receive independent ERS assessments. Scores based a sample of assessments completed in 2009, and included in the "Demonstrating Quality: Pennsylvania Keystone STARS 2010 Program Report					

Child outcomes from Keystone STAR 3 and 4 programs, Head Start Supplemental Program, and PA Pre-K Counts also indicate improvements in program quality across these programs. As the following chart shows, the percentage of children proficient in the seven domains listed (which correlate to the five essential domains of school readiness) increased significantly across all domains for all programs measured.

Domain	% of Children Proficient in Domains of School Readiness, by Program					
	PA Pre-K Counts		Head Start Supplemental		Keystone STARS 3&4	
	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2010	Spring 2011	Fall 2010	Spring 2011
Personal and Social Development	21.4	79.6	21.2	70.8	37.9	73.3
Language and Literacy	15.1	75.1	12.5	61.5	32.0	68.7
Mathematical Thinking	13.4	73.6	10.2	58.8	27.1	64.8
Scientific Thinking	13.4	73.7	10.7	58.4	28.2	66.1
Social Studies	16.1	76.7	12.4	59.4	31.9	68.6
The Arts	25.8	82.6	24.5	70.5	43.4	76.3
Physical Development	30.4	86.8	28.8	76.1	49.9	81.9

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(4): Other Required Evidence Tables

<i>Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development. Children with High Needs Participating in Each Type of Early Learning and Development Program for Each of the Past 5 Years (2007-2011)</i>					
	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
Type of investment	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start and Head Start¹⁸	\$39,911,000 ^a	\$39,451,000 ^a	\$38,661,000 ^a	\$37,332,000 ^a	\$37,278,000 ^a
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: PA Pre-K Counts</i>	\$73,694,000 ^a	\$85,722,000 ^a	\$84,563,000 ^a	\$83,358,000 ^a	\$82,784,000 ^a
State contributions to IDEA Part C	\$108,599,000 ^a	\$110,136,000 ^a	\$114,120,000 ^a	\$96,393,000 ^a	\$112,926,000 ^a
State contributions for special education and related services for children with disabilities, ages 3 through Kindergarten entry	\$169,779,000 ^a	\$166,761,000 ^a	\$171,719,000 ^a	\$171,688,000 ^a	\$154,265,000 ^a
Total State contributions to CCDF¹⁹	\$144,611,000 ^a	\$166,761,000 ^a	\$171,719,000 ^a	\$171,688,000 ^a	\$154,265,000 ^a
State match to CCDF <i>Exceeded/Met/Not Met (if exceeded, indicate amount by which match was exceeded)</i>	\$99,470,000 (exceeded by \$555,000) ^a	\$106,630,000 (exceeded by \$8,898,000) ^a	\$98,680,000 (exceeded by \$1,208,000) ^a	\$108,078,000 exceeded by \$12,565,000) ^{a, b}	Not available
TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs²⁰	\$171,356,000 ^c	\$186,369,000 ^c	\$163,210,000 ^c	\$192,964,000 ^c	\$209,904,000 ^c
Total State contributions:	\$807,420,000	\$861,830,000	\$842,672,000	\$861,501,000	\$751,422,000
^a State of Pennsylvania SAP Accounting System. ^b Estimated. ^c DPW Budget Office's TANF Worksheet.					

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.

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Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State.
Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.

Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years ²¹					
	2007	2008	2009 ²²	2010 ¹⁷	2011 ¹⁷	
State-funded preschool (annual census count; e.g., October 1 count) <i>Specify: PA Pre-K Counts</i>	0	10,945	11,841	11,863	11,359	
Early Head Start and Head Start²³ (funded enrollment)	30,980	30,739	29,064	32,367	32,982	
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 (annual December 1 count)	42,556	44,174	46,410	47,346	47,346 ^a	
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 (Fiscal Year End Data, June 30)	69,325	73,600	75,826	78,730	82,914	
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA (total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report)	493,964	505,013	530,182	603,653	603,653 ^a	
Programs receiving CCDF funds (average monthly served)	Child Care Works ^b	55,206	75,779	74,615	68,208	68,096
	Keystone STARS ^{b,c}	89,433	119,196	119,439	101,397	100,968
Other <i>Describe: Head Start Supplemental</i>	5,780	5,780	5,738	5,632	5,465	
Other <i>Specify: Home Visiting Programs^d</i>	7,598	8,025	8,618	8,447	5,821 ^e	
Other <i>Specify: Licensed Nurseries</i>	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available	

^a 2010; 2011 Data Currently Not Available. ^b The averages are based on state fiscal years (i.e. 2007 = SFY06-07). ^c The full estimate of children (birth through Kindergarten entry) is included because the number of children with high needs receiving services in a Keystone STARS program is unknown. ^d Includes Parents as Teachers, Nurse Family Partnership, and Parent Child Home Program. ^e NFP funded capacity, not served; PCHP dropped to 3 grantees for FY 10-11

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.

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Table (A)(1)-6: 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.
 Please place an “X” in the boxes to indicate where the State’s Early Learning and Development Standards address the different age groups by Essential Domain of School Readiness.

Essential Domains of School Readiness	Age Groups		
	Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers
Language and literacy development	X	X	X
Cognition and general knowledge (including early math and early scientific development)	X	X	X
Approaches toward learning	X	X	X
Physical well-being and motor development	X	X	X
Social and emotional development	X	X	X

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System Currently Required Within the State by Different Types of Early Learning and Development Programs or Systems.
 Please place an “X” in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.

Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: PA Pre-K Counts</i>	X	X	X	X ^a	
Early Head Start and Head Start and Head Start State Supplemental	X	X	X	X ^a	
Programs funded under IDEA Part C	X	X			
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619	X	X			
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA					
Programs receiving CCDF funds					
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Specify by tier:</i>	X (STAR 2 and above)	X (STAR 3 and above)	X (STAR 3 and above)	X ^a (STAR 3 and above)	
State licensing requirements					
Other <i>Describe: Home Visiting</i>	X	X		X	
Other <i>Describe: Licensed Nurseries</i>					

^a Staff-child interactions subscale, Environment Rating Scale

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Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of High-Quality Health Promotion Practices Currently Required within the State by Different Types of Early Learning and Development Programs or Systems.

Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.

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: PA Pre-K Counts</i>	X	X	X		
Early Head Start, Head Start, and Head Start State Supplemental	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part C	X	X		X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619	X	X		X	
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	X	X	X		
Programs receiving CCDF funds	X				
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Specify by tier (add rows if needed).</i>	X	X	X	X (STAR 3 and above)	
State licensing requirements	X	X	X		
Other <i>Specify: Home Visiting</i>	N/A – Home Visiting	X	X	X	
Other <i>Describe: Licensed Nurseries</i>	X		X		

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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</p> <p><i>Specify: PA Pre K Counts</i></p>	<p>Linkages with other community supports: Collaborations are defined as coordination with community agencies whose work intersects with PA Pre-K Counts programming. At a minimum, collaboration agreements are encouraged with Early Intervention, Head Start, Local Education and Resource Networks (LEARN) teams, and the community’s early learning programs including private nursery schools, local school districts, and community-based child care providers. PA Pre-K Counts providers should reach out to the county Child Care subsidy agencies to coordinate funding for before and after child care that may be needed. Written agreements that specify the way in which referrals and enrollment are coordinate will assure that families are informed of the process.</p> <p>Family Engagement Strategies: Engaging parents in their children’s preschool experience has a positive impact on children’s school readiness and success. Partnerships with parents should be multi-faceted, and culturally and linguistically sensitive. PA Pre-K Counts providers should include strategies for parent engagement in their program handbooks and utilize the Partnership Standards within the Learning Standards for Early Childhood as the framework for these plans.</p>
<p>Early Head Start and Head Start</p>	<p>Early Head Start and Head Start programs (including Head Start State Supplemental) are required to follow the Federal Program Standards. The Program Standards specify the ways in which programs engage and support families. They include items such as: Family goal setting, Accessing community services and resources, Services to pregnant women, Parent involvement in child development and education, Parent involvement in health, nutrition, and mental health education, Parent involvement in community advocacy, Parent involvement in transition activities, Community Partnerships, and Advisory Committees.</p>
<p>Programs funded under IDEA Part C</p>	<p>Programs funded under IDEA Part C are required to adhere to federal and state regulations. Family Engagement is at the core of all Early Intervention services and Early Intervention providers are required to support families’ high level of participation by helping families to identify their priorities and interests of their children and to become lead team members in the planning and delivery of services for their children. Early Intervention services are based upon the understanding that children learn from everyday interactions with familiar people, places and routines – families are at the center of these learning experiences. By design Early Intervention services are individualized for each and every child. The Early Intervention team consults with the family and identified caregivers to ensure supports and services are coordinated and comprehensive.</p>
<p>Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619</p>	<p>Programs funded under IDEA Part C are required to adhere to federal and state regulations. Family Engagement is at the core of all Early Intervention services and Early Intervention providers are required to support families’ high level of participation by helping families to identify their priorities and interests of their children and to become lead team members in the planning and delivery of services for their children. Early Intervention services are based upon the understanding that children learn from everyday interactions with familiar people, places and routines – families are at the center of these learning experiences. By design Early Intervention services are individualized for each and every child. The Early Intervention team consults with the family and identified caregivers to ensure supports and services are coordinated and comprehensive.</p>
<p>Programs funded under Title I of ESEA</p>	<p>Programs funded under Title 1 of ESEA must follow the federal legislation, regulation and policy guidance related to parent involvement. Lead Educational Agencies are required to involve parents in jointly developing parent involvement policies, school review and improvement efforts; coordinate and integrate their efforts with other programs; provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary to assist participating schools in planning and implementing effective parent involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance; build the schools' and parents' capacity for strong parental involvement.</p>
<p>Programs receiving CCDF funds</p>	<p>Child Care Works subsidized child care program. Per regulation, these families receiving subsidized child care are required to have a face-to-face meeting with the Child Care Information Services agency in their county. At this meeting, parent counseling and resource and referral information on early care and development programs, especially high quality programs like Keystone STARS, is made available to the family as well as other community resources if needed.</p>

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<p><i>Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State.</i></p> <p><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></p>	
<p>Types of Programs or Systems</p>	<p>Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today</p>
<p>Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements</p> <p><i>Specify by tier (add rows if needed).</i></p>	<p>Pennsylvania’s TQRIS system is built on the foundation of our State Licensing requirements. All programs need to maintain these requirements. To move up a tier, programs must to meet all standards for the previous tiers.</p> <p>STAR 1 (Start with STARS):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program collects child-centered information at enrollment to facilitate responsive care that is mindful of the needs of individual children and families. A parent/family meeting is offered within 45 days of enrollment to encourage program-family partnerships and share initial observations and goals for the child. • Program provides general information to parents regarding transitioning children to another classroom or educational setting. • At enrollment, families are provided with information regarding public, social and community services. <p>STAR 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific group or classroom information is shared with parents daily, using visual communication format. • Individual child information is shared in written form with parents on a daily basis for infants and toddlers, and there is a format and procedure for use on an as needed basis for other age groups. • Program transfers child’s records, at the request of the parent, when the child transitions to another education setting. • Program creates, with input from parents, a list of community/school stakeholders regarding child transition. • Program includes age-appropriate activities for children to prepare for transition. • At a minimum of once per year, written information on topics including health and human services, wellness, nutrition and fitness and/or child development is given and explained to parents and staff. <p>STAR 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of two parent conferences is offered per year to discuss the child’s progress and behavioral, social and physical needs. A written report of the child’s progress is provided during at least one of these conferences. • Parents are offered a group meeting to provide information regarding a child’s transition to another classroom or higher educational setting and to encourage parents and their children to connect to the school setting by visiting. • Program sends letter of introduction to appropriate community/school stakeholders outlining goal to partner in child transitioning efforts from child care to school setting. • Program participates in community/school transition activities as available. • A plan is written and implemented describing procedures to refer parents to appropriate social, mental, health, educational, wellness, and medical services. • Coordinate a minimum of one annual group activity to involve parents in meeting program learning goals. <p>STAR 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program offers parents an individual meeting to share specific information regarding the child’s transition to another classroom or educational setting and to give parents written information about the child’s progress. • Program has policies that demonstrate engagement and partnership with parents in program planning and decision making.

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<p><i>Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State.</i></p> <p><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></p>	
<p>Types of Programs or Systems</p>	<p>Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today</p>
<p>State licensing requirements</p>	<p>Completion of a Child Services Report: Twice a year regulated Child Care providers are required to provide family members a Child Service Report. The form is divided into the following three categories: (1) Child’s strengths, as age appropriate; (2) The next developmental milestones, as age appropriate; (3) You can help your child grow and develop, as age appropriate, at home. Each category lists the following four growth and development areas for review: Physical (fine motor and gross motor), Knowledge and Skills (approaches to learning, math, science and social studies), Social Emotional (personal-social), Communication, Language and Literacy.</p> <p>Child Care Centers and Group Child Day Care Homes:</p> <p>Communication with Parents: The operator shall establish oral or written communication in the language or mode of communication that is understandable to the parent.</p> <p>Parent access and participation: A parent of a child in care shall be permitted free access, without prior notice, throughout the center whenever children are in care, unless a court of competent jurisdiction has limited the parental right of access to the child and a copy of the order is on file at the facility. Opportunity shall be provided for parents to participate in the facility’s program. The operator shall maintain a yearly file, which documents general announcements to promote parent participation. The file shall be updated annually.</p> <p>Family Day Care Homes:</p> <p>Communications with Parents: The operator shall establish either oral or written communication in the language or mode of communication, which is understandable to the parent.</p> <p>Parent access and participation: A parent of a child in care shall be permitted free access, without prior written notice, throughout the child care space whenever children are in care, unless a court of competent jurisdiction has limited the parental right of access to the child and a copy of the order is on file at the facility. Opportunities shall be provided for parents to participate in the facility’s program.</p>
<p>Other <i>Describe: Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards</i></p>	<p>All programs that are funded through the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning are required to use the Early Learning Standards as a basis for their curriculum. The Early Learning Standards includes a key learning area: Partnerships for Learning. This key learning area outlines standards around:</p> <p>Connections: Shared Understanding of Family and School values, philosophies and cultures. Including: Information Exchange, Home to School Connections, School to Home Connections</p> <p>Family Engagement including: Shared Governance or decision-making, Special events and activities, Screening and assessment, Goal Development, Ongoing Progress Review, Community Supports</p> <p>Transition including: Program Entry, Program Exit, Community Connections</p>

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Table (A)(1)-10: All Early Learning and Development Workforce Credentials Currently Available in the State

List the Early Learning and Development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? (Yes/No/Not Available)	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
Child Development Associate (CDA) 2006-2007 2007-2008 2008-2009 2009-2010 2010-2011	Yes	1013 1318 1404 1959 2107	Data not available	Data is not currently collected for all Early Childhood Educators in the state.
Director Credential 2006-2007 2007-2008 2008-2009 2009-2010 2010-2011	Yes	193 150 264 181 264	Data not available	Data is not currently collected for all Early Childhood Educators in the state.
School-Age Credential 2006-2007 2007-2008 2008-2009 2009-2010 2010-2011	Yes	10 48 11 40 42	Data not available	Data is not currently collected for all Early Childhood Educators in the state.

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)
Pennsylvania Early Learning Keys to Professional Development	308	Yes
Community Colleges	Academic Year 2009-10	
Allegheny	48	Yes
Beaver	15	Yes
Bucks	23	Yes
Butler	11	Yes
Delaware	22	Yes
Harrisburg	53	Yes
Lehigh Carbon	49	Yes
Luzerne	8	Yes
Montgomery	33	Yes
Northampton	229	Yes

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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)
PA Highlands	20	Yes
Philadelphia	62	Yes
Reading	11	Yes
Westmoreland	60	Yes
Four Year Higher Education	Academic Year 2008-09*	
Albright College	9	Not Available
Alvernia University	18	Yes
Arcadia University	17	Yes
Baptist Bible College and Seminary	4	Not Available
Bloomsburg University of PA	52	Not Available
Cabrini College	24	Not Available
California University of PA	28	Not Available
Carlow University	20	Yes
Chatham University	2	Not Available
Chestnut Hill College	12	Yes
Cheyney University of PA	1	Not Available
DeSales University	1	Not Available
Duquesne University	12	Not Available
East Stroudsburg University of PA	27	Yes
Eastern University	15	Yes
Edinboro University of PA	35	Yes
Elizabethtown College	58	Not Available
Gannon University	11	Yes
Grove City College	35	Not Available
Gwynedd-Mercy College	11	Not Available
Holy Family University	2	Yes
Immaculata University	5	Not Available
Indiana University of PA/Main	10	Yes
Juniata College	3	Not Available
Keystone College	4	Yes
King's College	9	Yes
Kutztown University of PA	58	Not Available
La Roche College	0	Not Available

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<i>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</i>		
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)
Lincoln University	16	Not Available
Lock Haven University of PA/Main	19	Yes
Mansfield University of PA	13	Not Available
Marywood University	8	Not Available
Mercyhurst College	4	Not Available
Messiah College	8	Not Available
Millersville University of PA	61	Not Available
Misericordia University	11	Not Available
Mount Aloysius College	7	Not Available
Neumann University	11	Not Available
Penn State/Capital College-Harrisburg	12	Yes
Penn State University/Main	13	Yes
Philadelphia Biblical University	3	Not Available
Point Park University	6	Yes
Saint Vincent College	10	Yes
Seton Hill University	3	Not Available
Shippensburg University of PA	1	Yes
Slippery Rock University of PA	42	Not Available
Susquehanna University	11	Not Available
Temple University/Main	77	Not Available
University of Pittsburgh/ Main	11	Yes
University of Scranton	5	Not Available
Valley Forge Christian College	2	Not Available
West Chester University of PA	64	Yes
Westminster College		Not Available
Widener University/Main	9	Not Available
Wilkes University	5	Not Available
*2009-10 data currently not available		
Revisions to the Pennsylvania Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework have resulted in alignment with the Teacher Certification requirements.		

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<i>Table (A)(1)-12: Current status of the State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment</i>					
State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment	Essential Domains of School Readiness				
	Language and literacy	Cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development)	Approaches toward learning	Physical well-being and motor development	Social and emotional development
Domain covered? (Y/N) ^a	Y	Y	Y	N ^b	Y
Domain aligned to Early Learning and Development Standards? (Y/N) ^a	Y	Y	Y	N ^b	Y
Instrument(s) used? (Specify)	Keystone Kindergarten Inventory ^a				
Evidence of validity and reliability? (Y/N) ^c	N	N	N	N	N
Evidence of validity for English learners? (Y/N) ^c	N	N	N	N	N
Evidence of validity for children with disabilities? (Y/N) ^c	N	N	N	N	N
How broadly administered? (If not administered statewide, include date for reaching statewide administration)	Currently in pilot stage (Fall 2011) Valid and reliable tool will be fully administered statewide in Fall 2014				
Results included in Statewide Longitudinal Data System? (Y/N) ^a	N	N	N	N	N
^a The Keystone Kindergarten Inventory is currently in the pilot stage (Fall 2011). These domains are currently in the pilot version, and are aligned to the Early Learning and Development Standards. Results will be included in the SLDS in Fall 2014 once the tool is implemented statewide. ^b Physical well-being and motor development domain will be added in Spring 2012 pilot. ^c Reliability/Validity analysis of pilot data will be done by national experts in assessment, including Drs. Lynn Kagan and Catherine Scott-Little.					

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Table (A)(1)-13: 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 Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems						
	Unique child identifier	Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier	Unique program site identifier	Child and family demographic information	Early Childhood Educator demographic information	Data on program structure and quality	Child-level program participation and attendance
PELICAN Provider Certification^a			X ^h			X	
PELICAN Child Care Works^b	X ^g		X ^h	X	X	X	X
PELICAN Early Intervention^c	X ^g		X ^h	X		X	X
PELICAN Early Learning Network^d	X ^g	X	X ^h	X	X	X	X
PELICAN Keys to Quality^e			X ^h			X	X
PELICAN Pre-K Counts^f	X ^g	X	X ^h	X	X	X	X
PELICAN Provider Self Service^g			X ⁱ		X	X	

^a PELICAN Provider Certification is the system used to manage and create regulated child care providers and to certify/register that these providers meet the general health and safety standards for child care – thus creating a safe environment for children. The key building blocks of the Provider Certification system include Certification, Inspections, Complaints & Incidents, Sanctions, Administration, Correspondences and Reports. Regulated child care providers are created and assigned a unique program site identifier through the enterprise system access as noted in item i below. Data on program structure and quality pertains to the physical attributes and environment of regulated child care providers.

^b PELICAN Child Care Works is the low income, subsidized child care system used to assist in the management and administration of subsidized child care eligibility, enrollment and payment. The key building blocks of the Child Care Works system are Case Management, Financial Management, Provider Management, Online Attendance Tracking, Resources & Referral, Workload Management, Correspondences and Reports. See item g below regarding the Unique child identifier. Unregulated, relative/neighbor, child care providers are created and assigned a unique program site identifier through the enterprise system access as noted in item i below. Regulated child care provider information is listed as created within the PELICAN Provider Certification system. Early childhood educator demographic information for regulated, subsidized child care providers is self-reported and updated by either contractors from hardcopy reports or online updates through Provider Self Service; it may include highest educational attainment for the program site director; number of classroom staff, number of classroom staff with 2- year or 4-year degrees and number of classroom staff with special education certification. Data on program structure and quality includes child-level enrollment suspensions, child-level enrollment cessation reasons, and child care provider quality ratings as designated within PELICAN Keys to Quality. For the Child-level program participation and attendance information, child-level attendance details are voluntarily recorded by on a monthly, aggregate basis (i.e. number of attended days per month) by contracted subsidized child care program administrators.

^c PELICAN Early Intervention is the system used for both the infant/toddler and preschool Early Intervention programs to manage the services and supports provided to children (birth through age five) with developmental delays and disabilities. The key building blocks of the Early Intervention program are Case Management, Financial Management, Provider Management, Staff Management, Care Plan (ISP), Workload Management, and Reports. See item h below regarding the Unique child identifier. Unique early childhood educator identifiers for are assigned and data is stored within PELICAN Early Learning Network. Early Intervention providers are created and assigned a unique program site identifier through the enterprise system access as noted in item i below. Early childhood educator demographic information contains education attainment and credentials/licenses. It is collected for Early Intervention programs through PELICAN Early Intervention; the data is stored within PELICAN Early Learning Network. Data on Program structure and quality includes care plan service management, service notes management by supports coordinators and record closure reasons. For the Child-level program participation and attendance information, child-level

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Table (A)(1)-13: All Early Learning and Development Data Systems Currently Used in the State

<p>program participation data is recorded – child-level attendance is not.</p> <p>^d PELICAN Early Learning Network is the outcome reporting repository for participating program sites. It enables Pennsylvania to better understand the children served by its programs. It also offers a reporting solution that provides business intelligence used to improve program quality and the lives of children and families in Pennsylvania.</p> <p>The key building blocks of the Early Learning Network system include Child Enrollment, Staff Management, Attendance, Assessment Information, Alerts and Reports</p> <p>See item h below regarding the Unique child identifier.</p> <p>Unique program site identifiers are created and assigned as noted in item i below, within the provider management subsystem of PELICAN.</p> <p>Early childhood educator demographic information contains education attainment and credentials/licenses.</p> <p>Data on program structure and quality includes program structure, quality rating, and enrollment begin and end dates.</p> <p>^e PELICAN Keys to Quality is the system used to designate quality ratings and track technical assistance for program site locations participating in the Keystone STARS program.</p> <p>The key building blocks of the Keys to Quality system include – Provider Management, STARS Management, Grants Management, Fiscal Management and Technical Assistance.</p> <p>Regulated child care provider information is listed as created within the PELICAN Provider Certification system.</p> <p>Unique early childhood educator identifiers for are assigned and data is stored within PELICAN Early Learning Network.</p> <p>The unique program site identifiers are created and assigned as noted in item i below.</p> <p>Early childhood educator demographic information contains education attainment and credentials/licenses. It is collected for Early Intervention programs through PELICAN Early Intervention; the data is stored within PELICAN Early Learning Network.</p> <p>Data on program structure and quality pertains to the physical attributes and environment of regulated child care providers. It does not contain information regarding children or early childhood educators.</p> <p>^f PELICAN Pre-K Counts is the system used to provide funding for three- and four-year olds to attend a high-quality, half- or full-day Pre-Kindergarten in schools, child care centers and nursery schools. It is designed to support children who are at risk of school failure because of income, language or special needs issues.</p> <p>The key building blocks of the PA Pre-K Counts application include – Waitlist, Transfers, Intake and Staff Management, Classroom Management, Caseload Management, Program Review Instrument, Waivers & Enrollment Planning, Reports.</p> <p>See item h below regarding the Unique child identifier.</p> <p>Early childhood educator demographic information contains education attainment and credentials/licenses. It is collected for Early Intervention programs through PELICAN Early Intervention; the data is stored within PELICAN Early Learning Network.</p> <p>Unique program site identifiers are created and assigned as noted in item i below, within the provider management subsystem of PELICAN.</p> <p>Data on program structure and quality includes staff demographics information, educational level, director credentials, supervisory certificates and licenses and professional development credits.</p> <p>^g PELICAN Provider Self Service is the online system used to collect a valuable information about Pennsylvania’s early childhood programs – some of which is made available to the general public through an online Provider Search functionality. PELICAN Provider Self Service is used by early childhood programs to update their own key programmatic information used for resource and referral purposes.</p> <p>Prospective regulated child care providers can apply for a certificate of compliance or license. Existing regulated child care providers can choose to perform the following actions: submit a renewal application for certificate of compliance or license; conduct a certification self-assessment or report a complaint or incident. Subsidized child care providers can review and process child care attendance invoices.</p> <p>Early childhood programs are created and assigned a unique program site identifier through the enterprise system access as noted in item i below.</p> <p>Early childhood educator demographic information for early childhood programs is self-reported; it may include highest educational attainment for the program site director; number of classroom staff, number of classroom staff with 2- year or 4-year degrees and number of classroom staff with special education certification.</p> <p>Data on program structure and quality includes information about the work environment and quality ratings as designated within PELICAN Keys to Quality.</p> <p>^h Unique Child Identifiers are assigned through access to an enterprise system, Master Client Index (MCI), which is managed by the Department of Public Welfare.</p> <p>ⁱ Unique Program Site Identifiers are assigned through access to an enterprise system, Master Provider Index (MPI), which is managed by the Department of Public Welfare.</p>
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(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)(2): Articulating the State’s Rationale for its Early Learning and Development Reform Agenda and Goals

Over the past decade, Pennsylvania has made a strong commitment to increasing the strength of its Early Learning and Development systems to ensure that all children – particularly those with high needs – have access to the high quality programs that will fully prepare them for school success. In 2007, Pennsylvania centralized planning and administration of all state-funded and state-administered Early Learning and Development programs under the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), which spans the state’s Departments of Education and Welfare. Through OCDEL, Pennsylvania coordinates and implements quality components across programs, including developing the state’s Learning Standards for Early Childhood and establishing a requirement for all programs to use the standards to inform curriculum, observation, and assessment. As a result of its focus on Early Learning and Development has successfully:

- developed multiple partnerships designed to drive improvement in Early Learning and Development programs across the state;
- established policies and procedures to align and coordinate systems and created a network of information management systems to effectively and appropriately collect and analyze data about program quality, educator qualification and certification, and child outcomes;
- articulated Learning Standards for Early Childhood from birth through 3rd grade;
- developed a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System to support and measure program quality;
- established a comprehensive assessment system for child outcomes and classroom and teacher quality and child-outcomes reporting framework; and
- created a career framework and professional development system to support and improve the quality of the teachers who serve young children.

These initiatives have all been driven with one goal in mind: to ensure that every child in the state enters Kindergarten with the skills they need to succeed in school.

Because OCDEL is housed in both the Education and Public Welfare departments, it has been able to build solid partnerships with other state offices serving high-needs children, including the Office of Children, Youth, and Families, which administers child welfare programs; and the

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Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, which administers Title I programs. This governance structure will ensure a streamlined implementation for the state's RTT-ELC-funded Early Learning and Development Plan.

OCDEL has begun to build connections to its K-12 system by aligning learning standards and integrating quality expectations into Board of Education regulations for public school Pre-Kindergarten programs, and by including school districts as eligible grantees for PA Pre-K Counts, Pennsylvania's state-funded preschool program. Pennsylvania has also created a state framework for transition plans to link Early Learning and Development programs with school districts, charging locally-based LEARN teams (which conduct local community outreach) to support this work. These accomplishments have resulted in higher quality for Early Learning and Development programs, increased education levels and qualifications among early childhood educators, and improved outcomes for high-needs children.

Yet, like other states, Pennsylvania still faces significant challenges to ensure Kindergarten-readiness for children with high needs in order to close the ongoing achievement gap between high-needs children and their peers. These challenges are rooted in the following questions: How do we define Kindergarten readiness? How can we effectively measure whether or not children have Kindergarten-ready skills? How can we better help early educators and programs, particularly those in high-needs communities, provide effective instruction and supports that will ensure children are ready for Kindergarten? And how can we most effectively monitor and report on the outcomes of those efforts so that *all* early educators, programs, and policy-makers have clear, understandable information they can use to inform instruction and improve program quality?

The Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) provides Pennsylvania the opportunity to answer those questions as builds on its solid Early Learning and Development foundation to:

- Define what it means to be Kindergarten ready through frameworks that identify the specific cognitive, social/emotional, and physical skills and abilities children must possess to succeed in the K-12 system. These frameworks identify developmental milestones for children at the Infant/Toddler and Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten ages and

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include the five domains shown by research as critical to children's developing school readiness.

- Determine whether children have reach those milestones by the time they arrive in Kindergarten by developing a kindergarten-readiness inventory within a new child-outcomes reporting framework that will be mapped to authentic assessments to measure children's school-readiness at Kindergarten entry.
- Give all early educators and programs the tools they need to ensure Kindergarten readiness and provide smooth transitions for children to the formal K-12 system by focusing on increasing educator and program quality in high-risk communities and developing a birth-through-8 continuum for career development, early learning standards, and standards-based child outcome reporting.
- More effectively use data to ensure that policies and practices result in Kindergarten readiness for all children participating in the state's Early Learning and Development programs, including those with high needs by developing new tools for parents, teachers, community leaders, and policy-makers that will convert raw data into timely and actionable information that promotes Kindergarten readiness and positive outcomes for children.

By taking these steps, Pennsylvania will realize its vision of *taking children, families, and communities to the top* by ensuring that all children – including those with high needs – enter Kindergarten ready to succeed and to sustain achievement through the elementary grades.

(a): Goals for Improving Program Quality & Outcomes and Closing the Readiness Gap

To make its vision reality, Pennsylvania has established three ambitious, yet achievable goals for its Early Learning and Development system:

- 1). Increase access to quality programs for children with high needs to close the readiness gap by: a). increasing the number of Early Learning and Development programs serving high-needs children that are rated as high-quality; b). helping programs more effectively engage parents in their children's learning and development; and c). increasing early childhood educators' capacity to identify developmental delays.

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- 2). Improve program quality and increase efficiency within the Early Learning and Development system by integrating data systems and maximizing use of data.
- 3). Improve child outcomes for high-needs children by building a birth-8 continuum for career development, early learning standards, and standards-based child outcome reporting.

The charts on the following pages summarize the way in which Pennsylvania plans, with RTT-ELC support, to implement its reform agenda. The first chart outlines the way in which the integrated components of the state's Early Learning and Development reform agenda establish a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals. The second chart provides a graphic depiction of how these components will help the state realize its vision of taking children, families, and communities to the top. The details of state's plans and rationale for realizing its vision and achieving its goals are described in the subsections that follow these charts.

(b): Summary Chart of Pennsylvania’s Early Learning and Development Reform Agenda

The following chart summarizes Pennsylvania’s Early Learning and Development reform agenda, outlining the state’s progress in each of the key federally-defined Early Learning and Development domains, defining existing gaps, highlighting the state’s High Quality Plans, and linking those plans to the state’s key goals.

Quality Component	Pennsylvania’s Progress	Gaps/Challenges	High-quality plans	Close the Readiness Gap	Improve Program Quality	Improve Child Outcomes
Early Learning and Development Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Standards aligned birth – 3rd grade; alignment confirmed by independent evaluation • All PA Early Learning and Development programs required to use standards to inform curriculum and assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Learning and Development standards not fully integrated into Pennsylvania’s K-12 Standards Aligned System 	Fully integrate Pennsylvania’s early learning standards into the state’s K-12 Standards Aligned System (C1)			X
Comprehensive Assessment Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental screening required in most Early Learning and Development programs • Common outcomes reporting for several Early Learning and Development programs in Early Learning Network • Environment Rating Scale (ERS) classroom assessments in PKC, HSSAP, and STARS programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data on assessments not centralized, can lead to duplicative assessments of children served in multiple programs • Few tools available to help teacher use assessment data to improve instruction or families to improve children’s learning at home and share with K teachers when entering K 	Design and implement Training Modules on the Comprehensive Assessment System to offer educators a greater understanding the purposes and benefits and to support implementation of the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework. (C2)		X	
			Partner with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP) to deliver an educational curriculum on the use childhood developmental screening in primary practice settings to primary care providers. (C2)	X		
			Develop and implement the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework (C2)			X

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Quality Component	Pennsylvania's Progress	Gaps/Challenges	High-quality plans	Close the Readiness Gap	Improve Program Quality	Improve Child Outcomes
Family Engagement Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family involvement included in Early Learning and Development standards • Implementation of Strengthening Families Framework since 2008 • Parent Advisory Council • OCDEL Family Survey • Family engagement component in all OCDEL program standards • Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN) • Resource and referral through CCIS agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families of high-needs children not participating in Early Learning and Development programs not being reached as well as those within the Early Learning and Development system. • Some data/information that can help families and communities make solid early learning choices not publicly available 	Develop Family Engagement Project to connect systems in 36 high needs communities that support strong partnerships between child, family, community and school to promote children's school readiness (C4)	X		
			Expand the cross systems use of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework to health, child welfare, and K-12 communities (C4)			X
			Create the Early Learning GPS (Guiding Parents Smoothly) family survey tool (C4)	X		
			Create a web-based Early Learning Community Scorecard (C4)	X	X	
			Expand the Pennsylvania One Book, Every Young Child campaign by providing the annual book selection and take-home resources to every child in select Early Learning and Development programs as well as children in homeless shelters and expand the Reach Out and Read program in high risk communities (C4)	X		
Development of Early Childhood Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career lattice and CBK for early childhood educators • Three professional credentials • Work with higher education to increase access for early childhood educators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State does not have data to understand status of early childhood workforce • Not enough professional development specifically addresses infants and toddlers 	Develop an information technology solution (that builds on existing data systems) to collect and analyze Early Childhood Education workforce data (D1)		X	
			Develop an infant toddler professional development framework (D1)			X
			Develop and implement a career advising strategy to promote movement of educators up the Early Educator Career Lattice (D1)	X		X

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Quality Component	Pennsylvania's Progress	Gaps/Challenges	High-quality plans	Close the Readiness Gap	Improve Program Quality	Improve Child Outcomes
High Quality, Accountable Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PKC standards meet or exceed nearly every NIEER benchmark • HSSAP follows federal Head Start guidelines • Childcare licensing – 7th in county as per NACCRRA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No national benchmark for TQRIS standards • STARS does not include all Early Learning and Development programs • Fewer than 25% of Early Learning and Development programs participating in STARS have a STAR 3 or 4 rating 	Validate the effectiveness of Keystone STARS (B5)		X	
			Expand Keystone STARS to include Head Start, PKC, school-based pre-k and licensed nursery schools (B2)	X	X	
			Enhance case management and technical assistance for Keystone STARS programs serving high-needs children (B4)	X	X	
Kindergarten Entry Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PA students participating in ECLS • Developed Kindergarten Inventory tool, piloting in 2011-12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No statewide assessments of all students at Kindergarten entry 	Develop and fully implement the Keystone Kindergarten Entry Inventory Framework (E1)		X	X
Effective Data Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unified data system for child, teacher, and program information (PELICAN) • Unified system for child outcomes reporting (Early Learning Network) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is valuable data being collected that is not formatted into actionable information for programs to improve quality and communities to use in local planning. 	Develop a provider dashboard and management tool (E2)		X	
			Enhance Pennsylvania's data system better monitor expulsions and suspensions of children in Early Learning and Development programs (E2)		X	X

(c): Graphic Showing Pennsylvania's Vision for Early Learning and Development

The following graphic illustrates the way in which all components of the state's reform agenda work in concert to take "Pennsylvania's children, families, and communities to the top" in school and life success.

Taking Pennsylvania's Children, Families and Communities to the Top

Pennsylvania's Vision is...

- Closing the Readiness Gap**
 - Increase access to research-based, quality early learning programs for high-needs children
 - Help programs serving high-needs children more effectively engage families in their children's development
 - Build capacity of early childhood educators and pediatricians to identify developmental delays
- Improving Program Quality**
 - Integrate data systems for teacher qualifications, comprehensive assessment system, and program management
 - Provide families and communities with relevant information on the school readiness of children and programs that serve them
- Improving Child Outcomes**
 - Build a birth-8 continuum for career development, early learning standards, and standards-based child outcomes reporting
 - Develop a Kindergarten Child Outcomes Framework that is anchored in the Kindergarten Entry Inventory

Children enter kindergarten ready for school success

25% more early learning programs participate in Keystone STARS

Children who have delays receive supports earlier when they are most effective

Parents actively engage in their children's early learning and select quality early learning opportunities

Early Childhood and Kindergarten teachers share expectations of children's progress, work together to provide instruction that helps children achieve

Programs and communities save money by increasing efficiency and eliminating duplication of services

... Pennsylvania's Promise!

Knowing the school readiness of every child entering kindergarten, communities, schools, and families make solid decisions to help every child succeed in school and in life

(d): Narrative Summary of the State Plan for Achieving Goals

Pennsylvania has identified objectives and strategies for each of its goals.

(1): Increasing Access to High Quality Programs for Children with High Needs and Closing the Readiness Gap

Pennsylvania plans to increase access to high quality programs for children with high needs and close the readiness gap by:

- a). Increasing the number of high quality Early Learning and Development programs serving high-needs children.

By creating Keystone STARS, PA Pre-K Counts, and the Head Start Supplemental program, Pennsylvania greatly increased the number of quality early education options for high-needs families. However, the state still serves only a fraction of its high-needs children through these programs. In addition, fewer than 25% the programs participating in Keystone STARS are in the top tiers of program quality (STAR Levels 3 or 4).

With funding from RTT-ELC, Pennsylvania plans to increase both the number of high quality programs serving high-needs children and the number of high-needs children enrolled in top tier programs. To meet this objective, the state will:

- Expand Keystone STARS to include school-based PA Pre-K Counts providers, Early Intervention services, school-based Pre-Kindergarten programs, and licensed nursery schools. OCDEL will crosswalk each program's standard with STARS program standards, establish minimum health and safety standards, and eliminate duplication of reporting and oversight across programs. OCDEL will also enhance the state's data system to include all Early Learning and Development programs. These strategies will increase program participation in Keystone STARS approximately 25% by 2016 (see section B2 for details).
- Enhance case management and technical assistance for Keystone STARS programs serving high-needs children and establish a mentor program for Family Child Care Home providers. These strategies will support improved program quality. OCDEL's goal is to ensure that at least 305 centers and 252 family programs move up one or more STAR

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levels, resulting in access to higher-quality programs for an estimated 20,000 at risk children (see section B4 for details).

- u). Helping programs more effectively engage parents in their children's learning and development.

To increase access of quality early learning programs for high-needs children, the state must provide information to families about the options available to them and about how they can support their children's learning at home. The families of high-needs children can be the hardest to reach with this kind of information, however. Many families are homeless or transient, may not speak English, or have additional stressors that make it more difficult for them to focus on their children's early learning. Effectively engaging high-needs families requires partnering with local service providers to reach families where they live, work, or spend their day. These partnerships must be well coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive if they are to reach all families with high-needs children, not just those enrolled in Early Learning and Development programs.

Through its RTT-ELC plan, OCDEL will help Early Learning and Development programs more effectively engage high-needs families in their children's learning by developing a coordinated statewide strategy for family engagement that:

- Helps high-risk communities better coordinate family supports and create local family engagement partnerships through a targeted Family Engagement Project (see section C4 for details).
- Increases the capacity of providers from the health, child welfare, and K-12 communities to support high-needs families by expanding cross-systems use of the nationally-acclaimed Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework (see section C4 for details).
- Helps organizations working with high-needs families, guide those families in making informed early learning choices by creating the Early Learning GPS (Guiding Parents Smoothly) online survey and discussion guide (see section C4 for details). This guide will support the work of Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies, child welfare agencies, homeless shelters, and other family-service organizations.

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- Provides high-needs children with books and activities to promote parent engagement in early literacy development by expanding the Pennsylvania One Book, Every Young Child campaign (see section C4 for details). The families of children in Head Start, public Pre-Kindergarten, Early Intervention programs, and homeless shelters will receive these books.

v). Increasing early childhood educators' capacity to identify developmental delays.

The earlier that children can be identified as having developmental delays, the more effectively quality early education can address those delays so children can enter Kindergarten ready for school success. Pennsylvania proposes to identify high-needs children requiring additional services and interventions sooner by partnering with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP) to deliver an educational curriculum to primary care providers on the use of childhood developmental screening in primary practice settings. This curriculum will not only increase health professionals' capacity to identify development delays but also help them better educate families about child development, further increasing family capacity to support children's learning (see section C2 for details).

(2): Improving Program Quality and Increasing Efficiency within the State's Early Learning and Development System

Research shows that a range of program components – including learning standards, classroom assessments, child outcome data, and teacher quality – have a direct affect on program quality.²⁴ The accessibility and usability of information about program components and child outcomes also affects program quality, as teachers, administrators, and policy-makers must be able to effectively use this information to drive decision-making at the classroom, program, and policy level. Pennsylvania has developed strong systems that include early learning standards, comprehensive assessment, program technical assistance, and educator career support. Through OCDEL, the state has begun integrating these systems across all Early Learning and Development programs to support data-driven decision-making. Because all systems are not

²⁴ Wesley, P. W., & Buysse, V. (Eds.) (2010). *The quest for quality: Promising innovations for early childhood programs*. Baltimore: Brookes.

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fully integrated, however, valuable data is not easily shared and assessments for children who participate in multiple programs are sometimes duplicated.

Pennsylvania is in a unique position to streamline its data management process to help provide easily-accessible, user-friendly, comprehensive data that can keep parents informed and engaged, drive classroom instruction, improve program quality, and inform state education policy. With support from the RTT-ELC grant, Pennsylvania plans to maximize use of data by:

- Developing a provider dashboard and management tool that will draw on the full resources of Pennsylvania's data collection system to provide new information that programs can use to guide continuous quality improvement and instruction (see section E2 for details).
- Demonstrating the efficacy of the Keystone STARS (the state's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System) in raising program quality and improving outcomes for children enrolled in STARS program so that expansion of the program will lead to higher quality programs and improved child outcomes (see section B5 for details).
- Benchmarking the education and retention level of Pennsylvania's Early Childhood Workforce by developing a coordinated and comprehensive information technology solution to collect and analyze all Early Childhood Education workforce data in one centralized location. This effort will provide administrators with accessible educator information they can use to recommend continuing professional development and instructional supports, and reduce duplicate data collection so that educators improve their expertise and provide better quality instruction for children (see section D1 for details).
- Providing families and communities relevant aggregated information about the school readiness of children in their communities and the programs that serve them through a web-based Community Scorecard. The Scorecard will help families find appropriate programs for their children and help communities identify local opportunities and challenges and address those elements in their planning (see section C4 for details).
- Enhance Pennsylvania's data system to better monitor expulsions and suspensions of children in Early Learning and Development programs to understand the impact of suspending or ending services on the continuity of services and child outcomes (see section E2 for details).

(3): Improving Outcomes for Children, Especially High-Needs Children

Until 2010, Pennsylvania's push to create standards to guide curriculum and instruction, to improve teacher quality and preparedness, and to report on children's development and academic achievement throughout the early education and K-12 continuum had been made through parallel efforts using different information technology platforms. And while the state has made significant progress in documenting child outcomes for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in select high-quality programs and has evidence that children in these programs are making progress through the school year, this documentation includes only 15% of young children in the state and provides no baseline against which the state can evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. Pennsylvania's established Early Learning and Development standards through 2nd grade align with Pennsylvania's 3rd to 12th grade academic standards; however, work to integrate these standards into Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System (SAS) is in its infancy.

Furthermore, although research shows that the earlier children receive quality early education, the more likely they are to enter Kindergarten with age-appropriate skills and to overcome delays, Pennsylvania has not yet established a system to fully ensure the quality of the educators who serve the state's youngest children. A more formal educator continuum and professional development is needed specifically for educators serving infants and toddlers. This need stems, in part, from the restructuring of Pennsylvania's teacher certification guidelines, which led to a decrease in Infant/Toddler-specific content in higher education coursework.

And, while the state has made significant progress in documenting child outcomes for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in select high-quality programs and has evidence that children in these programs are making progress through the school year, this documentation includes only 15% of young children in the state and provides no baseline against which the state can evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. In order for Pennsylvania to reach its vision of every child entering Kindergarten ready to succeed in school, the state must better align and fully integrate its Early Learning and Development and K-12 systems.

With support from RTT-ELC, Pennsylvania plans to establish a birth-to-8 continuum for learning standards, career development, and standards-based child outcome reporting by:

- Fully integrating Pennsylvania's early learning standards into the state's K-12 Standards Aligned System (SAS) including a full curriculum framework, teacher tools and professional

development so that teachers from early childhood through 3rd grade have common expectations for children's progress and common tools to help promote that progress (see section C1 for details).

- Establishing an infant toddler professional development framework, with approximately 36 hours of needs-based coursework and four 3-credit college courses, designed to increase the professional level of educators working with infants, toddlers, and families so they can provide better instruction and improve child outcomes (see section D1 for details). With training provided through the framework, these teachers will also be better prepared to identify developmental delays as early as possible to better target instruction and provide referrals when needed.
- Increasing the education level of Early Childhood Educators in high-risk communities by implementing career-advising program that promotes movement up the Early Childhood Career Lattice. This strategy will include an online learning community for institutions of higher education (IHEs); career advising competencies for administrators, instructors and IHEs; and a career resource guide for early childhood educators (see section D1 for details).
- Developing a standards-based birth-to-Pre-Kindergarten child-outcomes reporting framework that is both anchored in the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory (described in section E1) and mapped to multiple authentic assessments (see section C2 for details). **The proposed Keystone Child Outcomes Framework (KCOF) will be fully operational by 2014 and all state-funded Early Learning and Development teachers and public school Kindergarten teachers will be required to report child outcome data using this common standards-based child outcome framework.**
- Implementing the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework, which will both help educator better understand children's needs and target instruction to those needs and create a big-picture understanding of children's Kindergarten readiness across the state. By 2015, all Kindergarten programs will use this tool to report children's readiness. OCDEL will use outcomes from the tool to benchmark children's readiness for school at Kindergarten entry and pinpoint communities where high-needs children need additional early learning supports (see section E1 for details).

(e): Rationale for Selecting Criteria in Focused Investment Areas

In its Statewide Plan for Early Learning and Development Programs, Pennsylvania has chosen to address three criteria in Focused Investment Area C (criteria C1, C2, and C4); one criterion in Focused Investment Area D (criterion D1); and both criteria in Focused Investment Area E (criteria E1 and E2). The rationale for addressing the selected criteria in each focused investment area, including an explanation of why these selected criteria will best meet Pennsylvania's goals, is included in the evidence section on the following pages.

In its proposed reform agenda, Pennsylvania is building on a foundation of excellence. The state has a historic commitment to Early Learning and Development and has made significant financial and structural investments in its system to ensure long-term success and sustainability. Its foundation includes strong standards, well-established data systems, and interagency partnerships that ensure that the state has sufficient capacity to implement its proposed reforms. An investment from the federal government through the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge will serve as a catalyst for these reforms and become the driving force for better child outcomes in the state. In addition, because Pennsylvania serves as a model for other states, this investment will provide returns on a national level.

(f): Evidence for (A)(2)

(1): Goals for Improving Program Quality

Pennsylvania's goal for program quality is to improve program quality and increase efficiency within the Early Learning and Development system by integrating data systems and maximizing use of data.

(2): Goals for Improving Child Outcomes

- 4). Pennsylvania's goal for program quality is: to improve child outcomes, especially for high-needs children, by building a birth-8 continuum for career development, early learning standards, and standards-based child outcome reporting.

(3): Goals for Closing the Readiness Gap

Pennsylvania's goals for closing the readiness gap are: a). to increase the number of high-quality Early Learning and Development programs serving high-needs children; b). to help programs more effectively engage parents in their children's learning and development; and c). to increase early childhood educators' capacity to identify developmental delays.

(4): Criteria for Focused Investment Area C

<p>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</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (C)(1): Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (C)(2): Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (C)(3): Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> (C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.</p>
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Rationale for Choosing to Address Criteria in Focused Investment Area C:

Rationale for C1 - Although Pennsylvania's established Early Learning and Development standards through 2nd grade align with Pennsylvania's 3rd to 12th grade academic standards, work to integrate these standards into Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System (SAS) is in its infancy. Integrating these standards and tools into the K-12 standards framework will improve consistency of educational expectations of children from early education through elementary

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education and facilitate better collaboration between early childhood educators and elementary school teachers, leading to smoother transitions to Kindergarten and sustained progress for children in the elementary grades.

Rationale for C2 – OCDEL’s Comprehensive Assessment System provides a solid foundation for helping programs and early childhood educators meet the needs of children to improve child outcomes. Despite that solid foundation, however, the state needs to strengthen and streamline the system across programs to make information more easily accessible and reduce duplication of assessments for children enrolled in multiple programs.

Rationale for C4 - Because family engagement is critical to children’s development and student achievement, Pennsylvania has focused on giving parents more choices in their children’s education and providing them with the data they need to make informed decisions. While the state has developed standards and initiatives that support family engagement, these initiatives must be integrated through a coordinated statewide strategy. The state also wants to reach all families with high-needs children, not just those currently participating in its Early Learning and Development programs. To reach more families, Pennsylvania must strengthen the capacity of local communities to develop their own family engagement strategies and help providers who serve high-needs families guide them to make quality early learning choices.

(5): Criteria for Focused Investment Area D

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.

Rationale for Choosing to Address Criteria in Focused Investment Area D:

Rationale for D1 - While Pennsylvania has made great strides to develop a common statewide progression of credential and degree opportunities aligned with the Core Body of Knowledge, the system still has several gaps that need to be filled. The state does not yet have a complete picture of the status of all early educators in the state, a way to systematically determine what educators’ individual needs for professional development are, or a way to evaluate whether

improvements in educator quality can be linked to improved child outcomes. Changes to educational requirements for early childhood educators have resulted in a decrease in Infant/Toddler specific content within the higher education system. The focus on Pre-K – 4 led many colleges to reduce or eliminate coursework specific to infants and toddlers. Because quality early learning for high-needs infants and toddlers is critical to closing the achievement gap, early childhood educators serving infants and toddlers need to be highly qualified.

(6): Criteria for Focused Investment Area E

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.

Rationale for Choosing to Address Criteria in Focused Investment Area E:

Rationale for E1 - Although Pennsylvania has developed a common child outcomes assessment framework for several of its Early Learning and Development programs, and most local school districts conduct a Kindergarten entry assessment, the state has not developed a statewide framework for Kindergarten assessment. This lack of a common outcomes reporting framework makes it difficult to gauge school readiness, compare statewide data across districts, allocate and prioritize resources for early childhood programs, and inform policy, particularly in regard to closing the achievement gap.

Rationale for E2 – Pennsylvania began developing its data systems in 2002, when the Early Learning and Development information systems were decentralized and relied on antiquated information technology and manual reporting with no real-time information available. Since then, Pennsylvania has worked to develop a single integrated system for all early childhood programs to centralize program data and allow administrators to effectively and systematically manage Early Learning and Development programs. Having developed an integrated system, Pennsylvania is looking for advanced strategies to leverage that data to improve instruction, practices and policies. Pennsylvania is in a unique position to build on national leadership and broaden the current uses of the data system to provide actionable information to the field.

(7): Official Administration Summary of the Pennsylvania's Response to the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge (Issued September 2011)

Pennsylvania has the infrastructure to develop and maintain a coordinated, high-quality, early education system based upon quality program design, comprehensive accountability, and documenting positive outcomes for children, with a focus on serving high-needs children. Through the RTT-ELC Early Learning grant application, Pennsylvania proposes to implement Governor Corbett's agenda for early education: preparing children for school success. The application will focus on the following areas:

Measuring Outcomes and Progress: A major component of the application will focus on measuring outcomes and progress with the goal of informing instruction and improving results. This component will be achieved by:

- developing a Kindergarten entry observation tool to be used by educators during the first weeks of enrollment in Kindergarten to inform and guide instruction. The development of this observation tool will be guided by best practices and research and will also be informed by feedback from pilots of the observation tool in classrooms throughout Pennsylvania.
- validating the Kindergarten entry observation tool.
- providing reports to parents, teachers, programs, and community leaders about program outcomes.

Making High-Quality, Accountable Programs Accessible to More Children with High Needs: The Administration proposes to increase participation and quality in Keystone STARS, Pennsylvania's voluntary Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by:

- providing programs such as Head Start, Pre-K Counts, licensed nursery schools, school district Pre-K programs funded by Title I, and preschool Early Intervention the opportunity to participate in the Keystone STARS program.
- providing enhanced technical assistance and professional development to assist early education programs in high-need communities to move to a higher Keystone of quality.
- providing a forum for Keystone STARS programs to collaborate and share successful program models and best practices.

Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children: The Administration proposes to improve alignment and collaboration between early learning and K-12 education by:

- moving the Early Childhood Education Standards Aligned System (SAS) to the K-12 Standards Aligned System (SAS) so that educators have comprehensive information available in one location.
- improving professional development for early childhood providers.
- establishing a family resources website and related support and outreach to assist families in high-need communities to prepare their children for school success.

Building an Effective Early Childhood Education Workforce: Quality teachers are an essential component to any effective education system. Therefore, the Administration proposes to increase early childhood educator effectiveness by:

- collaborating with institutions of higher education on Early Childhood Education pre-service curriculum to improve quality and to ensure that program completers are well prepared to educate the State's youngest learners.
- aligning the Early Childhood Education workforce database with the K-12 workforce database (Teacher Information Management System).
- completing the development of a comprehensive early educator continuum through the development of tiered criteria for individuals working with infants and toddlers.

Developing an Efficient Technology Infrastructure to Support Program Activities: The components noted above will be supported through targeted investments in a technology infrastructure to improve efficiency and provide reliable information to help parents make decisions for their children and to guide effective policymaking. The Administration proposes the following related activities:

- development of a web-based system to analyze data from the Kindergarten observation tool.
- development of a resource website for families.
- aligning existing systems to facilitate data analysis.

(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)(3): Aligning and Coordinating Early Learning and Development across the State

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan for aligning and coordinating Early Learning and Development across the state, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan, including a timeline with milestones for key activities.

For a decade, Pennsylvania has engaged in sustained and focused efforts to coordinate and strengthen Early Learning and Development programs across the state (see section (A)(1) for details of these efforts). To oversee those efforts, the state has developed a strong Early Learning and Development governance structure. The structure provides clearly-defined roles and responsibilities for the agencies and individuals in charge of leading Early Learning and Development efforts, articulates decision-making processes, and creates formal avenues through which Early Learning and Development programs, educators, and families can be involved in planning and implementing Early Learning and Development initiatives – including the proposed RTT-ELC grant project. As it has defined and sharpened its early learning mission and focus, the state has garnered an exceptional level of participation in and commitment from key State Agencies and from a wide range of providers and other stakeholders.

This commitment is demonstrated through agency and stakeholder involvement in developing the proposed Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) Statewide Plan and their pledge to continue that commitment as the state implements the plan. The plan for Pennsylvania's proposed RTT-ELC grant-funded activities is driven by Governor Corbett's Early Childhood Education Policy. The plan's goals and activities closely adhere to and align with this policy. This plan has received Governor Tom Corbett's endorsement and has his full support. Both the Secretaries of Education and Public Welfare have guided the plan's development and fully endorse it. In addition, the plan has as bipartisan, bicameral support from the Pennsylvania legislature, including from the members of the General Assembly's bipartisan Early Childhood Education Caucus [see Appendix (A)(3)-1: Letters of Support from Legislators and Other Stakeholders, on page 237 of the appendices].

(a): Demonstrating the State's Early Learning Governance Structure

Pennsylvania's Early Learning and Development governance structure, established in 2007, includes multiple state agencies that work together to facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision-making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability. The participating state agencies that form the Early Learning and Development governance structure are:

- The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), which is a dual deputate of the Departments of Education and Public Welfare with direct lines of reporting to the Secretaries of both departments and will serve as the lead agency for the proposed project.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), including: 1). OCDEL; 2). the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (includes private academic licensed nursery schools and the Homeless Education, Migrant Education, English Language Learners, and Education Leading to Employment and Career Training Programs), 3). the Office of Administration (includes the Food and Nutrition Program), 4). the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, 5). the Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education (including the Family Literacy Program), 6). Information Technology staff, 7). School District Pre-K Programs, 8). programs funded by Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 9). PDE-designated attorneys from the Office of General Counsel; and 10.) PDE Directors from the Offices of Policy, Legislative Affairs and Press.
- The Department of Public Welfare (DPW), including: 1). OCDEL, 2). the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, 3). the Office of Children, Youth and Families, 4). the Office of Developmental Programs, 5). the Office of Income Maintenance, 6). the Office of Administration's Bureau of Information Systems, 7). DPW-designated attorneys from the Office of General Counsel; and 8). DPW Directors from the Offices of Policy, Legislative Affairs and Press.
- The Department of Health, including: 1). the Office of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, including the Home Visiting, Title V Maternal and Child Health Service Block Grant Programs, and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program, and 2). the Office of Public Health and Preparedness, including Public Health Centers.

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As a member of the Executive Teams of both the Secretary of Education the Secretary of Public Welfare, the Deputy Secretary of OCDEL provides a bridge between the two departments. The Deputy Secretary also meets individually with other agency leadership, including:

- Monthly meetings with the Secretary of Education and bi-weekly meetings with the Executive Deputy Secretary of Education
- Ad hoc meetings with the Secretary or the Executive Deputy Secretary of Public Welfare
- Weekly individual meetings with Bureau Directors (in addition to the Directors' participation in Executive Team meetings).

The effectiveness of these agencies to jointly guide the state's Early Learning and Development systems is demonstrated by: 1). Governor Tom Corbett's commitment to early childhood education and to the proposed RTT-ELC plan; 2). the seamless way in which the agencies share responsibility for and regularly communicate about the state's vision and plans for Early Learning; 3). their collaborative work to develop and implement the ambitious yet achievable state high-quality plan for Early Learning and Development described in this application; and 4). the broad-based support OCDEL has been able to garner for this work.

Other key participants in the governance structure include:

- The Pennsylvania Early Learning Council (ELC), a 50-member council of gubernatorial appointees who serve for a three-year term. The role of the Council is to serve as an advisory entity regarding early learning issues; to provide OCDEL with recommendations on implementation of early learning programs; to support the state's approach to quality in early childhood settings; and to receive reports from OCDEL and provide feedback to OCDEL regarding Strategic Planning and implementation efforts.

ELC members represent a broad array of stakeholders, including parents (specifically parents of high-needs children); Early Learning and Development organizations (including the Pennsylvania Head Start Association, Early Intervention program, child care programs, Child Care Works, and the PA Pre-K Counts Program); other education organizations and state agencies (including the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, Pennsylvania School Districts, the Pennsylvania Department of Health, and the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services); and private businesses and community-based organizations.

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Established by Executive Order, the ELC meets three times per year. The group is co-chaired by the Deputy Secretary of OCDEL and the President of Family Communications, Inc., a non-profit organization that promotes children's social, emotional, and behavioral health. The Early Learning Council met in July 2011 to provide input for the state's RTT-ELC plan. A complete scope of work for ELC is included in the OCDEL-ELC Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), in Appendix (A)(3)-2: MOUs and Exhibits, on page 301 of the appendices.

- The State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC), a 50-member group of gubernatorial appointees comprising the parents of children eligible for Early Intervention services and representatives from the Pennsylvania Departments of Education, Health, and Public Welfare. The SICC, which meets six times a year, is convened by federal statute. Its mission is to ensure that a comprehensive delivery system of integrated Early Intervention programs and services is available in Pennsylvania to all eligible infants, toddlers and young children and their families. The OCDEL Deputy Secretary meets regularly with the SICC and the group provided input for the RTT-ELC plan, focusing on the needs of children with disabilities and developmental delays, via conference call. During the implementation of the RTT-ELC plan, the Deputy Secretary will report on progress to and solicit ongoing feedback from this group. A letter of support from SICC is included in Appendix (A)(3)-3: Letters of Support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, on page 322 of the appendices.
- The Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC), a group of gubernatorial appointees who represent businesses across the state. The group works to ensure the capacity of the future workforce by supporting efforts to strengthen early childhood programs to adequately prepare young children for future school, college, and career success. The ELIC has formed subcommittees across Pennsylvania to disseminate information to citizens, other business leaders, and legislators about the benefits of quality early childhood education. The ELIC provided input for the state's RTT-ELC plan during two conference calls and met in the Governor's Residence on October 5th, 2011 for an update on the proposal. ELIC will receive updates throughout the state's implementation of its plan. A letter of support from the ELIC is included in Appendix (A)(3)-1: Letters of Support from Legislators and Other Stakeholders, on page 237 of the appendices.

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This well-established governance structure provides the mechanism through which the proposed RTT- ELC grant-funded activities will operate. OCDEL has delineated specific and effective ways for participating state agencies and stakeholders to work together and communicate with one another and planning and problem-solving for Early Learning and Development issues occur in multiple settings: at the Governor's Cabinet, in the Secretaries' Executive Team meetings, in Deputy Secretaries' meetings with Bureau Directors, and in individual meetings between Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries and the Deputy Secretary and Bureau Directors. The highest level of oversight comes from the Governor, through weekly meetings of Governor's Cabinet, which comprises the Secretaries of all key state agencies. In addition, each agency Secretary meets weekly with his or her Executive Team, which includes not only the Executive Deputy Secretary and OCDEL's Deputy Secretary but also Deputy Secretaries from other Participating State Agencies. These meetings also include Directors of Policy, Legislative Affairs, Administration, General Counsel, and the Press Secretary.

(1): Organizational Structure for Managing the RTT-ELC Program Grant

OCDEL will serve as the lead agency for the proposed RTT-ELC activities and OCDEL's Deputy Secretary will coordinate all grant-related activities, with oversight from the Governor's Office and the Secretaries of Education and Public Welfare. Because the governance and communication structure, described above, is already in place, the state will not need to develop a new structure to accommodate the management of this project. The regular meetings with and structured communication between OCDEL and the two State Secretaries will include regular reports about RTT-ELC plans and progress. Furthermore, as stated above, the Deputy Secretary and OCDEL leaders meet with and are advised by Directors of Policy, Legislative Affairs, Press, General Counsel, and Administration of both Departments. Representatives of the Departments of Education and Welfare's Policy Offices attended all RTT-ELC planning meetings. Representatives of both Departments' offices of Legislative Affairs, and General Counsel have been immensely helpful in assembling this proposal. These offices will continue to provide guidance as the RTT-ELC initiative moves forward.

In addition OCDEL will involve the key Early Learning and Development councils in the management of RTT-ELC grant-funded activities on an ongoing basis:

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- **Early Learning Council:** The Deputy Secretary of OCDEL or her designee(s) will report on RTT-ELC grant activities and progress at each of the three annual ELC meetings. Because the OCDEL Deputy Secretary and representatives from other Participating State Agencies serve on the council, the ELC will play a significant role in implementing the state's RTT-ELC plan. Continuous feedback and recommendations will be solicited from these valued ELC members on Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge activities.
- **The State Interagency Coordinating Council.** The Deputy Secretary of OCDEL or her designee(s) will report on RTT-ELC grant activities and progress at each of SICC's six annual meetings. This group is especially facile at making recommendations about children with developmental delays and disabilities and will be helpful in this arena. Feedback will be solicited from SICC members and this feedback will be included in RTT-ELC activities as appropriate.
- **The Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC):** ELIC will also provide significant support to OCDEL in implementing the RTT-ELC plan. The ELIC meets twice per year at the State Capitol in the spring and autumn. They also meet in regional groups throughout the year. They will receive updates from the OCDEL Deputy Secretary or her designee and provide feedback. This group is especially interested in data and analysis and will be helpful in making suggestions about data collected.

The evidence section for (A)(3)(a)(1) on page 69 provides an organizational chart that illustrates the way in which the proposed grant-funded activities will be governed and managed.

(2): Governance-Related Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Agency and Others

OCDEL's Deputy Secretary will report on the status of Race to the Top grant-funded activities at weekly Executive Team meetings within the Departments of Education and Public Welfare, and through regularly scheduled individual meetings with the Secretaries, and other Deputy Secretaries. OCDEL Bureau Directors and Division Chiefs will have lead responsibilities for some of the work plan. The Deputy Secretary will also schedule additional meetings as needed to address issues. During these meetings, the Deputy Secretary and agency colleagues will regularly review the state's progress toward the specific goals articulated in each section of the

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State's RTT-ELC plan and will assign tasks, allocate resources, clarify issues as they arise, and problem solve as needed.

In addition, OCDEL will:

- Serve as the lead agency for the application and implementation, should the RTT-ELC grant be awarded.
- Work closely with the oversight of and leadership in the Departments of Education and Public Welfare and the Governor's Office, through existing meeting structures, to fulfill the plan outlined in the grant proposal.
- Oversee the work of all other participating state agencies to ensure adherence to the proposed plan and full implementation of the plan during the time of the grant period, including working collaboratively to ensure scopes of work are carried out.
- Continue to administer and supervise the following programs and ensure proposed plans related to these programs are carried out: Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) services; services funded under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, section 619; services funded under IDEA Part C; state-funded preschool through PA Pre-K Counts and Head Start Supplemental Programs; home visiting through the Nurse Family Partnership and the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Head Start Collaboration Grants; and child care licensing.
- Provide information to and be open to feedback from the participating state agencies, advisory groups, early learning intermediary organizations and other stakeholders.
- Identify sources of technical assistance for the project as needed.

The roles and responsibilities of each participating state agency include:

- Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE): implement all tasks and activities outlined in the PDE scope of work, as defined in the PDE Memorandum of Understanding; abide by the governance structure; abide by the budget; participate in all relevant meetings; and provide feedback and advice to OCDEL.
- Department of Public Welfare (DPW): implement all tasks and activities outlined in the DPW scope of work, as defined in the DPW Memorandum of Understanding; abide by the governance structure; abide by the budget; participate in all relevant meetings; and provide feedback and advice to OCDEL.

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- Department of Health: implement all tasks and activities outlined in the DOH scope of work, as defined in the DOH Memorandum of Understanding; abide by the governance structure; abide by the budget; participate in all relevant meetings; and provide feedback and advice to OCDEL.

The roles and responsibilities of the other entities that participate in the governance structure are:

- Early Learning Council: Provide feedback to OCDEL on grant activities and progress at annual meetings and through staff.
- State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC): Provide feedback to OCDEL on grant activities and progress at each of the SICC's six annual meetings.
- The Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC): Provide feedback to OCDEL on grant activities and progress at both of the ELIC's semi-annual meetings.

Table (A)(3)-1 on page 71 provides specific information about the governance-related roles and responsibilities of each Participating State Agency.

(3): Method and Process for Decision-Making and Dispute Resolution

Decision-making processes will vary depending upon the nature of the issues involved.

Decisions regarding statewide early childhood policy require the consent of the Governor's Office. These decisions rest with the Policy Directors of the Department of Education and/or the Department of Public Welfare, and with the Governor's Policy Office.

Most operational decisions do not require the direct consent of the governor and can be made with the guidance and approval of the Secretary of Education or Public Welfare, both of whom will receive regular updates from OCDEL regarding RTT-ELC progress and plans and so will be able to make fully-informed decisions about grant-funded activities.

The Departments of Education and Public Welfare both have Offices of Policy, Legislative Affairs, and Communications, each of which will be kept abreast of the RTT-ELC activities and progress. Some operational decisions will require input and approval by these offices, others may be made by OCDEL's Deputy Secretary and staff with input and recommendations from the ELC and other advisory groups.

Following discussion, disputes or differences of opinion may occur about how to proceed on certain matters. It is the responsibility of the Deputy Secretary to make recommendations about

Early Childhood Education. Advisement will also be needed from the respective Policy, Legislative Affairs, General Counsel, Administrative, and Press Offices. However, it is the role of the Office of the General Counsel, to make final decisions regarding disputes. A process for dispute resolution is clearly defined within each Memorandum of Understanding and entails a collaborative process, followed by an enforcement process, as appropriate to the situation.

(4): Plan for Involving Key Stakeholders in Planning and Implementation of Grant Activities

The Early Learning and Development Governance Structure has formally established avenues through which representatives from key stakeholder groups have been and will continue to be involved in planning and implementing proposed grant-funded activities. These other stakeholders include Early Childhood Educators and other representatives from Early Learning and Development providers, parents and families, including parents of children with high needs, and businesses and community-based organizations and the process through which these groups have been involved in planning is described in (A)(3)(a)(1), above. Each of these groups will continue to be involved in implementing the grant activities in the following ways:

The Early Learning Council (ELC): ELC will continue to provide input and feedback to OCDEL regarding the plan through its regularly scheduled meetings (three times annually) and through the work of its subcommittees, which are convened on an ad hoc basis and will come together as needed throughout the course of the state's implementation of the Early Learning and Development plan. These subcommittees include: a). Child Care Works, b). Full- Day Kindergarten, c). Keystone STARS, d). Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, e). Early Childhood Mental Health, f). Early Learning Career Preparation and Development, g). Early Learning Network, and h). Parent Advisory Council. When requested, these committees address specific RTT-ELC plan activity areas and provide input and recommendations as needed.

The State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC): Like the ELC, the SICC will continue to provide input and feedback to OCDEL regarding the plan through its regularly scheduled meetings (six times annually) and through communication with the Secretaries and Deputy Secretary. In addition, because the chairperson of the SICC also serves as a member of the Early Learning Council, the interests of children with high needs will have additional representation through that council as well.

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The Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC): The ELIC will provide feedback to OCDEL on grant activities and progress at both of its semi-annual meetings.

(b): Demonstrating Participating State Agencies' Commitment

The Participating State Agencies are enthusiastically committed to the State Plan described in this proposal, including the goals and outcomes articulated in the plan, the activities that will result in a successful implementation of the plan, and the partnerships and community outreach that will help ensure the sustainability of the activities. This commitment also includes their ongoing work within the established governance structure that guides all state Early Learning and Development efforts and will also guide the activities of the proposed plan. Each Participating State Agency has demonstrated its commitment by developing and finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Each MOU document includes:

- 1). Terms and conditions that reflect the agency's strong commitment to the State Plan, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the agency's existing funding to support the State Plan,
- 2). "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require the 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 will participate, and
- 3). The signature of an authorized representative of the agency.

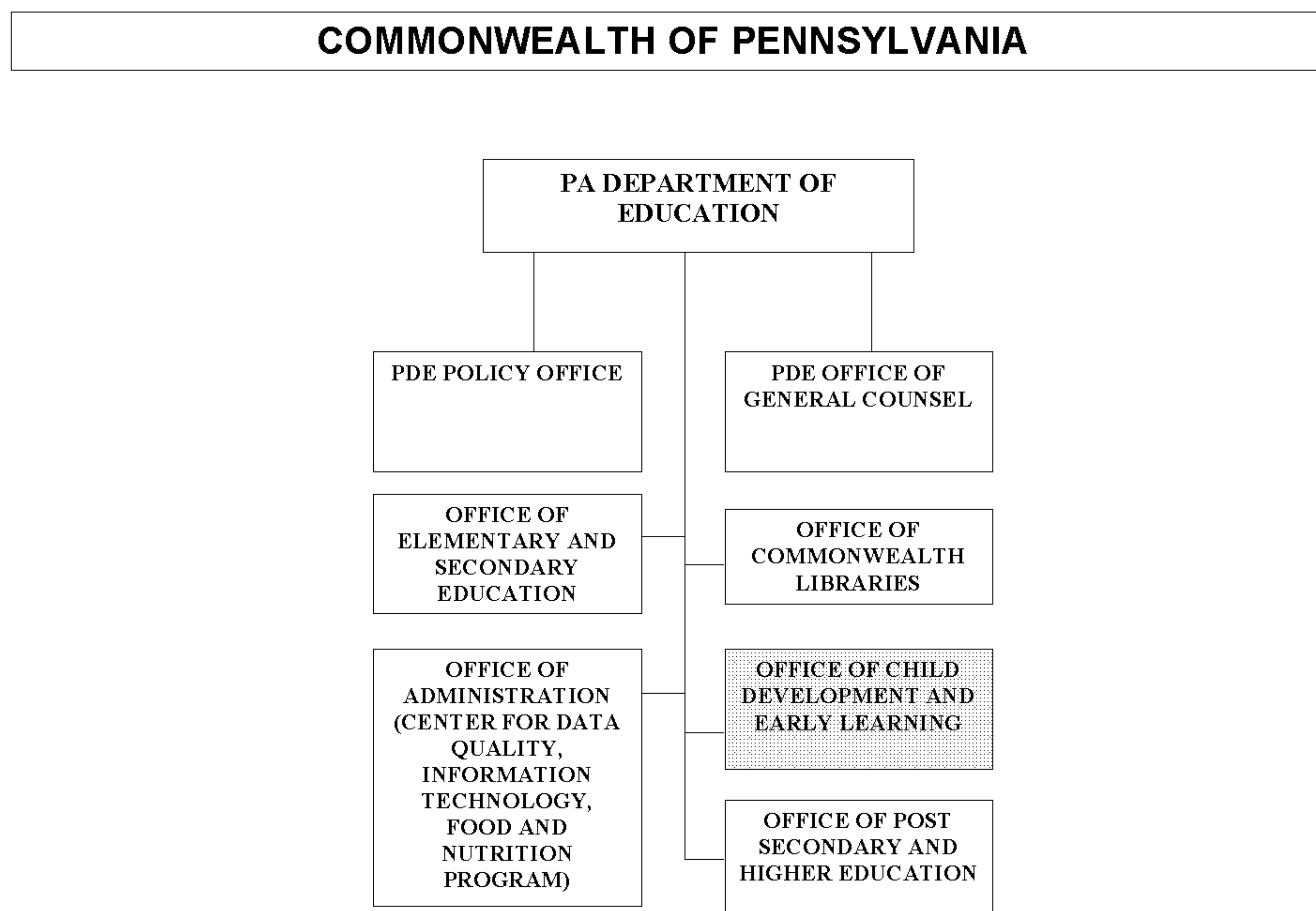
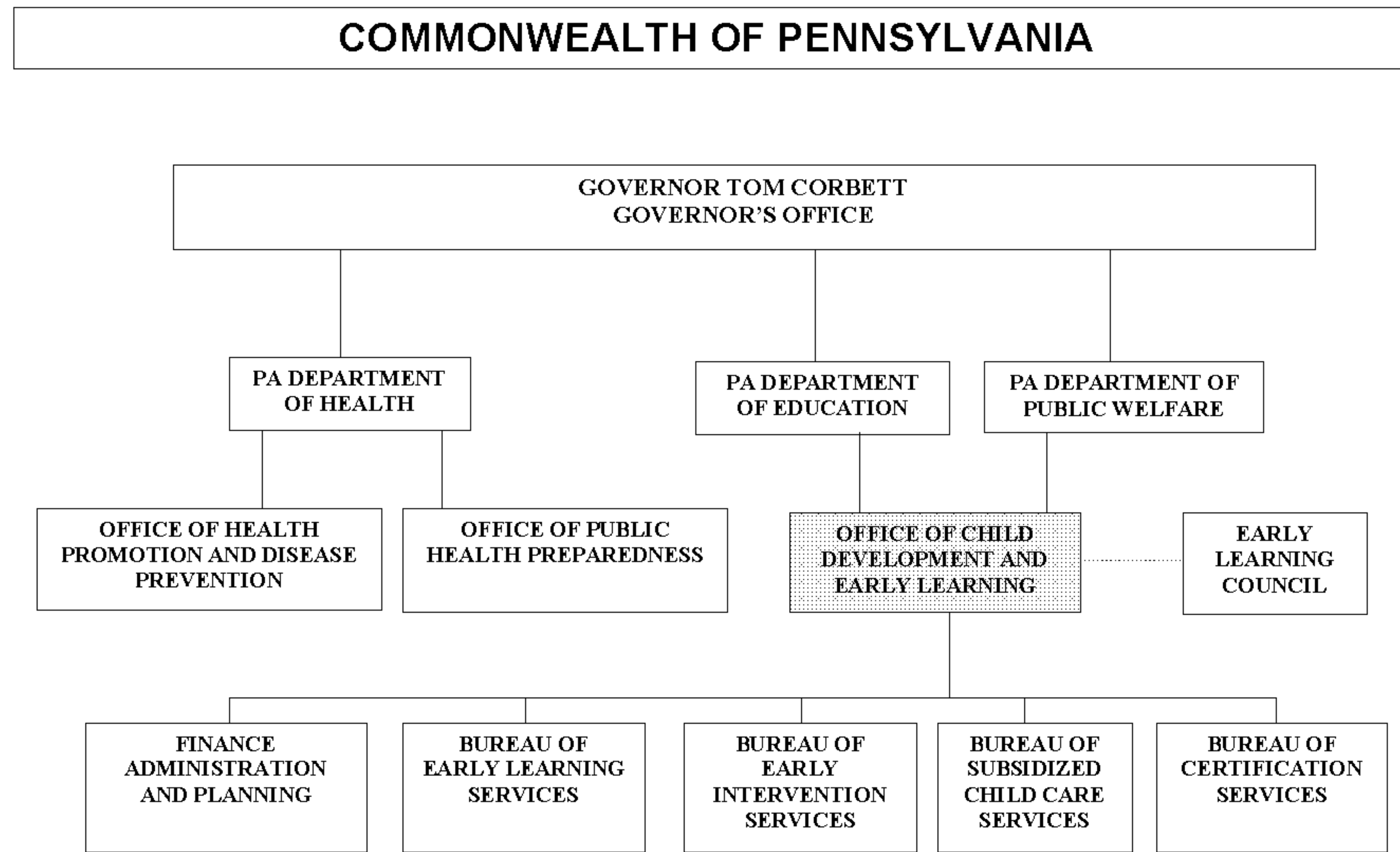
The evidence for (A)(3)(b) includes a list of all agencies providing an MOU for this project. The fully-executed and countersigned MOU is included in Appendix (A)(3)-2: MOUs and Exhibits from Participating State Agencies on page 301 of the appendices. Each MOU includes specific language that describes both the responsibilities of the Participating State Agency and the OCDEL and the joint responsibilities shared by the Agency and OCDEL. Each MOU also describes recourse in the event of any parties' failure to perform their agree-upon duties and responsibilities. Exhibit I for each MOU lists each Participating State Agency, and outlines the agency's Scope of Work as it relates to each required criterion in this proposal.

(c): Demonstrating Stakeholder Commitment

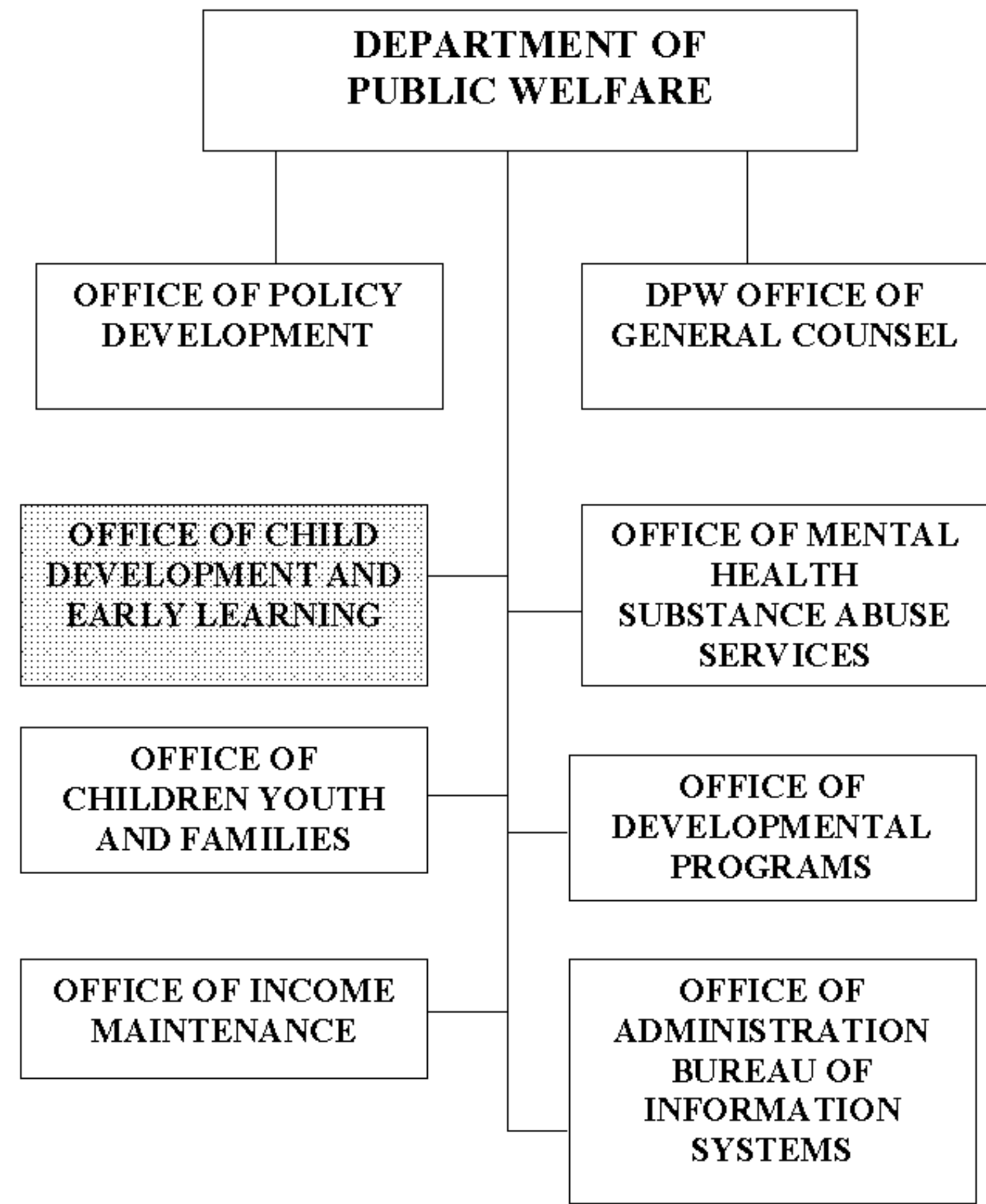
(1): Letters of support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and early learning councils: Table (A)(3)-2 on page 72 includes a list of every Early Learning Intermediary Organization and local early learning council in the State and indicates which organizations and councils have submitted letters of intent or support. A copy of each letter is included in Appendix (A)(3)-3: Letters of Support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, on page 322 of the appendices. (2): Letters of intent or support from other stakeholders: Pennsylvania has received more than 60 letters of support representing a broad range of stakeholder groups, including businesses, foundations, education organizations, institutions of higher education, and other organizations. Evidence for (A)(C)(3)(2) includes a list of every stakeholder providing a letter of intent or support for this project. A copy of each letter is included in Appendix (A)(3)-1: Letters of Support from Legislators and Other Stakeholders on page 237 of the appendices. This enthusiastic support attests to both the need for Pennsylvania's proposed Early Learning and Development reforms and stakeholder confidence in the state to implement those reforms effectively and successfully.

(d): Evidence for (A)(3)

(A)(3)(a)(1):



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(A)(3)(a)(2): Governance-Related Roles and Responsibilities

<i>Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities</i>	
Participating State Agency	Governance-related roles and responsibilities
Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as the lead agency for the application and implementation, should a grant be awarded. • Work closely with leadership in the Departments of Education and Public Welfare and the Governor’s Office, through existing meeting structures, to fulfill the grant proposal. • Oversee the work of all other participating state agencies to ensure adherence to the proposal and full implementation of the plan during the time of the grant period, including working collaboratively to ensure scopes of work are carried out. • Continue to administer and supervise the following programs and ensure plans related to these programs are carried out: CCDF, Section 619 of Part B IDEA, Part C of IDEA, State-funded preschool through PA Pre-K Counts and Head Start Supplemental Programs, home visiting through the Nurse Family Partnership and the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, Head Start Collaboration Grant and child care licensing. • Provide information to and be open to feedback from the participating state agencies, advisory groups, early learning intermediary organizations and other stakeholders. • Identify sources of technical assistance for the project as needed.
Department of Education (PDE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement all tasks and activities outlined in the PDE scope of work. • Abide by the governance structure and by the budget. • Participate in all relevant meetings. • Provide feedback and advice to OCDEL.
Department of Public Welfare (DPW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement all tasks and activities outlined in the DPW scope of work. • Abide by the governance structure and by the budget. • Participate in all relevant meetings. • Provide feedback and advice to OCDEL.
Department of Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement all tasks and activities outlined in the DOH scope of work. • Abide by the governance structure and by the budget. • Participate in all relevant meetings. • Provide feedback and advice to OCDEL.
Other Entities	
Early Learning Council (ELC)	Provide feedback to OCDEL on grant activities and progress at annual meetings and through staff.
State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC)	Provide feedback to OCDEL on grant activities and progress at each of the SICC’s six annual meetings.
Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC)	Provide feedback to OCDEL on grant activities and progress at both of the ELIC’s semi-annual meetings.

(A)(3)(b): Memoranda of Understanding or Other Binding Agreements

The following Participating State Agencies have provided a Memorandum of Understanding for participating in the state’s proposed Early Learning and Development plan:

- Department of Education
- Department of Public Welfare
- Department of Health
- Early Learning Council

A copy of each fully executed MOU or other binding agreements that cover each Participating State Agency is enclosed in Appendix (A)(3)-2: MOUs and Exhibits from Participating State Agencies on page 301 of the appendices.

(A)(3)(c)(1): Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and Local Early Learning Councils

The following Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and Local Early Learning Councils have provided letters of support for the state’s proposed Early Learning and Development plan:

<i>Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and Local Early Learning Councils (if applicable)</i>	
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)?
Pennsylvania’s Statewide Early Learning Council (Pennsylvania has no local early learning councils)	Yes
Pennsylvania Child Care Association	Yes
Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children	Yes
Pennsylvania Head Start Association	Yes
Pennsylvania Head Start Collaboration Office	Yes
Child Care Providers United	Yes
Pennsylvania Home-Based Child Care Providers Association	Yes
State Interagency Coordinating Council	Yes
Early Intervention Providers Association	Yes
Child Care Information Services Grantees (responsible for resource and referral work)	Yes, four grantees provided letters.

A copy of each of these letters is enclosed in Appendix (A)(3)-3: Letters of Support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations on page 322 of the appendices.

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(A)(3)(c)(2): Letters of Support

The following additional groups of stakeholders have provided letters of support for the state's proposed Early Learning and Development plan:

- Elected Officials (6 letters)
- Business Community (5 letters)
- Foundations (3 letters)
- K-12 Education System Letters (14 letters)
- Higher Education System (5 letters)
- Advocate, Professional, Family Support, Community-Based and Non-Profit Association and Organizations (15 letters)
- Child Outcomes Reporting Companies (5 letters)

A copy of each of these letters is included in Appendix (A)(3)-1: Letters of Support from Legislators and Other Stakeholders, on page 237 of the appendices.

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(A)(3)(d): High Quality Plan for (A)(3): Aligning and Coordinating Early Learning and Development across the State

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	<p>Pennsylvania’s Early Learning and Development governance structure includes multiple state agencies that work together to facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision-making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), • The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), • The Department of Public Welfare (DPW), and • The Department of Health. <p>Other key participants in the governance structure include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State Interagency Coordinating Council (SICC), • The Pennsylvania Early Learning Council (ELC), and • The Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC)
Key Goals	<p>To use the state’s existing governance structure to effectively oversee and guide the implementation of RTT-ELC-funded plan, with OCDEL as the lead agency.</p>
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct regular meetings with and structured communication between OCDEL and the two State Secretaries, which will include regular reports about RTT-ELC plans and progress. • The Deputy Secretary of OCDEL or her designee(s) will report on RTT-ELC grant activities and progress at each of the three annual ELC meetings. • The Deputy Secretary of OCDEL or her designee(s) will report on RTT-ELC grant activities and progress at each of SICC’s six annual meetings. Feedback will be solicited from SICC members and this feedback will be included in RTT-ELC activities as appropriate. • The Deputy Secretary of OCDEL or her designee(s) will report on RTT-ELC grant activities and progress at the Early Learning Investment Commission meetings twice per year. The ELIC will provide significant support to OCDEL in implementing the RTT-ELC plan.
Rationale for Activities	<p>An effective structure provides the mechanism through which the proposed RTT-ELC grant-funded activities will operate and includes specific and effective ways for participating state agencies and stakeholders to work together and communicate with one another.</p>

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Required Elements	Description of Element
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	This effective structure helps ensure the successful implementation of grant-funded activities Statewide
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	N/A. The governance structure currently exists and is fully implemented. This structure will be use to oversee all proposed grant-funded activities.
How State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable	Include representatives from all types of Early Learning and Development programs in the governance structure for grant-funded activities and provide formal mechanisms for ongoing input and feedback
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	Include parents and representatives from agencies and programs serving children with high needs in the governance structure for grant-funded activities and provide formal mechanisms for ongoing input and feedback

Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed for (A)(3)

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
<p>Conduct regular meetings with and structured communication between OCDEL and the two State Secretaries that include regular reports about RTT-ELC plans and progress, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • weekly meetings of Governor's Cabinet • weekly Executive Team meetings for PDE and DPW • monthly meetings between OCDEL Deputy Secretary and the Secretary of Education • bi-weekly meetings between OCDEL Deputy Secretary the Executive Deputy Secretary of Education • ad hoc meetings between OCDEL Deputy Secretary and the Secretary or the Executive Deputy Secretary of Public Welfare • weekly between OCDEL Deputy Secretary and individual 	Ongoing	Secretaries of PDE and DPW Deputy Secretaries of PDE and DPW OCDEL Deputy Secretary	

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Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Bureau Directors			
Report on RTT-ELC grant activities and progress at each of the three annual Early Learning Council meetings. Solicit feedback from ELC members and incorporate feedback in RTT-ELC activities as appropriate.	Fall, Winter, and Spring each year	Deputy Secretary of OCDEL or her designee(s)	
Report on RTT-ELC grant activities and progress at each of SICC's six annual meetings. Solicit feedback from SICC members and incorporate feedback in RTT-ELC activities as appropriate.	Every other month each year	Deputy Secretary of OCDEL or her designee(s)	
Work with the Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC) to have members provide significant support to OCDEL in implementing the RTT-ELC plan.	Fall each year and ongoing	Deputy Secretary of OCDEL or her designee(s)	

(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)(4): Developing a Budget to Implement and Sustain the Work of This Grant

OCDEL's proven track record with managing a comprehensive \$1.3 billion early learning system serving children from birth to age 5 makes Pennsylvania a sound RTT-ELC investment. Pennsylvania is positioned to receive the RTT-ELC award and immediately leverage its experience in systems building and financial management to implement bold reforms to improve school readiness for over 300,000 children in the state. The budget the state has will effectively support the state's proposed RTT-ELC Early Learning and Development Plan.

(a): Using Existing Funds to Support Early Learning and Development

Pennsylvania's consolidated Early Learning and Development System results in OCDEL managing a 1.3 billion dollar budget that will directly and indirectly support and assist efforts to achieve the outcomes identified in the state plan. Table (A)(4)-1 lists the early learning program funding streams that OCDEL manages and the corresponding amounts.

The largest portion of the \$1.3 billion provides direct services to the high need children who are the focus of the RTT-ELC application. Direct services include Child Care, Head Start, Evidence Based Home Visiting, Early Intervention, and State Pre-School. While not all inclusive, children currently receiving OCDEL early learning services represent the immediate benefactors of the state plan – the high need children that will benefit from higher program quality, improved child outcomes and closing of the readiness gap.

Pennsylvania is a leader in the early childhood data system field because of its commitment to program accountability and monitoring. However, the goal is not to simply build data systems and collect data; the goal is to enable Early Education professionals and policy-makers to use that data to inform instruction, improve programming, and demonstrate the efficacy of early learning programs. Pennsylvania is ready to move the nation to the next level with its rich data set and unique child Identifier used across both the early learning longitudinal system and the K-12 longitudinal system. As a result, funding is requested through the RTT-ELC to be targeted to data usage and analytics to be used by educators, providers, and the community. The requested funds will be used in concert with Pennsylvania's annual allocation of over \$26 million dedicated to early learning data systems. The \$25 million cost is allocated across TANF (\$4.2M), Child Care Development Block Grant (\$8.5M), Medical Assistance Information funds

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(\$6.36M), and state dollars (\$7.7M). In addition, OCDEL has \$3.8 million from SLDS available to supplement the K-Entry Inventory work proposed in this grant.

RTT-ELC funds are requested to expand the Keystone STARS program, Pennsylvania's signature quality rating and improvement system. Pennsylvania has been committed to QRIS for over a decade and currently invests \$33.8 million annually from the Child Care Development Block Grant into STARS including the quality, school-age, and infant toddler set-asides. The federal funds, supported by an additional \$24 million in state dollars, support provider financial awards, professional development, technical assistance, environmental ratings, designations and other STARS related quality initiatives. Expanding Keystone STARS to include additional programs and increasing workforce effectiveness will be easily accomplished based on a solid infrastructure and a compatible information technology system.

Pennsylvania's plan will also leverage private foundation support from the Build Initiative, William Penn Foundation, Heinz Endowments and the Grable Foundation. Funding will be used to continue support of OCDEL's parent and public engagement work branded "Pennsylvania's Promise For Children." Currently OCDEL is working with the foundations for additional grant opportunities following the conclusion of our 3-year funding partnership. About \$220,000 remain available to focus on educating parents, general public and policy-makers on the benefits of high quality early learning experiences. Additional parent engagement strategies funded by RTT-ELC will move Pennsylvania closer to reaching its goal of having parent demand (not additional state spending) increase the supply of high quality programs.

State Advisory Council funding (\$1.2 M) is available to supplement Pennsylvania's reforms targeted towards data usage and analytics, child outcomes and parent engagement strategies. In Pennsylvania, the State Advisory Council is called the Early Learning Council. Pennsylvania allocated Council funds for data auditing to insure the integrity of Early Learning data to be used in outcome reporting, for transition support to young children and their families as they transition through the continuum of services and developmental states, and to enhance parents' understanding of their role in supporting children's success in preschool, Kindergarten, and learning in general.

Other reform strategies outlined in the State Plan will also be supplemented by current federal and state resources. Early childhood literacy funds will be supplemented annually by \$5.7

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million in Striving Readers and \$489 million in Parent Child Home Program. The home visiting scheduling initiative will aid service coordinators in the Early Intervention Program funded at \$438 million, Nurse Family Partnership Program funded at \$14.5 million and Evidence Based Home Visiting Program funded at \$2.8 million.

(b): Using Grants Funds to Achieve the Outcomes in the State Plan

The way in which Pennsylvania will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan is addressed in the Budget Section (section VIII of the application), which begins on page 279.

(c): Demonstrating Sustainability

Pennsylvania has developed three key strategies for sustaining the work of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge following the grant period. First, Pennsylvania will use RTT-ELC support to develop and expand systems that the state can maintain without additional funding following the grant period. These systems, which will be cost-neutral once they are fully implemented, include:

- Expanding the Keystone STARS Quality Rating and Improvement System to bring additional early learning programs into the system, thereby increasing the number and percentage of children with high needs who have access to high quality early learning environments. The state will use RTT-ELC funds during the project period to increase participation in STARS by Head Start, Pre-K Counts, Early Intervention, and all other child-serving programs. RTT-ELC funding will enable Pennsylvania to plan and implement additional STARS activities, to provide enhanced STARS technical assistance for programs that serve high-needs children, and to provide professional development to providers about the STARS system and the services available to them through that system.
- Developing a statewide Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework to ensure the common use and reporting, across programs, of authentic observational assessments to measure children's school readiness. RTT-ELC funding will enable Pennsylvania to develop the tool, pilot its use, validate activities, provide professional development, and create the information management system that will become the repository for all Kindergarten entry data.

The state has proposed sufficient funding to complete both the STARS expansion and the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework project and set an ambitious, yet realistic, timeline

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to have both projects finished by the end of the grant period. Once the projects are complete, the state will be able to maintain the systems through its current operating budget, without additional support.

Pennsylvania's second strategy to ensure the sustainability of its RTT-ELC-funded initiatives is reallocating existing resources. As discussed earlier, Pennsylvania has made a significant commitment to and investment in Early Learning and Development, doubling its investment programs, from approximately \$600 million in 2000 to more than \$1.3 billion today. At the end of the grant period, some of these extensive resources will be reallocated to sustain and expand the work of Governor Corbett's early childhood initiatives, including the Race to the Top plan.

For example, reallocation will support the planned expansion of Keystone STARS. To monitor compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Part B (which funds Early Intervention services for children with disabilities), Pennsylvania uses a Peer Monitoring System. Pennsylvania plans to use RTT-ELC funds to adapt the Early Intervention Peer Monitoring System Tool to include Keystone STARS quality rating elements. RTT-ELC funds will also be used to train the state's existing cadre of peer monitors regarding the new compliance expectations associated with participation in the Keystone STARS Program. Following the grant period existing funding for the Peer Monitoring System Tool will be reallocated to include monitoring of the Keystone STARS elements.

The third, and perhaps most important, way that Pennsylvania will sustain planned RTT-ELC-funded activities is by maintaining and expanding stakeholder commitment to the state's early childhood education initiatives. Pennsylvania is proud to have a wide range of deeply-committed champions of early childhood education who understand and advocate for Pennsylvania's Early Learning and Development efforts. These champions include:

- Governor Tom Corbett. Governor Corbett has declared that Early Childhood Education is one of his priorities and has reinforced this commitment by endorsing the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge plan summarized in Section (A)(2), which begins on page 36.
- The Early Learning Investment Commission (ELIC). Pennsylvania's ELIC represents a group of 60 business leaders who are committed to the state's continuing leadership in Early Childhood Education through the return on investment for Early Learning and Development programs, which includes savings from reduced special education and other costs to school

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districts and future revenue and societal benefits high quality early learning programs create by ensuring that Pennsylvania has a well-educated workforce in coming years. ELIC's letter of support for the proposed plan is located in Appendix (A)(3)-1 on page 237 of the appendices.

- The Early Childhood Education Caucus. Since January of 2009, this 80-member, bipartisan, bicameral group of influential state leaders, led by Senator Pat Browne (R) and Representative Phyllis Mundy (D), has continually championed early childhood issues in the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The Early Childhood Education Caucus's letter of support for the proposed plan is located in Appendix (A)(3)-1 on page 237 of the appendices.
- The Early Learning Council (ELC). This 60 member group of champions represents stakeholders from across Pennsylvania, including groups such as Parents of Young Children, Head Start programs, Pre-K Counts programs, School Districts, Child care programs, advocacy groups, and practitioners. Co-Chaired by Mr. Bill Isler, President of Family Communications, Inc./Mr. Rogers Neighborhood, and Dr. Barbara Minzenberg, Deputy Secretary OCDEL, this group will receive progress reports from the Race to the Top OCDEL Team, and give input and recommendations to inform grant activities. The ELC will also ensure ongoing support of leading edge Race to the Top initiatives subsequent to the grant period. The ELC's letter of support for the proposed plan is located in Appendix (A)(3)-3 on page 322 of the appendices.

Using this three-pronged approach to sustainability Pennsylvania will have the capacity not only to sustain but also to continuously build on the Race to the Top initiatives following the federal grant period.

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(d): Evidence for (A)(4)

(A)(4)(a)

<i>Table (A)(4) – 1 Existing other Federal, State, private, and local funds to be used to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan.</i>					
Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 2012	Fiscal Year 2013	Fiscal Year 2014	Fiscal Year 2015	Total
Child Care Development Block Grant – Direct Child Care Services	\$310,357,110	\$310,357,110	\$310,357,110	\$310,357,110	\$1,241,428,440
State dollars –direct child care services	\$282,378,361	\$282,619,696	\$282,619,696	\$282,619,696	\$1,130,237,449
TANF – direct child care services	\$31,686,000	\$31,686,000	\$31,686,000	\$31,686,000	\$126,744,000
Food Stamps-direct child care services	\$15,915,000	\$15,915,000	\$15,915,000	\$15,915,000	\$63,660,000
Social Services Block Grant – direct child care services	\$30,977,000	\$30,977,000	\$30,977,000	\$30,977,000	\$123,908,000
Child Care Development Block Grant – Quality initiatives including set-asides	\$33,857,588	\$33,857,588	\$33,857,588	\$33,857,588	\$135,430,352
State dollars Child Care Quality Initiatives	\$23,961,000	\$23,624,022	\$23,624,022	\$23,624,022	\$94,833,066
State Longitudinal Data Systems	\$0	\$3,849,875	\$0	\$0	\$3,849,875
Federal Early Head Start	\$1,322,387	\$1,322,387	\$1,322,387	\$1,322,387	\$5,289,548
State Advisory Council	\$1,345,758	\$325,000	\$0	\$0	\$1,670,758
Federal Evidence Based Home Visiting	\$2,818,007	\$2,775,709	\$2,775,709	\$2,775,709	\$11,145,134
Nurse Family Partnership Program (state funds)	\$11,978,000	\$11,978,000	\$11,978,000	\$11,978,000	\$47,912,000
Nurse Family Partnership Program (Medical Asst. funds)	\$2,544,000	\$2,544,000	\$2,544,000	\$2,544,000	\$10,176,000

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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
Parent Child Home Program (State Funds)	\$489,000	\$489,000	\$489,000	\$489,000	\$1,956,000
IDEA Part C	\$11,964,000	\$11,964,000	\$11,964,000	\$11,964,000	\$47,856,000
Medical Assistance Part C Program	\$51,300,000	\$51,300,000	\$51,300,000	\$51,300,000	\$205,200,000
State Dollars for Part C	\$118,926,000	\$118,926,000	\$118,926,000	\$118,926,000	\$475,704,000
IDEA Part B 619	\$11,120,847	\$11,120,847	\$11,120,847	\$11,120,847	\$44,483,388
IDEA Part B 611	\$30,664,071	\$30,664,071	\$30,664,071	\$30,664,071	\$122,656,284
Medical Assistance Part B Program	\$18,570,400	\$18,570,400	\$18,570,400	\$18,570,400	\$74,281,600
State Dollars for Part B	\$196,133,700	\$196,133,700	\$196,133,700	\$196,133,700	\$784,534,800
Head Start Collaboration	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$900,000
Striving Readers Literacy Program	\$5,700,000	\$5,700,000	\$5,700,000	\$5,700,000	\$22,800,000
State Preschool	\$82,784,000	\$82,784,000	\$82,784,000	\$82,784,000	\$331,136,000
State Head Start	\$37,278,000	\$37,278,000	\$37,278,000	\$37,278,000	\$149,112,000

This table represents the total program dollars that OCDEL manages and is intended to provide reviewers with the scope of OCDEL's Early Learning Continuum. These programs either have a direct or indirect impact on achieving the outcomes in the State Plan. Fiscal Year 2012 represents Pennsylvania's Fiscal Year 2011-12 (July 1 - June 30). Future fiscal years are estimated based on allocations available in State Fiscal Year 2011-12.

(A)(4)(b)

The State's budget appears in Section VIII, which begins on page 279 .

The narratives that accompany and explain the budget, and describe how it connects to the State Plan are also included in Section VIII.

CORE AREA (B): HIGH-QUALITY, ACCOUNTABLE PROGRAMS

(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS). (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 TQRIS that--

- (a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--
- (1) Early Learning and Development Standards,
 - (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System,
 - (3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications,
 - (4) Family engagement strategies,
 - (5) Health promotion practices, and
 - (6) Effective data practices.
- (b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children, and
- (c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

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 (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 TQRIS based on a common set of tiered Program Standards that meet the elements in criterion (B)(1)(a), submit--
 - o A copy of the tiered Program Standards,
 - o 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,
 - o Documentation of how the tiers meaningfully differentiate levels of quality.

(B)(1): Developing and Adopting a Common, Statewide TQRIS

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan for ongoing implementation of its well-established statewide TQRIS, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan, including timelines and milestones for activities. Appendix (B)(1)-1 on page 336 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

For almost a decade, Pennsylvania has had in place a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) for its Early Learning and Development Programs. This system, known as the Keystone STARS program, was initiated in 2002 as a multifaceted approach to improving the programs that serve young children in Pennsylvania. Keystone STARS evaluates program quality and supports continuous improvement for Early Learning and Development programs in the state, including child and school-age care, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts and Head Start programs. See Appendices (A)(1)-6a, 6b, and 6c, which begin on page 159 of the appendices, for a copy of the standards for Centers, Group Homes, and Family Child Care Homes.

(a): Statewide Set of Tiered Program Standards Linked to Key Areas

The STARS standards are aligned with and reference Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood, which are described more fully in section (C)(1). See Appendices (A)(1)-4a, 4b, and 4c, which begin on page 12 of the appendices, for a copy of the Learning Standards for Infants/Toddlers, Pre-K, and Kindergarten. The learning standards cover all essential domains of school readiness, are developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate and provide guidance for activities to support Early Learning and Development in the classroom and at home. These standards are designed to guide teachers and parents as they choose appropriate learning activities and assessment tools for young children; they are not intended for use as a curriculum or assessment tool. More intensive standards integration is required at each successive level of the Keystone STARS system. For example, at STAR 1, sites obtain and maintain copies of the appropriate Learning Standards for all age groups in the program; at STAR 2, Learning Standards are used as a resource for staff in classroom planning and documentation of children's learning; at

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STAR 3, sites implement a learning curriculum that incorporates the Learning Standards, including a written curriculum statement; and at STAR 4, programs crosswalk their curriculum and assessment tools to the Learning Standards.²⁵

Keystone STARS Performance Standards reflect research-based indicators, validated in the Keystone STARS Program Report 2010, which is included in Appendix (A)(1)-8 on page 213 of the appendices. The research basis for the standards is provided in Appendix (B)(1)-2: Good, Better, Best Executive Summary, on page 337 of the appendices. The Keystone STARS Performance Standards identify requirements for meeting quality indicators from STAR 1 (lowest level of quality) through STAR 4 (highest level) in each of the following areas:

- 1). Staff Qualifications and Professional Development: standards in this area establish the educational qualifications required for Early Childhood Educators and program directors at each STAR level and details the amount and type of annual continuing education [see Appendix (B)(1)-3: Career Lattice of Early Educator Credentialing on page 345 of the appendices] including training in child observation, assessment, inclusion and learning standards.
- 2). Learning Program: standards in this area establish benchmarks for curriculum and for use of a comprehensive assessment system, that includes developmentally-appropriate authentic child assessments and assessment of the program environment. Entry of program assessment and child outcome reporting data is required at higher STAR levels. Appropriate use of data to improve classroom instruction and outcomes for children is contained in professional development offerings.
- 3). Family and Community Partnerships: standards in this area establish benchmarks for the use of strategies to engage families, including types of information programs collect and track, resources and referrals provided, activities offered, conferences conducted, levels of support provided for children with special needs, and policies to engage parents in planning and decision-making. Special attention is paid to engaging families and communities in transition planning and activities that support children. Specifically programs are required to share information and support families about health promotion practices (health, wellness, nutrition, safety).

²⁵ (all examples provided are excerpted from the 12.15.10 Center Standards)

- 4). Leadership and Management: standards in this area establish quality measures for effective business practices to ensure organizational stability, create effective financial and personnel policies and procedures, and ensure high program quality and child safety. The comprehensive assessment standards come together in this section as Directors use multiple sources of evidence and data to form an annual Continuous Quality Improvement Plan at the classroom and program levels. Examples of sources include ERS scores, child outcome assessments, licensing inspection summaries, family, staff, and child surveys, audit reports, site safety records, and data from the Reach and Risk report.

Research-based health promotion practices, such as required professional development in child abuse mandated-reporter responsibilities, are embedded throughout the standards. For example, at STAR Level 2, programs must: a). administer developmentally-appropriate child screenings and share them with families within 45 days of each child's program entry, b). institute a system of site safety review and a corresponding plan of action, and c). document illness and injuries, including plans of action to prevent further occurrences.

Support services and activities provided to STARS programs include Early Childhood Mental Health technical assistance, comprehensive obesity-prevention activities, and the health and safety requirements embedded in the criteria for the Environment Rating Scales. At STAR Level 4 programs are required to provide early intervention outlined in Parts B and C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in conjunction with parents and service providers from public social and community service organizations and to implement activities appropriate to meet Individual Educational Program plans or Individual Family Service Plan goals or special needs plans and objectives.

Versions of the Keystone STARS Performance Standards are available for Early Learning and Development centers, group child care homes, and family child care homes.²⁶ Performance Standards are reviewed annually and have been revised and updated, based on feedback from the early childhood community, to align with best practices and quality improvements in the field. In addition, OCDEL has convened a STARS Advisory Committee, comprising stakeholders and

²⁶ In order to be eligible for Keystone STARS, programs must meet the minimal health and safety requirements for their program, such as Child Care Certification Regulations and Head Start Performance Standards.

practitioners who meet quarterly to guide and advise OCDEL on revisions to the standards, consult on protocols, recommend adaptations, and strengthen provider/family partnerships. The most recent Keystone STAR Center Standards update (July 2009) included embedding the Strengthening Families and Cultural Competency models in the standards and developing and implement tools that support the programs.

(b): Measurable Standards that Lead to Improved Learning Outcomes

Pennsylvania's Keystone STAR system meaningfully differentiates program quality requirements at four increasing levels of quality in four key areas of practice. The standards are both clear and measurable, as described below. The system incorporates high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children: the standards includes nearly every quality category identified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families.²⁷

Requirements for evaluating and rating program quality increase at each STAR level, from STAR 1 to STAR 4. Appendices (A)(1)-6a, 6b, and 6c, which begin on page 159 of the appendices, detail the increasing quality requirements in each of the four quality areas. The Good, Better, Best Executive Summary [Appendix (B)(1)-2 on page 337 of the appendices] provides the research basis for the standards and next steps for improvement where the standard is met. Pennsylvania made the decision to select research based indicators of quality that could be reliably monitored and assessed. National standards such as Caring for our Children and the Head Start Program Performance Standards were used to calibrate the top tier. Keystone STARS did not duplicate the standards already embedded in licensing and the Environment Rating Scale, which were leveraged to streamline monitoring and assessment.

The following paragraphs summarize the way in which STARS meaningfully differentiates program quality requirements and lead to improved outcomes. Appendix (B)(1)-4: Keystone STARS TQRIS Description, on page 346 of the appendices, provides further documentation of the way the program differentiates program quality at each of the four STAR levels. The

²⁷ Compendium of Quality Rating Systems and Evaluations, Administration for Children and Families, Department of Health and Human Services, April 2010, p 42.

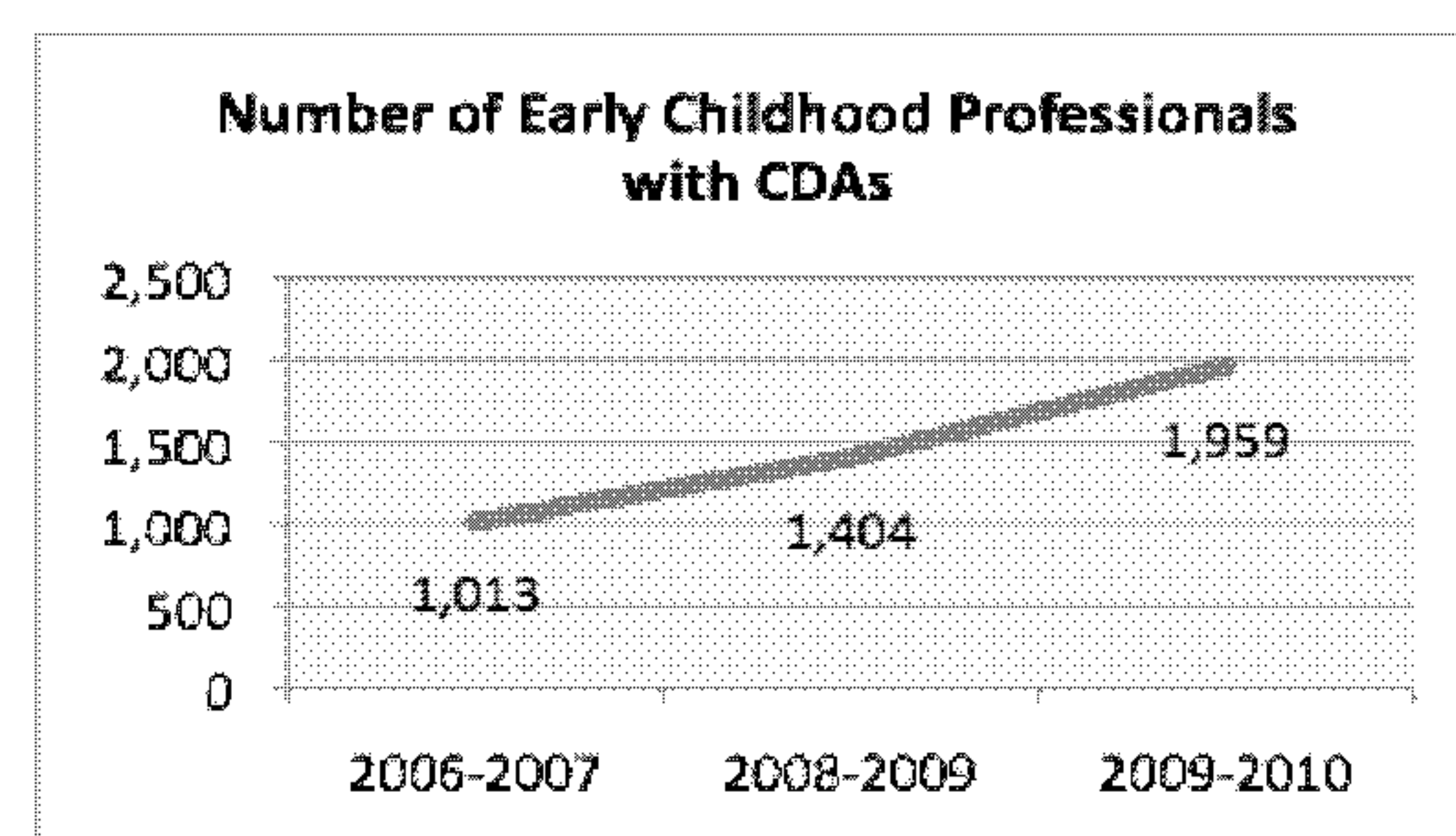
evidence section for (B)(1) explains how STARS Program Standards meet all required areas to meet the federal definition of “Program Standards” (see page 95).

(1): Staff Qualifications and Professional Development

Teacher quality is critical to the success of early learning and school-age programs. Qualified teachers keep children engaged, promote positive development, address concerns, and work with families to create learning experiences both in school and at home. Quality teachers are needed to improve learning outcomes, particularly for children with high needs.²⁸ The 2006 evaluation of Keystone STARS found that classrooms with teachers who had at least an associate’s degree had significantly higher Environment Rating Scale scores.²⁹

STARS standards in this domain require practitioners to evaluate their skills, knowledge and academic background against the state’s Core Body of Knowledge (its Workforce Competencies Framework) and establish an annual professional development plan that builds on strengths and fills in gaps. For each of the four STAR levels, the standards differentiate increasingly-stringent program requirements for educator and director education levels and credentials as well as professional development activities related to Early Learning and Development (including the number of hours required, instructor quality³⁰, and college-credit requirements). All directors in Keystone STARS programs must complete professional development on the Core Body of Knowledge, on the related Professional Development Record, and on the Foundations of the Environment Rating Scales (ERS).

The state also provides targeted financial supports for staff to earn their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, continuing professional development and required course work for Keystone STARS through merit awards. Practitioners can also apply for vouchers through the Pennsylvania Voucher Program to support required college level coursework. As shown in the chart to the right, STARS-defined requirements have resulted in significant increases, since 2006-07, in the



²⁸ (Barnett, 2003a, Bowman, Donovan & Burns, 2001, Howes & Brown, 2000).

²⁹ “Evaluation of Pennsylvania’s STARS Quality Rating System in Child Care Settings,” (December 2006).

³⁰ Professional development must be provided by a Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System (PQAS) approved instructor or be eligible for Act 48 or Continuing Education Units (CEU) hours.

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number of Pennsylvania early childhood teachers earning their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. In addition, the number of early childhood professionals earning their Director Credential has increased by 60% since 2007-08.

(2): Learning Program

High quality in early learning programs is also linked to improvements in child learning outcomes.³¹ High-quality programs include research-based, developmentally-appropriate curricula that guide teachers to provide learning activities that help every child in the classroom develop,³² developmentally-appropriate assessments that measure child progress through ongoing observation and work sampling, and assessments of the quality of the learning environment.

For each of the four STAR levels, the STARS system differentiates increasingly-stringent program requirements for: 1) incorporating the state's Learning Standards for Early Childhood as a resource for building an appropriate curriculum, 2) using standards-aligned child observation and assessment tools, 3) using the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) checklists³³ to measure the quality of the classroom environment. As programs move up the STARS ladder, they must:

- Increase the degree to which they align their curriculum with the Learning Standards for Early Childhood and demonstrate that alignment.
- Use child observation and assessment tools to assess child progress and align the tools with the Learning Standards. At STAR level 3 and 4, programs must use an authentic assessment, and measure each child's progress across the essential domains of school readiness.
- Increase the level to which they incorporate the nationally-recognized Environment Rating Scale (ERS) classroom assessment tool and the ERS scores they receive. The ERS measures the elements of the classroom environments that promote children's learning, including effective classroom setup and quality of adult-child interactions. ERS scales are available for

³¹ Burchinal, P., Kainz, K., Cai, K., Tout, K., Zaslow, M., Martinez-Beck, I., Rathgeb, C. (2009). "Early Care and Education Quality and Child Outcomes. Research-to-Policy, Research-to-Practice Brief #2009-15. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation.

³² Vold, E. B. (2003). Young children's affirmation of differences: Curriculum that is multicultural and developmentally appropriate. In J. P. Isenberg & M. R. Jalongo (Eds.), *Major trends and issues in early childhood education: Challenges, controversies, and insights (Second edition)* (pp. 30-46). New York: Teachers College Press, p. 31.

³³ For more information on the Environment Rating Scales, visit <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ECERS/>.

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three developmental levels: Infant/Toddler, Early Childhood, and School Ages 5 through 12.

A Family Child Care Home rating scale is also used.

As the charts below show, the quality of Early Learning and Development programs in the state is growing, as indicated by the increase in the number of programs reaching STAR levels 3 and 4 and the increase in the average ERS score for these programs. Child outcomes for preschoolers in STAR 3 and 4 centers indicate that children in these programs are making progress throughout the year. More than 65% of preschoolers who attended Keystone STARS 3 & 4 programs finished the 2009-10 program year with age-appropriate literacy, numeracy and social skills.

(3): Partnerships with Family & Community

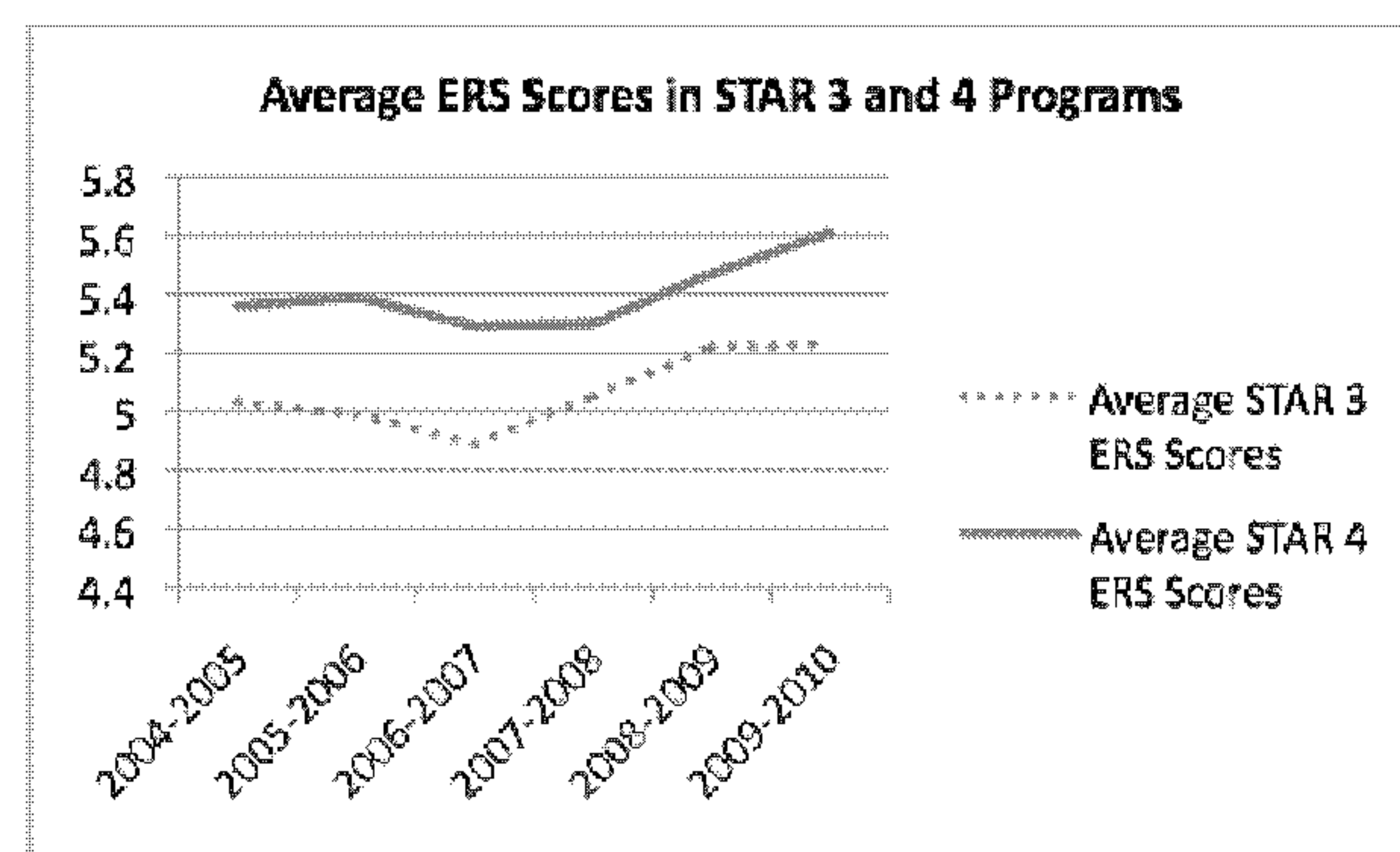
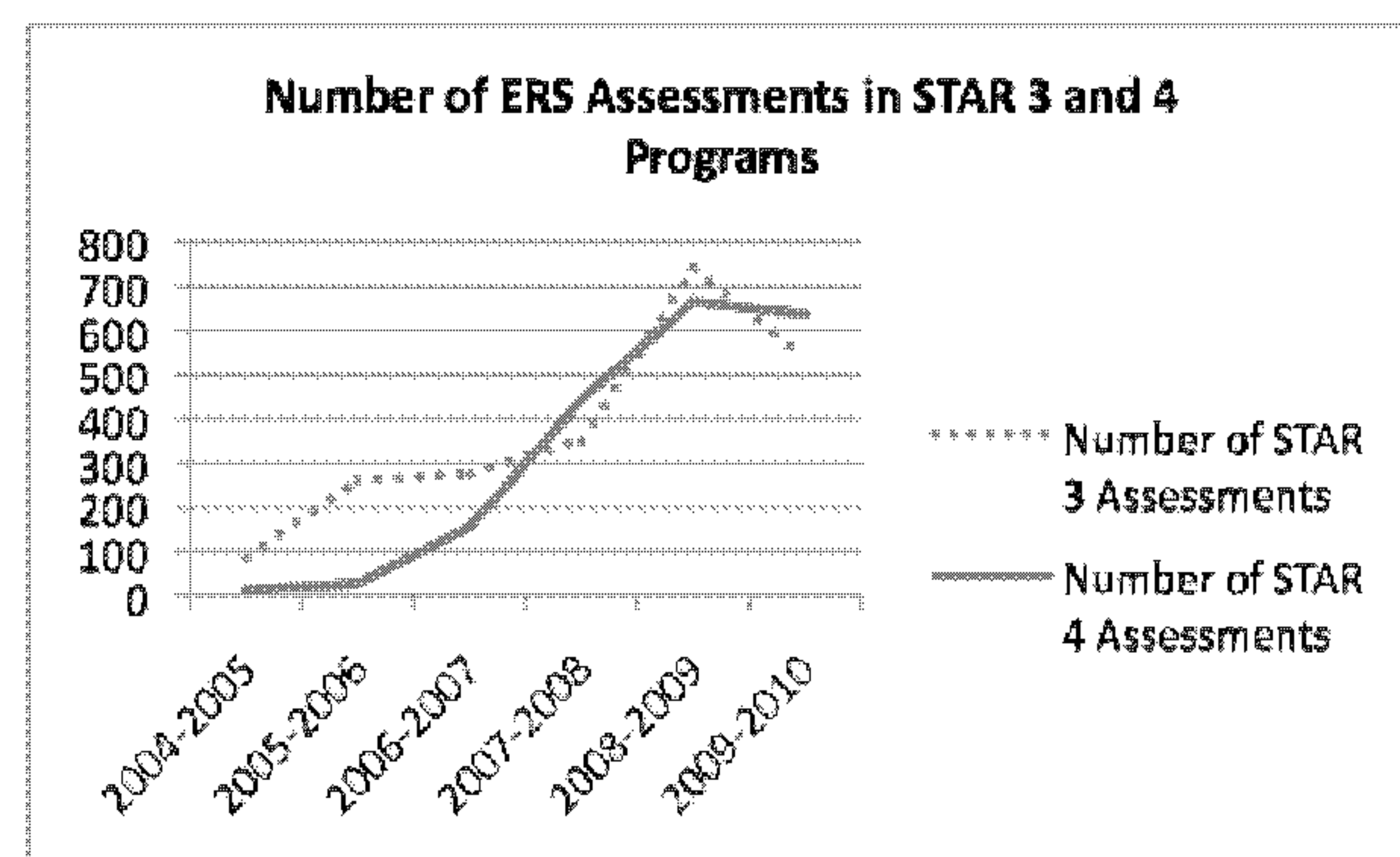
When parents are involved in their children's learning, children do better in school. Research has shown not only that it is vital for families to be involved in children's early learning, but also that children whose

parent/guardian participates in their learning throughout school have higher student

performance.³⁴ In order for early learning programs to have the greatest impact on a child's

development, they must build effective and ongoing partnerships with families to enable them to support their children's learning and development. This connection is even more necessary when those families face challenges such as poverty, low parental education levels, limited English proficiency, or other factors that can affect children's health, safety, or ability to learn.

For each of the four STAR levels, Keystone STARS differentiates increasingly-stringent program requirements for efforts to provide families with community resources, involve families in programs, and promote smooth transitions for children to another classroom, program, or



³⁴ Jeynes, W. H. (2005). Parental involvement and student achievement: A meta-analysis (Family Involvement Research Digest). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. Retrieved January 1, 2007, from www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/publications_resources/publications_series/family_involvement_research_digests/parental_involvement_and_student_achievement_a_meta_analysis.

school. Depending on the STAR level, programs must meet different requirements for documenting parent communications, such as daily child updates to parents and invitations to parent-teacher conferences. Programs at STAR 2 level and above are also required to present a list of local stakeholders involved in early care and education, such as other early learning programs, school districts, and community engagement groups. Parents indicate high levels of satisfaction with Keystone STARS, and are engaged in their child's learning. A 2010 survey of over 7,000 parents of children in STAR 3 or 4 programs indicated that at least 96% of parents were satisfied with a range of key quality measures.

(4): Leadership and Management

For each of the four STAR levels, the STARS system differentiates increasingly-stringent program requirements for standard measures business practices, staff communications and support, employee compensation, and continuous quality improvement. These requirements include elements such as keeping detailed budgets and financial records, providing employee benefits, conducting classroom observations, developing salary scales based on education and experience, developing a policy and procedures manual, and conducting an annual independent financial audit. STARS Specialists – staff members in each of the state's six Keys program regions who are specifically trained to work with Keystone STARS providers – conduct reviews of program documents to determine each program's level of compliance with requirements. Specialists may also interview program staff to learn more about the content of staff meetings. Enhanced management practices have also enabled many Keystone STARS programs to become stronger early learning partners with Early Intervention, school districts, and Head Start programs in their communities.

(c): Links to State's Early Learning and Development Program Licensing System

The Keystone STARS standards build on the regulatory or performance standards for each program type. If the program has issues with the underlying authority, depending on the difficulty, the STARS are suspended or removed until the program is back in compliance and again meeting the STAR level standards. Pennsylvania has strong child care regulatory requirements on which Keystone STARS can build, such as detailed health and safety guidelines including emergency preparedness and appropriate staff-child ratios. The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Office of Child Development and Early Learning, Bureau of

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Certification is responsible for the regulation of all child care centers, group day care homes, and family day care homes in Pennsylvania. The regulations are promulgated to facilitate the safe and healthful care of a child in a child day care center and to support families by providing care that promotes the emotional, cognitive, communicative, perceptual-motor, physical and social development of the child.

(d): Goals

Pennsylvania's goal for its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System is to continue to improve the programs that serve young children in Pennsylvania thereby improving child outcomes, particularly for children with high needs.

(e): Activities/Next Steps

To reach its ongoing goal of continuous quality improvement, Pennsylvania plans to

- 1). Continue to implement support for and monitor programs that participate in the Keystone STARS through the Keystone STARS Early Learning Keys to Quality.
- 2). Continue to evaluate participating program's compliance with tiered STARS Performance Standard requirements, and assign s to programs based on their compliance.
- 3). Continue to help programs improve and move up the STARS quality ladder through OCDEL's ongoing work already being implemented, which includes:
 - Helping programs evaluate educator skills, knowledge and academic background against the Core Body of Knowledge and establish annual plans in the professional development record to build on educator strengths and fill in gaps.
 - Providing professional development for all directors of participating programs on the Core Body of Knowledge, the Professional Development Record, and Foundation of the Environment Rating Scale.
 - Providing targeted financial supports for staff to earn their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, School Age Credential and/or Director Credential.
 - Providing professional development for educators.
 - Providing merit awards for professional development and required course work.
 - Continuing to offer the Voucher Program to support educators' required college level coursework.

(f): Evidence for (B)(1)

(1): Status of Program Standards

Table (B)(1)-1: Status of all Program Standards Currently Used in the State							
	Program Standards Elements.³⁵ If the Program Standards address the element, place an "X" in that box.						
List each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State, specify which programs in the State use the standards	Early Learning and Development Standards	Comprehensive Assessment Systems	Qualified Workforce	Family Engagement	Health Promotion	Effective Data Practices	Other
Keystone STARS	X	X	X	X	X	X	
PA Pre-K Counts Guidance and statute	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Head Start Performance Standards and HSSAP Guidance	X	X	X	X	X	X	

(2): A Copy of the Tiered Program Standards

Copies of the Keystone STARS Performance Standards for Centers, Group Homes, and Family Child Care Homes are provided in Appendices (A)(1)-6a, 6b, and 6c, which begin on page 159 of the appendices.

(3): Documentation that the Standards Address all Defined Areas and Meet the Federal Definition

The Keystone STARS Performance Standards address all areas included in the federal definition of Program Standards. As described above, the Keystone STARS system serves as the state’s Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and defines tiered levels of quality for Early Learning and Development Programs, meaningfully differentiating program quality requirements at four increasing levels of quality (STAR Levels 1 through 4) in four key areas of practice: Staff Qualifications and Professional Development; Learning Program; Family and Community Partnerships; and Leadership and Management. The standards are both clear and measurable.

³⁵ Please refer to the definition of Program Standards for more information on the elements.

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The system incorporates high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children: the standards include nearly every quality category identified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families. STARS Program Standards meet the federal definition of program standards as follows:

- a). STARS Program Standards incorporate the State's Early Learning and Development Standards through evidence-based activities, interventions, or curricula that are appropriate for each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and are aligned to K-12 Standards Aligned System. The STARS Program Standards require programs to use the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards and/or relevant Academic Standards to plan learning activities and to implement a curriculum that incorporates the standards. The Learning Standards are not designed to be used as a curriculum or assessment tool but to guide parents and teachers as they choose appropriate learning activities and assessment tools for young children.
- w). In the STARS system, 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 through authentic, observation-based assessments; and 2). program performance and quality through assessment of program environment, including the Environment Ratings Scales.
- x). The STARS system addresses the need for a qualified workforce that improves young children's health, social, emotional, and educational outcomes, through requirements for staff qualifications and by providing targeted professional development.
- y). STARS strategies are successfully used to engage families in supporting their children's development and learning in each program's efforts to provide families with community resources, involve families in the program, and promote smooth transitions for children to another classroom, program, or school.
- z). STARS incorporates health promotion practices. Participating programs are required to support families and share information about health promotion practices (including health, wellness, nutrition, and safety).
- aa). STARS promotes effective data practices. Classroom, program, and state level data is gathered through the PELICAN Keys to Quality and Early Learning Network database

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management system, which is the specific PELICAN system that manages Keystone STARS. Identification of high-need and/or at-risk children and providers who serve those populations helps OCDEL strategically provide appropriate TA and PD to support high quality Early Learning and Development programs for all children. Additionally, OCDEL can monitor grant spend-down by providers, fiscal management by the contracted Regional Keys, and ultimately the movement towards achievement of Star level and provider type targets.

(4): Documentation that the Standards Differentiate Levels of Quality

Appendix (B)(1)-4: Keystone STARS TQRIS Description, on page 346 of the appendices, documents the systems' differentiation of program quality, providing a detailed description of how:

- STARS 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 and aligned to K-12 Standards Aligned System;
- STARS Comprehensive Assessment Systems are used routinely and appropriately to improve instruction and enhance program quality by providing robust and coherent evidence of children's learning and development outcomes and program performance and quality;
- STARS meaningfully differentiates program quality requirements across four domains (Teacher Qualifications and Credentials, Learning Program, Partnerships with Family and Community, and Leadership and Management) to improve outcomes; and
- STARS Program Standards meet the federal definition of program standards.

(5): Pennsylvania’s High-Quality Plan for (B)(1): Continuing to Implement Pennsylvania’s Well-Established TQRIS

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	<p>Pennsylvania has a well-established common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) for its Early Learning and Development Programs known as the Keystone STARS.</p> <p>The Keystone STARS Early Learning Keys to Quality evaluate program quality and support continuous improvement for Early Learning and Development programs in the state, including child and school-age care, Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts and Head Start programs.</p>
Key Goals	<p>To continue to improve the programs that serve young children in Pennsylvania thereby improving child outcomes, particularly for children with high needs.</p>
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Continue to implement support for and monitor programs that participate in the Keystone STARS through the Keystone STARS Early Learning Keys to Quality. 2). Continue to evaluate participating program’s compliance with tiered STARS Performance Standard requirements, and assign s to programs based on their compliance. 3). Continue to help programs improve and move up the STARS quality ladder through OCDEL’s ongoing work already being implemented, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helping programs evaluate educator skills, knowledge and academic background against the Core Body of Knowledge and establish annual plans in the professional development record to build on educator strengths and fill in gaps. • Providing professional development for all directors of participating programs on the Core Body of Knowledge, the Professional Development Record, and Foundation of the Environment Rating Scale. • Providing targeted financial supports for staff to earn their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, School Age Credential and/or Director Credential. • Providing professional development for educators. • Providing merit awards for professional development and required course work. • Continuing to offer the Voucher Program to support educators’ required college level coursework.

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Required Elements	Description of Element
Rationale for Activities	Research shows that high program quality in early education is linked to improvements in child outcomes and is especially important for children with high needs. High quality programs can ameliorate some of the risks high-needs children face, and help them enter Kindergarten better prepared to succeed. Teacher quality is critical to the success of an early learning and school-age program. Qualified teachers keep children engaged, promote positive development, address concerns, and work with families to create learning experiences both in school and at home. Quality teachers are needed to improve learning outcomes, particularly for children with high needs.
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	Statewide.
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	Activities are ongoing and currently being implemented throughout all six regions of the state.
How State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable	Keystone STARS has developed a specific set of program standards for different types of Early Learning and Development programs, including child care centers, family child care homes, and group homes.
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	<p>The Keystone STARS performance standards and tools and resources ensure access to high-quality programs for children with high needs and OCDEL data demonstrates higher numbers of at risk children are enrolled in Keystone STAR programs.</p> <p>Performance standards include requirements for partnerships with families, targeting the families of children with high needs to help identify barriers and provide needed resources.</p>
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

Timeline and Milestones for B1: Continuing to Implement Pennsylvania’s Well-Established TQRIS

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Evaluate/Monitor program compliance with tiered STARS Performance Standards	Ongoing	Regional Keys	ERS Assessors
Provide resources and tools to Keystone STARS early learning programs	Ongoing	Regional Keys	PA Key
Provide professional development to program directors on Core Body of Knowledge, Professional Development Record, and Environment Ratings Scales	Ongoing	Regional Keys	PA Key
Provide professional development to educators	Ongoing	Regional Keys	PA Key
Provide targeted financial supports for staff to earn their Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, School Age Credential and/or Director Credential	Ongoing	PA Key	Regional Keys
Provide merit awards for professional development and required course work	Ongoing	Regional Keys	

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

(B)(2): Promoting Participation in the State's TQRIS

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan promoting participation in its TQRIS, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan, including a timeline with milestones. Appendix (B)(1)-1, on page 336 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

Pennsylvania has in place a range of policies and practices to maximize participation in Keystone STARS, the state's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

(a): Policies and Practices to Reach the Goal of Participation by all Early Learning and Development Programs

Participation by regulated child care providers and Head Start Centers in the Keystone STARS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System is voluntary; child care programs that choose to participate in Keystone STARS and receive PA Pre-K Counts grants, however, must achieve and maintain a STAR Level of at least 3. Child care programs that participate in the Keystone STARS system benefit from STARS professional development and technical assistance, caseload management from a Regional Key specialist, branding to use in marketing, and STARS grants and awards. Head Start programs that participate receive professional development and technical assistance, caseload management, and branding benefits, but are not eligible for these grants and awards. Today, 103 Head Start/Early Head Start programs and 4,252 child care programs, including 227 Pre-K Counts state-funded preschool programs, participate in STARS.

Pennsylvania currently tracks data on state-funded child care and Head Start providers, including STARS programs, through Pennsylvania's Enterprise to Link Information for Children Across Networks (PELICAN) information management system. PELICAN enables Pennsylvania to integrate child care services information, including provider certification and professional development, across different child care programs. In partnership with Regional Keys, OCDEL uses data from this system to set annual targets for increasing the number of programs participating in Keystone STARS and increasing the number of STARS programs that reach

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Levels 3 and 4 (the top two program program-quality tiers). These targets are based on OCDEL's analysis of programs' past performance, movement on the STARS ladder, and provider grant spend-down information.

(b): Policies and Practices to Ensure Access for Children with High Needs

By program standards or regulations, Head Start, Early Head Start and PA Pre-K Counts enroll only children with high needs (children whose families earn up to 300% of the federal poverty, children receiving Early Intervention services, and children who are English Language Learners). In addition, one of Pennsylvania's primary directives is to increase access for children with high needs to quality early learning programs. The state provides financial incentives for most types of Early Learning and Development programs to include children eligible for Early Intervention services. With RTT-ELC grant funds, Pennsylvania plans to develop a specific protocol for Early Childhood Special Education Programs to participate in its STARS quality continuum. The current Early Intervention database enables the state to match unique child identifiers between Early Intervention and other Early Learning and Development programs. Pennsylvania plans to enhance this data system to include, for programs participating in STARS, data on the STAR level of the programs children receiving Intervention services attend. With the inclusion of STAR Level information for the programs, the state will be able to estimate the number of children receiving Early Intervention services at each STAR level for each type of program and determine how many of these children are enrolled in programs in the top two STARS tiers. Early Intervention staff would be able to use this data to provide families with more information about the STARS TQRIS system. OCDEL would be able to use the data to inform policy decisions and identify programs' technical assistance needs.

The number of high-needs children currently enrolled in all types of Early Learning and Development programs is provided in Table (A)(1)-3 in section A1. The number of these children who are enrolled in programs that are in the top tiers of STARS is provided in table (B)(4)(c)(2). This table also includes targets for increasing the enrollment of high-needs children in these quality programs.

(c): Targets for Early Learning and Development Program Participation in TORIS

With support from the RTT-ELC grant, Pennsylvania plans to significantly increase program participation in the Keystone STARS TQRIS between 2011 and 2016, including increasing the

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participation of the types of programs not currently tracked through the PELICAN information management system (licensed nursery schools, school-based Pre-K programs funded locally or through Title I, school-based Pre-K Counts programs, and Early Intervention (EI) programs funded through IDEA Part B). By the end of the 2016, the STARS program will include 95% of PA Pre-K Counts programs, 45% of Early Head Start/Head Start programs, 100% of EI programs, 56% of state-funded child care programs, and 10% of private licensed nursery school programs. Annual targets for participation are provided in Table (B)(2)(3), on page 108.

(d): Gaps and Needs Related to Program Participation in STARS

Not all state Early Learning and Development programs are tracked through PELICAN, however, and it is currently difficult to monitor and analyze data, set targets for increased participation, and enroll these programs in the STARS system. While the majority of the Head Start programs that participate in the Keystone STARS program are state-funded Head Start Supplemental Programs, most Head Start programs in Pennsylvania are not regulated by OCDEL. Data on these providers is managed outside the PELICAN Keys to Quality (K2Q) information management system. Likewise, data on other programs is managed outside PELICAN K2Q (these programs include Licensed Nursery Schools, School-Based Pre-Kindergarten, and Early Intervention programs funded through Part B section 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA). Because these programs are tracked through separate data systems, the state has no seamless way to set targets for continuous program quality-improvement initiatives for these providers. As a result, the state is missing valuable opportunities to strengthen the quality of these Early Learning and Development programs.

It has also been difficult for the state to include non-regulated program in the Keystone STARS systems because, to date, STARS designations have been based on data at the site level, rather than at the classroom level: to receive a designation for a specific STAR Level, the entire site must meet the program-quality requirements for that level. Tracking classroom-level STARS data in PELICAN would allow more sites to be eligible to participate in STARS (for example, a Pre-K classroom housed in a district elementary school building would be able to participate even though the school as a whole is not eligible to participate).

(e): Goals for Increasing Program Participation in STARS:

Between 2011 and 2016, Pennsylvania plans to:

- increase the number of programs participating in the Keystone STARS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System,
- increase the number of programs in the top two tiers of the STARS system, and
- increase the number and percent of high-need children participating enrolled in top tier programs

(f): Key Activities/Next Steps

The state will reach these goals for increased participation and enrollment by including more types of providers in the system, and although numbers of child care providers in Keystone STARS has stabilized due to the age of the program, additional efforts will be exerted in high need communities to recruit, enroll and support providers serving children at risk for school success. To include more types of programs, the state will implement consistent data management processes across all Early Learning and Development programs, streamlining data collection, and expanding the types of data that can be entered into the PELICAN information management system to include more types of programs. Pennsylvania plans to expand data collection through PELICAN to include classroom data, and expand Keystone STARS to include participation from:

- School-based PA Pre-K Counts providers,
- School-based Pre-K programs that are funded locally or through Title I,
- State-funded preschool programs that do not provide child care,
- Early Intervention Programs funded through Part B, section 619 of IDEA, and
- Private Academic Preschools (licensed nursery schools).

The first step in the process of expanding the data management system to include data-tracking for these providers is completing a crosswalk of the standards for these programs, comparing these standards against Pennsylvania's child care regulations and Keystone STARS program standards to identify inconsistencies and gaps. When programs' standards are lower than those of the state's child care regulations or STARS standards, programs will be required to meet the more stringent standards in order to participate in STARS. For example, regulations for Private Academic Nursery Schools do not require a 1:10 staff-to-child ratio, although STARS standards

do. Private nursery schools participating in the program would be required to adhere to this staff-to-child ratio to receive a STARS designation. The standards crosswalk will also compare program standards to determine whether there are economies that can be leveraged to streamline participation, for example, by accepting documentation to meet similar standards in a different program type as sources of evidence for Keystone STARS. The crosswalks will help the state streamline policies about the STARS designation process, because the STARS designation process will be able to eliminate any requirements that are already met by the program type's standards and already monitored by the regulating body for that program type. As indicated in Table (B)(1)-1 on page 95 shows the program types that have existing quality standards, which be included in the standards crosswalks.

As indicated in Table (B)(4)(c)(2) on page 134, an estimated 878 Head Start Centers funded by Federal and State dollars currently serve 27,163 children in Pennsylvania. Included in that number are 277 locations with state-funded classrooms supported by a \$36 million investment from the Head Start State Assistance Supplemental Program, HSSAP. HSSAP is based on compliance with the Federal Head Start Performance Standards for preschool aged children. PA Pre-K Counts serves 11,359 at-risk children in 481 locations. Head Start and PA Pre-K Counts often offer programming in the same location. In some instances, these programs also participate in Keystone STARS because they are included in the STARS designation and meet the performance standards of the child care facility in which they are located.

In addition to the program standards crosswalk, OCDEL will develop STARS professional development specifically for the new program types to be included in Keystone STARS in order to help support them in meeting STARS standards and moving up the STARS ladder. This professional development will include training on nationally-recognized Environment Rating Scales (ERS). This training will cover both the Foundations of ERS and training on the age-appropriate rating scale for the program: the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale - Revised (ITERS-R), the Early Childhood Rating Scale - Revised (ECERS-R), or the School-Age Environment Rating Scale (SACERS). Professional development will also include training on appropriate elements from the state's Core Body of Knowledge (CBK), described further in section D, which begins on page 210. Training on the CBK will comprise early learning standards, assessment, curriculum, and health and safety in addition to training specific to programs' ability to meet the standards, such as continuous quality improvement, completing

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facility training plans, mandated child-abuse reporting, and other topics. Expanding the system to include additional Head Start partners, school based child care programs, private nursery schools, and Early Childhood Special Education facilities will require significant enhancements to the PELICAN system. To complete this integration, the state plans to:

- Develop a crosswalk between the Head Start Standards, state certification regulations, and Keystone STARS standards. Head Start Performance Standards that align with STARS standards will be recognized, reducing the duplication of monitoring and oversight and facilitating program participation in STARS.
- All Head Start grantees participating in Keystone STARS will be managed by Preschool Specialists who currently support PA Pre-K Counts programs (these programs all must meet standards for STAR Levels 3 or 4). This management structure will build on the relationships and experiences already established, further streamlining the process for including these providers in STARS.
- All Head Start programs participating in STARS will enter the program at STAR Level 2, based on the program's submission to their designated Preschool Specialist of the programs most-recent federal review and scores from the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™), which measures the quality of teachers' and caregivers' interactions with children. STARS will provide need-based technical assistance and professional development to providers experiencing challenges in meeting these requirements.
- All Head Start State Supplemental and PA Pre-K Counts programs meet standards for STAR Levels 3 or 4. To receive their STARS designation, programs must: a.) submit their most-recent federal review (Head Start only), b.) submit their most-recent CLASS™ score (Head Start only), c.) provide evidence they meet the standards are still in play following the planned crosswalk, and d.) submit their ERS scores.

In addition, the state may modify the onsite STARS redesignation schedules for different provider types to align with federal reporting schedules and avoid duplication of efforts. Currently, this schedule calls for programs to be re-evaluated for STARS compliance every two years.

(g): Evidence for (B)(2)

(1): Performance Measures for Early Learning and Development Program Participation

Table (B)(2)(3): 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	# of programs in the State	Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System											
		Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target- end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015		Target- end of calendar year 2016	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: PA Pre-K Counts^a</i>	481	227 ^b	47.2	227	47.2	384	80	457	95	457	95	457	95
Early Head Start and Head Start ^{36 c, d}	878	103	11.7	131	15	175	20	263	30	351	40	395	45
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	48	<i>Programs funded by IDEA, Part C will not be included as they are home-based.</i>											
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	34 ^e	0	0							17	50	34	100
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	45	0	0							5	10	7	15
Programs receiving from CCDF funds	Child Care Works ^f	19,606	3,552	<i>Regulated providers are being tracked below (Keystone STARS).</i>									
		Keystone STARS ^g	8,498	4,252	50	4,470	52.6	4,537	53.4	4,605	54.2	4,674	55
Other <i>Specify: Home Visiting Programs^h</i>	57	0	<i>Home Visiting programs will not be included as they are home-based.</i>										
Other <i>Specify: Licensed Nurseries</i>	574	0							29	5	57	10	

^a Data Source: PELICAN, May 2011. ^b Current Child Care Providers Only. ^c Home Based Only Sites Not Included. ^d Head Start information represents Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant/Seasonal and Head Start State Supplemental funding; data source: Federal HSES, August 2011. ^e Reflects number of local Preschool Early Intervention programs that OCDEL contracts with to provide EI services. ^f The number of programs in the State includes all regulated (7,459) and unregulated (12,147) providers that had a Child Care Works subsidy enrollment on June 30, 2011. The baseline includes the actual subset of 7,459 regulated providers that also participated in Keystone STARS on June 30, 2011. ^g The number of programs in the State includes all regulated providers on June 30, 2011. The baseline is an actual count of regulated providers participating in the Keystone STARS program on June 30, 2011. ^h Includes Parents as Teachers, Nurse Family Partnership, and Parent Child Home Program.

³⁶ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

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(2): High Quality Plan for (B)(2): Early Learning and Development Program Participation

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	<p>Pennsylvania currently has a number of policies and practices in place to ensure program participation in Keystone STARS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.</p> <p>Participation by regulated child care providers and Head Start Centers in the Keystone STARS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System is voluntary.</p> <p>Currently, 4,252 child care programs and 103 Head Start/Early Head Start programs statewide participate in STARS. OCDEL uses data from its PELICAN information management system to sets annual targets for increasing the number of programs participating in Keystone STARS, increasing the number of STARS programs that reach Levels 3 and 4 (the top two program program-quality tiers), and increasing access to high quality programs for children with high needs.</p> <p>All PA Pre-K Counts child care programs are required to be at STAR Level 3 or 4.</p>
Key Goals	<p>Increase the number of programs participating in Keystone STARS,</p> <p>Increase the number of STARS programs that reach Levels 3 and 4 (the top two program program-quality tiers), and</p> <p>Increase access to high quality programs for children with high needs.</p>
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<p>Enhance PELICAN Keys to Quality to be able to capture and manage non-certified provider groups to include: Head Starts, Private Academic - license nursery schools, and school based pre-k, Early Childhood Special Education Classrooms -IDEA part B, School District Title I.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a crosswalk of Certification Regulations with all new provider type regulations/standards. • Develop a crosswalk of Keystone STARS Performance Standards with all new provider type regulations/standards • Develop training materials for new provider types • Train Designators in updates of PELICAN Keys to Quality • Participate in PELICAN Keys to Quality Phase 3 system design, testing and implementation • Phase in Designation of new provider types over 3 years • All State funded PA Pre-K Counts and Head Start State Supplemental Programs must be a STAR 3 no later than July 1, 2014. • Conduct validation study throughout the grant

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Required Elements	Description of Element
Rationale for Activities	<p>Increased provider access to participation in the Keystone STARS program via the integrated PELICAN Keys to Quality system that will provide them with the knowledge and vehicle to structure their activities and increase the quality of their programs</p> <p>Increased provider access to the mentoring and monitoring that OCDEL provides participants in the STARS program</p> <p>Increased information to evaluate the effectiveness of its provider quality programs</p>
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	Key activities would be implemented across the State through the Regional Keys
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	<p>January 2012-June 2012: Project planning, including establishing protocols and ramping up for state-wide implementation</p> <p>June 2012 – July 2015 : Project begins and all provider types included by July 1, 2015</p>
How State will address the needs of the different types of ELD Programs, if applicable	This project will focus target programs that serve children identified with high needs. It will also encourage voluntary participation from school-based programs including Title I, Private Academic licensed nursery schools, and federal Head Start partner and Early Childhood Special Education Classrooms -IDEA part B
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	Programs will be offered enhanced services in high need and moderately high need counties and cities as per OCDEL Reach and Risk study.
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

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Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Key Activity 1: Develop a crosswalk of Certification Regulations with new provider types	Summer 2012	OCDEL Chief, Division of Operations	Regional Key staff PA Key staff
Key Activity 2: Develop crosswalks of Keystone STARS standards with new provider types, participation to include Keystone STARS Advisory Members and Regional Key Directors and Staff	Summer 2012	OCDEL Chief, Division of Operations	Regional Key staff PA Key staff
Key Activity 3: Develop training materials for new provider types	Summer 2012	Regional Key Directors PA Key Director	
Key Activity 4: Train Designators in updates of PELICAN Keys to Quality	Fall 2013 – Spring 2014	OCDEL Regional Key Staff	
Key Activity 5: Participate in PELICAN Keys to Quality Phase 3 system design, testing and implementation	Winter 2013	Regional Key OCDEL Chief, Division of Operations OCDEL Planning staff	
Key Activity 6: Phase in Designation of new provider types over 3 years	Summer 2013 through Summer 2015	Regional Key Directors Preschool Specialists Peer Reviewers	

(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.

(B)(3): Rating and Monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan for a rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan, including a timeline with milestones. Appendix (B)(1)-1, on page 336 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this plan.

Pennsylvania has a well-established system for rating and monitoring the Early Learning and Development programs that participate in the Keystone STARS programs. This system, called *STARS Designation*, applies to the diverse types of Early Learning and Development programs that operate in the state. The system not only enables OCDEL to help programs continuously improve, but also helps OCDEL provide quality rating and licensing information to parents in accessible, easy-to-understand formats.

(a): Using Valid and Reliable Monitoring Tools

The STARS Designation system uses valid and reliable monitoring tools to assess program quality, to rate the programs' compliance with STARS program standards, and to designate each program's STAR level on a scale of (lowest quality level) to 4 (highest level). Both the monitoring tools and the designation process are described below.

(1): Tools Used to Assess and Monitor Program Quality

The tools OCDEL uses to assess and monitor program quality and demonstrate provider compliance with STARS standards include document reviews (such as records of staff qualifications, lesson plans and financial statements), staff interviews, program observation by STARS designators, and third-party assessments (including ERS scoring and licensing reports).

ERS enables OCDEL to compare outcomes across programs and data sources. This valid and reliable tool was selected because it covers all age groups and provider types including family child care homes. All four ERS scales are used to monitor programs, as appropriate: the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale - Revised (ITERS-R), the Early Childhood Rating

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Scale - Revised (ECERS-R), the School-Age Environment Rating Scale (SACERS), and the Family Child Care Home Environment Rating Scale - Revised (FCCERS-R).

(2): Process for Assessing and Monitoring Program Quality (STARS Designation)

Highly-trained STARS Designators make regular site visits for each child care program participating in the system to review program evidence and verify that programs meet each STARS performance standard. Each program seeking a designation of STAR 3 or 4 must have an ERS conducted and scored by independent ERS assessor, and a minimum of one-third classrooms, including at least one classroom at each age level are assessed (at least one-half of all classrooms must be assessed for PA Pre-K Counts programs). The requirements for average ERS scores rise for each successive STAR level.³⁷ Programs must also submit all documentation required to demonstrate compliance with STARS standards. In addition, program staff are required to attend training to learn the ERS protocols and conduct a self- assessment of their classrooms in conjunction with the formal assessment conducted by the independent assessor. This training includes the ERS Foundations course, which provides an overview of the structure and scoring of the ERS tools, and scale-specific courses that cover each of the four ERS scales. Once appropriate documentation has been reviewed and the independent ERS assessment has been conducted and documented, the program receives its STAR Level designation. Programs seeking a STAR 1 Designation are not required to have a site visit; the approval process at this level is completed through a paper-based application.

STARS programs must renew their designations annually. To renew their designation, Keystone STARS programs submit documentation demonstrating compliance with STAR standards at their designated level. Designators make site renewal visits every other year, unless a program experiences a change in circumstances (e.g., change of physical location, significant staff turnover, or a change in its program director) or is seeking a higher STAR rating. If OCDEL encounters problems with a program's licensing or compliance with the STAR standards required for its rating level, Pennsylvania has an established process to suspend the program or to

³⁷ For STAR 3, assessment by a STARS ERS assessor must average a facility score of 4.25 and all classrooms assessed must score a minimum of 3.50. A written improvement plan is developed to address any ERS subscale score below a 3.5. For STAR 4, assessment by a STARS ERS assessor must average a facility score of 5.25 and all classrooms assessed must score a minimum of 4.25. A written improvement plan is developed to address any ERS subscale score below a 4.25.

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decrease the program's STAR rating. Following such an action, the state provides supports to help the program regain its STAR rating.

Regularly-scheduled ERS assessments are required for all programs renewing or seeking to move to STAR Levels 3 and 4 and for all PA Pre-K Counts classrooms, which are required to maintain level 3 or 4 status. A baseline assessment is conducted for Family Child Care Home providers seeking to move to a STAR Level 2.

Programs receive both summary reports for each classroom observed and an ERS Facility Report. If a program does not achieve the ERS score required to maintain its designated STAR Level, the program must develop and implement an improvement plan or the STAR level is reduced. Technical assistance is available to help programs in reaching their goals. Another ERS assessment can be scheduled no less than 90 days after the previous assessments were completed.

(3): Process for Ensuring Inter-Rater Reliability

Because many different STARS Designators operate throughout the state, OCDEL has established procedures to ensure the consistency of its designation process by establishing inter-rater reliability for the designators who determine whether providers meet performance standards. OCDEL facilitates a Designator Workgroup in which Designators share information, review policy items, and make policy recommendations that relate to standards and Designations.

In 2009, OCDEL launched a Designator Reliability Pilot to help establish these procedures. For the pilot, OCDEL developed a Designator Reliability Database to monitor and analyze information from Designators' reviews of participating programs. The Database included information specifically related to designations for child care centers at the STAR LEVEL 1 through 4 (in 2011-12, the database will expand to include Family Child Care Home Designations and to capture pre-designation data components). In this pilot program, two different Designators were required to complete a Designation site visit and assign a STAR Level to the same provider, independently of one another. New designators were paired with experienced designators for the reliability comparison. After the two Designators completed the site visit and assigned the STAR Level, they entered their results are entered into OCDEL's

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Designator Reliability Database for analysis. OCDEL staff reviewed this information to determine whether each Designator reviewed program data similarly and made the same STAR Level designation. New designators were required to have the reliability of their designation validated through this process before they were eligible to make independent Designation visits. Each Designator was required to complete a minimum of one reliability visit for every fifteen Designations.

Results from the pilot project led OCDEL to clarify information about the standards, develop of a document describing sources evidence for Designators, and create additional tools to help Designators conduct their reviews more accurately.

OCDEL also has established procedures to ensure the reliability of its independent ERS assessors. Assessors undergo rigorous training and reliability checks on each ERS scale before they can conduct an independent assessment.³⁸ In addition, a regional supervisor reviews every summary report from assessors to assure that the rationale listed for each indicator supports the assessor's score for the program. Once they have demonstrated reliability for all ERS scales, assessors engage in regular reliability checks throughout the year. In fiscal year 2010-11, OCDEL achieved an inter-rater reliability of 93% for all reliability assessments conducted.

(b): Providing Information to Parents

The state provides quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development programs in a variety of accessible, user-friendly, easy-to-understand ways. The State's goal in providing this information is to help families make informed decisions, based on program quality, when they are selecting an Early Learning and Development program for their children and to keep the families of children enrolled in the programs informed about the program's quality.

A key mechanism for giving families access to this information is the COMPASS website,³⁹ which provides parents a wealth of information about the early childhood programs available in

³⁸ Assessors are expected to score within 1 point of the consensus score on each item with 85% accuracy. Should an assessor not meet the 85% threshold, they must engage in an additional reliability check on that scale before they can conduct an independent assessment.

³⁹ <https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/compass.web/ProviderSearch/pgm/PSWEL.aspx>

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Pennsylvania. Parents can search for quality-rated providers using a variety of search criteria including, but not limited to:

- program type (child care, Early Head Start, Full Day Kindergarten, etc.),
- ages of children served (newborn, infant, preschool, etc.),
- provider type (family child care home, group child care home and child care center),
- Keystone STARS rating,
- access to public transportation,
- language spoken, and
- Special accommodations needed.

Other search criteria are also provided. Based on the search criteria parents enter, the system provides a list of providers that meet those criteria. The listing includes each provider's STAR rating, hours of operation, and address as well as a range of other pertinent information about the provider, including whether or not the provider serves subsidy-funded children and the site's certification and sanction history. The results also list the provider's website, if available.

In addition to this online tool, OCDEL's Keystone STARS provides families comprehensive resource and referral services through local Child Care Information Services (CCIS) offices. CCIS provides families with information on quality child care and personalized child care referrals to child care providers based on family-specific needs or preferences. CCIS agencies also administer the Child Care Works subsidized child care program. CCIS staff can explain the different types of programs available and provide information about the STARS rating system and licensing information. Families can also receive licensing and certification information from Regional Office of Child Development and Early Learning via a toll-free number.

Keystone STARS also provides a wide variety of marketing tools and support to programs that enables them to "let their STARS shine" in their communication with families and communities regarding their participation in STARS and their commitment to quality early learning.

In addition, Pennsylvania's Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN) Teams, described further in Section (C)(4), help OCDEL provide information to parents by building support networks for organizations and individuals interested in quality early education. These teams bring together early childhood programs, parents, school districts, and child-serving

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organizations. The teams provide a vehicle in communities to educate the public regarding quality early learning opportunities, including STARS.

(c): Gaps for Rating and Monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs

The key gap in the state's rating and monitoring system is that the Designator Reliability Database as it is currently configured does not capture STARS designation information for Family Child Care Home providers, nor does it capture pre-designation components.

(d): Goals for Rating and Monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs

Pennsylvania's goals for rating and monitoring its Early Learning and Development programs is to ensure the ongoing high quality of the programs that serve young children in Pennsylvania by including additional types of providers in its rating and monitoring system.

(e): Key Activities/Next Steps

Expand Designator Reliability Database to capture Family Child Care Home Designations and pre-designation components to enable OCDEL to better rate and monitor Early Learning and Development programs to ensure that programs meet high quality performance standards.

(f): Evidence for (B)(3)

(1): High Quality Plan for (B)(3): Rating and Monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	Pennsylvania has a well-established system for rating and monitoring its Early Learning and Development programs called <i>STARS Designation</i> .
Key Goals	To ensure the ongoing high quality of the programs that serve young children in Pennsylvania thereby improving child outcomes, particularly for children with high needs.
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<p>CURRENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STARS Designators continue to make regular program visits and review sources of evidence to verify that programs meet each STARS performance standard. • Continue to conduct on-site renewal visits every other year unless the program experiences a change in circumstances • STARS program continue to submit annual documentation to show they are meeting the standards for their STAR level • Continue to conduct Designator Reliability Visits to ensure consistency and inter-rater reliability for determining whether providers meet performance standards • Continue to facilitate Designator Workgroup where Designators share issues, review policy items and make policy recommendations that relate to standards and Designations. • Continue to use multiple ERS scales to rate programming for different age levels. • Continue to work with independent ERS assessors, who are trained for reliability. • Continue to provide quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in OCDEL programs. • Maintain the COMPASS website, which helps parents find and select quality programs that meet their needs. • Continue to provide resources and referrals through local Child Care Information Services offices. • Continue to provide marketing tools and communications support to STARS programs. • Continue to build community support through local LEARN Teams.

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Required Elements	Description of Element
	PLANNED: Expand Designator Reliability Database to capture Family Child Care Home Designations and pre-designation components
Rationale for Activities	Actively rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development programs provides a formal and targeted mechanism for the state to ensure that programs meet high quality performance standards.
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	Statewide.
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	Activities are ongoing and currently being implemented throughout all six regions of the state.
How State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable	The state’s Early Learning and Development program rating and monitoring system applies to the diverse types of Early Learning and Development programs that operate in the state
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	By rating and monitoring the extent to which programs meet Keystone STARS performance standards to ensure access to high-quality programs for children with high needs. These performance standards include requirements for partnerships with families, targeting the families of children with high needs to help identify barriers and provide needed resources.
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed for (B)(3)

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
CURRENT:			
STARS Designators continue to make regular program visits and review sources of evidence to verify that programs meet each STARS performance standard.	Ongoing	OCDEL	Associate Director, PA Key
Continue to conduct on-site renewal visits every other year unless the program experiences a change in circumstances	Ongoing	OCDEL	

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Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
STARS program continue to submit annual documentation to show they are meeting the standards for their STAR level	Ongoing	OCDEL	
Continue to conduct Designator Reliability Visits	Ongoing	OCDEL and Regional Key Participating Providers	
Continue to facilitate Designator Workgroup	Ongoing	OCDEL	
Continue to use multiple ERS scales to rate programs for different ages.	Ongoing	OCDEL	
Continue to work with independent ERS assessors, who are trained for reliability.	Ongoing	OCDEL	Associate Director, PA Key
Continue to provide quality rating and licensing information to parents	Ongoing	OCDEL	OCDEL Research
Maintain the COMPASS website.	Ongoing	OCDEL	Associate Director, PA Key
Continue to provide resources and referrals through local Child Care Information Services offices.	Ongoing	OCDEL	Director of the Bureau of Subsidized Child Care Services
Continue to provide marketing tools and communications support to STARS programs.	Ongoing	OCDEL	Communications & Public Policy Director, PA Early Learning Keys to Quality
Continue to build community support through local LEARN Teams.	Ongoing	OCDEL	
PLANNED:			
Expand Designator Reliability Database to capture Family Child Care Home Designations and pre-designation components	Summer 2012	OCDEL	

(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).

(B)(4): Promoting Access to High-Quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan for a promoting access for children with high needs, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan, including a timeline with milestones. Appendix (B)(1)-1, on page 336 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

Keystone STARS is Pennsylvania's well-established Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System dedicated to promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development programs in the state, with a specific focus on increasing access for children with high needs. Keystone STARS works to enhance, support, and recognize programs' continuous quality-improvement efforts through a focus on Standards, Training/Professional Development, Assistance, Resources, and Support.

(a): Policies and Practices for Early Learning and Development Programs to Continuously Improve

Through Keystone STARS, OCDEL has established a range of policies and practices designed both to help Early Learning and Development programs, particularly those that serve high-need children, continuously improve and to support improved outcomes for high-needs children. These policies and practices include training, technical assistance, and financial awards and incentives, and subsidy add-ons for quality STAR programs. Each of these practices is described below:

(1): Training (Professional Development)

The tiered Keystone STARS standards require higher levels of education and credentials and an increasing number of early education professional development credits for staff as programs move up the STARS ladder, a continuum of increasing program quality. Through the Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development system, STARS programs can participate in professional development opportunities so that educators acquire the necessary education and

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credentials as well as financial assistance to make professional development opportunities accessible. Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development is a comprehensive, statewide career development system for practitioners serving children and families in early childhood and school-age programs including: child care; Early Head Start and Head Start; Early Intervention; public school; and private licensed academic school. Relative-Neighbor providers in the subsidy system are also required to obtain 12 hours of professional development every two years. This system, which is linked to the state's Learning Standards for Early Childhood, provides a clearly articulated framework that defines pathways, which are tied to certification (leading to qualifications and credentials).

In addition to providing low-cost professional development opportunities, the state offers a professional development refund voucher program that provides reimbursement for courses that earn college credits and payment for the Child Development Associate (CDA) assessment fee for educators earning or renewing their CDA credential. Appendix (B)(4)-1: Professional Development Framework for Early Care and Education, on page 354 of the appendices, provides additional information about the state's comprehensive professional development system.

(2): Technical Assistance

In addition to providing professional development opportunities and financial assistance through STARS, OCDEL also provides technical assistance (TA) to Early Learning and Development programs in partnership with multiple state agencies and departments. The state's Cross-systems Technical Assistance workgroup meets quarterly to effectively identify technical assistance needs and design targeted technical assistance supports. This group includes representatives from Early Learning and Development programs, the STARS Technical Assistance team, Early Intervention, and other Early Learning and Development stakeholders.

These partnerships provide a cross-systems approach to technical assistance that:

- creates a seamless system of technical assistance that is easy to navigate,
- more effectively uses available resources and avoids duplication of services, and
- ensures that the technical assistance being offered is of a high quality.

STARS Technical Assistance is administered through the Pennsylvania's Regional Keys and provided by consultants who have the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to guide

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programs in each of the Keystone STARS content areas. Based on the recommendations of the work group, OCDEL and the PA Early Learning Keys to Quality developed a list of core competencies for technical assistance and professional development consultants. The competencies address skills, knowledge and attitudes that lay the foundation for developing a professional relationship with all clients and promoting a strength-based approach to continuous quality improvement. Appendix (B)(4)-2: Pennsylvania General Core Competencies for Relationship-Based Technical Assistance, on page 367 of the appendices, lists these core competencies and expectations. The expectations for delivering TA can be found in Appendix (B)(4)-3: Keystone STARS Technical Assistance Accountability Plan Benchmarks on page 382 of the appendices.

Technical assistance is available for almost all OCDEL programs, whether or not the programs are part of the STARS system. While technical assistance is available for almost all OCDEL programs, some technical assistance is targeted only to STARS programs and includes guidance for Early Learning and Development programs in the process of earning their STARS awards and moving up the STARS quality continuum. Technical assistance services include, but are not limited to assistance with: (1) outreach and promotion; (2) interpreting the Keystone STARS Performance Standards; (3) connecting and/or providing practitioners with information, supports, resources, and professional development; and (4) helping programs to develop and implement appropriate plans to achieve program-defined Keystone STARS standards and quality goals.

In addition to this generalized technical assistance, the Regional Keys offer three other specific types of Technical Assistance:

- a). Assistance targeted to Infant/Toddler Child Care Providers: Beginning in 2011, Infant Toddler Specialists were identified at each Regional Key to provide targeted technical assistance and coordination of regional supports for Infant/Toddler programs enrolled in Keystone STARS to improve upon the quality of care for very young children and their families. These Specialists serve at least 102 programs and focus on programs at STAR Level 2. Specialists have received training in the Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC), in the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) Pyramid Model of supports, and in the Strengthening Families framework. The training focuses on encouraging programs to implement relationship-based practices that will result in improved

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outcomes for children and their families. Participation in the program is voluntary and individualized based on the needs of educators and program directors. Specialists have helped programs establishing primary care groups; link early learning standards, improve their childhood observation and curriculum planning processes; and establish formal ways to include families in program planning.

- b). Assistance targeted to School Age Child Care Providers: School Age Child Care (SACC) Technical Assistance consists of professional development and technical assistance for school-age providers participating in Keystone STARS. SACC Professional Development and Technical Assistance employs strategies that research has shown improve program quality and achieve positive outcomes for children. SACC Professional Development and Technical Assistance also facilitates partnerships with community stakeholders to promote the development and expansion of out-of-school programming.
- c). Assistance targeted to help educators address social/emotional concerns. The Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) program provides child-specific consultation services to Keystone STARS programs to address the social/emotional concerns of young children in order to reduce expulsions and promote healthy development. ECMHC services are offered within the framework of the Pyramid Model of supports developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). ECMHC provides both prevention and intervention services to minimize the child's need for more intensive services and to increase the staff's confidence and competence in working with children with challenging behaviors, lower stress, and provide a higher quality of service. ECMHC Consultants work directly with teachers and parents to increase capacity to understand and address the child's developmental needs. In 2010-2011, 596 received ECMHC services.

Technical Assistance is having a strong, positive impact on Early Learning and Development programs: A 2009-2010 research study found that a higher percentage of STARS providers receiving technical assistance (50.5%) moved up at least one STAR level than did providers who did not receive TA (32.2%), as shown in Appendix (B)(4)-7: Technical Assistance Research Brief, on page 407 of the appendices.

(3): Financial Awards and Incentives

Through Keystone STARS, OCDEL provides targeted financial supports to Early Learning and Development programs to help them continue to improve quality and move up the STARS ladder. These funds are targeted to programs that serve children with high needs. To be eligible to receive award funds, a program must document that at least 5% of children enrolled receive Child Care Works (CCW) subsidy or Early Intervention (EI) services. Higher award amounts are available for programs that serve higher percentages of high-risk children.

Programs must develop a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) plan that outlines specific goals and activities to improve program quality and must use grant funds solely CQI-defined activities that help programs meet STAR requirements, such as purchasing required equipment and materials or providing staff with health insurance benefits to improve retention. STARS offers four levels of awards:

- Start with STARS grants for entry-level programs to address environment safety needs;
- Support Grants for STAR 1 programs to help move the programs to the next STAR level;
- Merit Awards for STAR 2, 3 and 4 programs to cover costs associated with earning program accreditation, professional development, and other activities to continue to improve quality; and
- Education & Retention Awards for STAR 2, 3 and 4 programs, targeted to highly qualified directors and/or teaching staff who have attained specialized degrees, credentials, and/or specified credit-bearing professional development in early childhood education.

Further details about these specific grants and awards are listed in Appendix (B)(4)-4: Keystone STARS Grants and Awards, on page 387 of the appendices.

In addition to the awards listed above, OCDEL helps meet the needs of low-income children by providing tiered Child Care Works subsidy enhancements for STARS programs, adding to the daily subsidized child care rate for Keystone STARS providers with a STAR rating of 2 or above. These additional subsidies help pay for the cost of higher-quality early learning experiences. The add-on rate increases as the STAR level increases. The total Keystone STARS add-on amount in FY 2010-2011 was slightly more than \$13 million.

(b): Helping Working Families of Children with High Needs Access Early Learning and Development Programs

Pennsylvania provides families with access to a comprehensive resource and referral system for early learning programs through local Child Care Information Services (CCIS) offices. As a result of a comprehensive effort to promote high quality child care through family engagement, staff at the local CCIS offices have increased their capacity to serve families of high-need children and provide them with the resources and support they need to access high-quality programs. CCIS resource and referral services: 1). help families learn about how to choose a quality early learning program for their children; 2). provide information about the Keystone STARS program, including licensing and child care regulations and general information about the types of programs available; 3). offer targeted referrals to community services based upon individual family needs. The state also maintains a comprehensive online provider search services called COMPASS, described in section (B)(3). Both the online service and CCIS staff provide families with information about specific providers, including hours of operation, supports provided to families, and information on providers' experience working with children with special health care needs and disabilities.

CCIS staff also provide information about and referrals to other early care and education programs such as Home Visiting, Head Start, and local Licensed Nursery Schools. In addition, CCIS staff meet with families eligible for the Child Care Works (CCW) subsidy to provide information about CCW participation and local CCIS offices work directly with families receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) to increase their access to high-quality early learning programs (the state has experienced a 44% increase in TANF families using regulated child care).

Pennsylvania also helps parents of children with developmental delays increase their access to high quality early learning programs. The state focuses Keystones STARS resources on supporting STARS programs in which children receiving Early Intervention services are enrolled. Staff working in Early Learning and Development programs receive training on positive behavior supports and inclusion strategies for children with developmental delays. In 2009-10, the state offered more than 125 workshops on these topics. Over the past three years, the number of children under age three receiving their Early Intervention services in early

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childhood settings increased from 18% to 55%, although most also receive EI services in the home. Historically in Pennsylvania, less than 50% of children in Preschool Early Intervention with developmental delays in received their services in typical early childhood settings.

In 2007-08, the Bureau of Early Intervention Services began a concerted effort to accommodate as many children with developmental delays or disabilities as possible in typical early childhood settings such as child care, Head Start, or preschool programs. This effort included a range of strategies, including:

- Providing outreach to Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts programs to ensure these new classrooms were inclusive of typically-developing children and children with developmental delays or disabilities;
- Providing targeted technical assistance to help Preschool Early Intervention programs with the lowest numbers of children in inclusive settings increase the number of children served in typical settings;
- Aggressively monitoring classroom and enrollment data and severely limiting new early childhood special education classes; and
- Participating in two national inclusion grant programs.

As a result, over the past three years, OCDEL has experienced a 20% increase in the number of preschool-age children included in typical early childhood programs (e.g. child care, Head Start, and preschool programs). In 2009-10, 70% of preschool-age children eligible for Early Intervention services received those services in typical settings.

(c): Increasing Programs in Top Tiers & Enrollment in Top Tier Programs

(1): Increasing the Number of Programs in the Top Tiers of the STARS TQRIS

Keystone STARS is now entering its 10th year of operation and has a successful history of statewide implementation and quality improvement among child care programs. Four consecutive years of data have shown a 2.5% to 3% increase in the number of providers at STAR Levels 3 and 4. As indicated in section (B)(2), above, Pennsylvania is continuing to develop strategies to increase program quality and to include different types of providers in the STARS system, focusing on increasing participation among programs serving high-needs children and

those in high-risk communities. These require more intensive supports, beyond those OCDEL currently offers, to move up the STARS ladder.

OCDEL has set its targets for increasing participation over the next four years based on this planned shift in focus toward supporting higher-need programs and including program types not currently participating in Keystone STARS. These provider types include school-based PA Pre-K Counts providers; school-based Pre-K programs that are funded locally or through Title I; state-funded preschool programs that do not provide child care; Early Intervention programs funded through Part B, section 619 of IDEA, and private academic preschools (licensed nursery schools) operating preschool classrooms. The state's targets for program participation are provided in Table B(4)(c)(1) on page 133.

(2): Increasing the Number and Percentage of Children with High Needs in Top Tier Programs

Since the inception of OCDEL's subsidy add-on program (described above), the use of Keystone STARS facilities by parents receiving subsidized child care has increased significantly: in June 2011, more than half of all children receiving this subsidy were enrolled in STARS facilities. More than 36% of children receiving the subsidy were enrolled in a program rated STAR 2 or higher; and almost 18% were enrolled in programs rated STAR 3 or 4. Those percentages also represent significant numeric growth in program participation: As shown in Table (B)(4)(c)(2) on page 134, almost 73,000 children currently receiving Child Care Works subsidies were enrolled in high-quality STAR-rated Early Learning and Development programs; almost 49,000 of those children were enrolled in programs rated STAR 2 or above; and over 24,000 were enrolled in STAR 3 or 4 programs.

(d): Gaps for Promoting Access to High Quality Programs for High Needs Children

While the STARS system is comprehensive and well-integrated, the state faces two key challenges: 1). the high caseload for STARS Coaches working with programs serving high-need children means that Coaches cannot provide the intensive level of services these programs need in order to be able to fully implement quality improvement efforts; and 2). Family Child Care Home providers require more intensive and focused mentoring to improve quality and outcomes for children.

(e): Goals for Promoting Access to High Quality Programs for High Needs Children

With RTT-ELC funding, OCDEL plans to continue to increase the number and percentage of at risk children in the top STARS tiers.

Pennsylvania aims to have 305 centers and 252 family programs move up at least one STAR level, resulting in higher quality programs for approximately 20,000 at risk children. Enrollment projections are provided in table (B)(4)(c)(2). These projections estimate annual growth of 1% to 2% in the number of low income, high need, subsidized care children entering high-quality Keystone STAR facilities; the projections are based on historical trends over the past three years. The chart below shows the projected number and percentage of children enrolled in programs in STAR Levels 3 and 4 by the end of 2016.

Type of Program	Children Enrolled in Programs in STARS Tier 3 or 4	
	Number	Percent
State-funded Preschool Programs (PA Pre-K Counts)	10,511	93%
Federally-funded Preschool Programs (Title I)	900	15%
Early Head Start/Head Start	14,176	45%
EI Programs for infants and toddlers (IDEA, Part C)	3,955	12%
EI Programs for children ages 3 to 5 (IDEA, Part B)	13,973	28%
Child Care Works	20,428	30%
Keystone STARS Child care	38,368	38%
Licensed Private Nursery Schools	1,607	7%

(f): Key Activities/Next Steps

With support from RTT-ELC funding, OCDEL plans to implement two projects to increase the number of high-needs children enrolled in programs in the top two STARS tiers: 1). the Center-Based STARS Coaching Project, which is designed to enhance STARS management for programs serving high-needs children by reducing the caseload for each STARS Coach working with these programs from 75 to 25 center-based programs; 2). the Family Child Care Home Mentoring Project, which is designed to enhance support for family child care providers and is based on a pilot in the SW Regional Key showing promising results. OCDEL will prioritize program participation in these projects based on numbers of high-needs children served in high-

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risk areas [see Appendix (A)(1)-3: OCDEL Program Reach and Risk Report Summary on page 10 of the appendices, for further information specific to the identification of high-risk areas in Pennsylvania].

Detail of these proposed projects are provided in the High Quality Plan chart in the evidence section for this criterion (on page 135) and in Appendix (B)(4)-5: Center Based STARS Coaching and Family Child Care Home Mentoring Projects, on page 390 of the appendices. In addition, the state will continue to provide subsidy add-ons to help pay for the cost of higher-quality early learning experiences for programs serving children who receive the Child Care Works subsidy.

Both of these projects will be supported with grants for providers to address specific needs for improving quality as determined in conjunction with Regional Key staff. These approaches will be evaluated over the life of the grant and current STAR management resources will be shifted to support successful models. A staff member located at the PA Key will oversee the projects, including the evaluation and final report. This staff member will also enhance the development of Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) professional development modules, expand the Director Quality Tool Kit, and refine and integrate the CQI approach to address the program types new to Keystone STARS. In addition, that staff member will intensify supports for programs around CQI (including development of effective teachers, economy by using shared services, and using data to improve quality). Appendix (B)(4)-6: Continuous Quality Improvement Framework, on page 398 of the appendices, demonstrates the initial steps taken by Pennsylvania to support programs working on systemic quality.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the Center-based coaching and Family Care Mentoring models, a place-based evaluation will be embedded into the selection criteria for participating programs. As mentioned, the Reach and Risk Report will be used to identify high and moderate-high risk counties (46 out of 67 counties in Pennsylvania) in which the program will operate. Half of the eligible counties will be randomly assigned to receive both the coaching and mentoring program, while the remaining half will not be eligible for the program. This cluster-randomized design will allow Pennsylvania to empirically test the effectiveness of the strategy on a host of outcome variables, including STAR movement, program quality indicators, and family and child outcomes.

(g): Evidence for (B)(4)

(1): Performance Measures for Increasing Early Learning and Development Programs in Top Tiers

Table (B)(4)(c)(1): 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 (TQRIS).

	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	Target - end of calendar year 2016
Total number of programs covered by the TQRIS ^a	4,252	4,498	4,766	4,995	5,198	5,357
Number of programs in Start with STARS	639	672	682	692	702	712
Number of programs in STAR 1	1,561	1,641	1,666	1,691	1,716	1,742
Number of programs in STAR 2	1,061	1,120	1,142	1,164	1,195	1,218
Number of programs in STAR 3	475	520	664	795	907	978
Number of programs in STAR 4	516	545	612	653	678	707
^a Numbers attempt to demonstrate unduplicated locations across provider types.						

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(2): Performance Measures for Increasing Enrollment in Top Tier Programs

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	# of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	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												
		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		Target- end of calendar year 2016		
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: PA Pre-K Counts^a</i>	11,359	5,035 ^b	44.3	5,035	44.3	8,832	78	10,511	93	10,511	93	10,511	93	
Early Head Start and Head Start ^{40 c, d}	31,503	3,193	10.1	4,725	15	6,301	20	9,451	30	12,601	40	14,176	45	
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C ^e	33,007	1,400	4.2	1,648	5	2,307	7	2,966	9	3,625	11	3,955	12	
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619 ^f	49,907	2,318	4.6	4,990	10	7,486	15	9,981	20	12,476	25	13,973	28	
Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	5,997	0	0.0							600	10	900	15	
Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program	Child Care Works	68,096	14,516 ^g	21.3	15,662	23	17,024	25	18,386	27	19,748	29	20,428	30
	Keystone STARS	100,968	27,136 ^h	27	32,310	32	33,824	33.5	35,339	35	36,853	36.5	38,368	38
Other <i>Specify: Home Visiting Programsⁱ</i>	5,821	0	<i>Home Visiting programs will not be included as they are home-based.</i>											
Other <i>Specify: Licensed Nursery Schools^j</i>	22,960	0	0.0							1,148	5	1,607	7	

^a Data Source: PELICAN, May 2011. ^b Current Child Care Providers Only. ^c Home Based Only Sites Not Included. ^d Head Start information represents Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant/Seasonal and Head Start State Supplemental funding. ^e Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C are primarily home based programs. ^f Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619 child enrollments are actual numbers; however, enrollment in top tier QRIS sites are based on estimates and will be duplicated. Part of the work of the application will be to better track preschool enrollments for children receiving Part B services. ^g Child Care Works baseline data is actual, based on June 30, 2011 enrollments within the PELICAN Child Care Works data warehouse for infant through 5 year olds. ^h Keystone STARS baseline data is the full estimate of children (birth through Kindergarten entry) in a Keystone STAR 3 or 4 program. June 2011 Child Care Works care level data was used to determine the proportion of children in a Keystone STAR 3 or 4 programs that are from birth through Kindergarten entry. ⁱ Includes Parents as Teachers, Nurse Family Partnership, and Parent Child Home Program. ^j Licensed Nurseries are estimated enrollment numbers based on actual locations with an average enrollment of 40 children per location.

(3): High Quality Plan for (B)(4): Promoting Access to High-Quality Early Learning and Development Programs

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	Keystone STARS has established a range of policies and practices designed to help Early Learning and Development programs continuously improve, including training, technical assistance, and financial awards and incentives, and subsidy add-ons for quality STAR programs. Each of these practices is described in the narrative for (B)(4).
Key Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the numbers of Children with High Needs in High Quality Keystone STAR programs • Enhance STARS management for center based programs serving children with high needs. • Enhance support for family child care providers through a mentoring project. • Increase resources, professional development, tool kits and support around continuous quality improvement for programs in Keystone STARS
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<p>Prepare for the implementation of two projects (Center-Based STARS Coaching and FCCH Mentoring):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify procedures and protocols for each of the Key Goals, including benchmarks/targets for progress and accountability measures. • Establish evaluation protocols and processes. • Hire staff to support implementation at each Regional Key and PA Key. • Train new staff and acclimate them to the project. <p>Implement the Center-Based STARS Coaching Project to reduce the caseload from 75 to 25 center-based programs for each STAR Coach working with programs serving high need, high risk children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select programs to participate in the enhanced STAR Management project <p>Implement the Family Child Care Home Mentoring Project to enhance support for family child care providers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train and support family child care provider mentors to work with three family providers to improve quality and outcomes for children. • Select family child care providers to serve as mentors • Train family child care mentors to work with providers • Select family child care providers <p>Ongoing work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain monthly contacts with Regional Keys, collect best practices, assemble resources to support the project • Evaluate project and determine successful models to continue with a reallocation of existing financing (create

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Required Elements	Description of Element
	sustainability). • Develop documents and best practices for working with hard to serve programs serving high risk children to inform this work after the end of the grant program (create sustainability).
Rationale for Activities	Increasing the quality of programs and the number of programs offering high quality available to children with high needs will help the state increase the number of high-needs children enrolled in programs in the top tiers of the state's STARS Tiered Quality program.
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	Both project will be implemented across the State through the Regional Keys
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	Winter and Spring 2012: project planning, including establishing protocols and ramping up for state-wide implementation. Summer 2012: begin first cohorts of both projects. Projects will be fully operational by the end of calendar year 2015.
How State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Program	These projects will focus on improving the STAR levels of currently-existing programs in Keystone STARS, which include different types of Early Learning and Development programs.
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	These projects focus on improving the quality of programs that participate in Keystone STARS, with a focus on programs that serve high-needs children in high-risk areas of the state. Programs will be offered these enhanced services, based on information from the OCDEL Reach and Risk study, in High and Moderately High need counties and cities.
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

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Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Key Activity 1: Procedures and protocols for each of the Key Goals would be identified including benchmarks/targets for progress and accountability measures	Summer 2012	Chief – OCDEL	Regional Key staff PA Key staff
Key Activity 2: Evaluation protocols and process would be established	Summer 2012	Chief - OCDEL	Staff Researcher
Key Activity 3: Staff to support implementation would be hired at each Regional Key and PA Key	Summer 2012	Regional Key Directors PA Key Director	
Key Activity 4: Training and acclimating Regional Key/PA Key staff to the project	Summer 2012	Regional Key Directors PA Key Director	Various PD and TA instructors New Staff Lead at PA Key
Key Activity 5: Selection of programs to participate in the enhanced STAR Management project	Fall 2012	Regional Key STAR Coaches	Staff Researcher PA Key Project Manager
Key Activity 6: Selection of family child care providers to serve as mentors	Summer 2012	Regional Key Directors	PA Key Project Manager
Key Activity 7: Training of FCCH mentors	Summer 2012	Regional Key staff	PA Key Project Manager
Key Activity 8: Selection of FCCH providers to work with mentors	Fall 2012	FCCH Mentors	Regional Key staff Staff Researcher PA Key Project Manager
Key Activity 9: Ongoing implementation	Winter 2012 to end of calendar year 2015	Regional Key Staff PA Key Project Manager	Chief - OCDEL
Key Activity 10: Monthly contacts with Regional Keys, collect best practice, assemble resources to support the project	Throughout implementation	PA Key Project Manager	Regional Key Staff FCCH Mentors

(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.

(B)(5): Validating the Effectiveness of the State TQRIS

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan for a promoting access for children with high needs, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan, including a timeline with milestones. Appendix (B)(1)-1, on page 336 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

Through multiple evaluations over ten years, the Keystone STARS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems has demonstrated its success by continuing to drive quality improvement in child care programs and providing families with increasing opportunities to enroll their children in quality Early Learning and Development programs. Ongoing, repeated evaluation of child and family outcomes and of program quality document STARS' impact on and benefit to both participating providers and the children they serve, who enter Kindergarten better prepared to succeed because they have been enrolled in quality early learning programs.

The success of the Keystone STARS program has also been demonstrated through two national studies of state efforts to develop Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement Systems: *Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement Systems: Approaches to Integrating Programs for Young Children in Two States*; and *Defining and Measuring Quality: An In-Depth Study of Five Child Care Quality Rating and Improvement Systems*. These studies were conducted as part of the Child Care Quality Rating Systems Assessment Project an effort by the Administration for Children and Families Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation (ACF OPRE) to create resources for states regarding the evaluation of state systems designed to measure, monitor, and promote high-quality child care. ACF OPRE published these reports, the first of which provides in-depth exploration of state Quality Rating and Improvement (QRI) systems and how they function within the early child care and education (ECE) system and the second of which examines the approaches used by five states and communities to measure quality through QRI systems.

(a): Validating Whether the Tiers Accurately Reflect Differential Levels of Quality

Pennsylvania has also commissioned multiple evaluations of Keystone STARS. These evaluations were conducted by the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Child Development in October 2003, December 2004, and December 2006 following the first, second, and fourth year of Keystone STARS implementation. These independent evaluation studies examined programs' fidelity of STARS implementation, the impact the STARS TQRIS had on individual program quality, and the impact the system had on families and child outcomes. The studies reported on the program's performance, progression, and important next steps for the program.

At the time the first study was conducted, only 1,271 providers were participating in STARS, accounting for 14% of all regulated providers in Pennsylvania. To help OCDEL improve and expand the STARS program, the Year One and Year Two reports collected feedback from providers and partners to determine which aspects of the program needed to be adjusted or enhanced. Providers identified a number of areas of needed improvement, including: lack of outreach; difficulties with the application process; barriers to obtaining higher education for staff and caregivers; and unclear standards for Center, Family, and Group facilities.

Based on this feedback, the evaluators made recommendations for improving STARS overall effectiveness. These recommendations included: 1) increasing outreach to parents and the community; 2) providing better information about the application, grant, and award processes; 3) making it more convenient for educators to obtaining higher education credits; 4) helping programs identify staff educational and training needs; 5) providing affordable training for staff, and reducing staff turnover; and 6) developing differentiated STARS standards for Family and Group Child Care. OCDEL made system improvements based on these recommendations, and by the time the third study was conducted in 2006 – with 4,044 regulated providers (45.6%) participating in Keystone STARS – evaluators found that STAR ratings were completed reliably, and that there was system wide improvement in quality among participating centers.

OCDEL has continued to make improvements to the STARS program through additional external evaluations and ongoing feedback collected from surveys of providers, partners, and parents. In 2010, OCDEL conducted a comprehensive analysis and evaluation of Keystone STARS and issued a report with detailed findings. This report, *Demonstrating Quality: Pennsylvania Keystone STARS 2010 Program Report*, was intended as a tool for researchers and

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states developing similar systems. A shorter summary was published for parents and the general public. The 2010 report built on findings from the previous evaluations and describes the specific programmatic enhancements OCDEL made to Keystone STARS in response to concerns identified in those previous evaluations.

The 2010 Demonstrating Quality report included descriptive data from the beginning of the program, including:

- the number and percentages of providers participating in Keystone STARS;
- trends in program movement on the STARS ladder by year, region, provider type, and community risk level;
- the number, type and cost of all financial awards by year, region, provider type, and STAR level;
- the number of technical assistance requests, the type of assistance provided, and the cost of technical assistance over time and by region;
- the results of ERS and CLASS™ scores and correlations between quality scores and teacher, classroom, and provider attributes;
- the number and type of professional development offered by year and region;
- staff and director qualifications;
- child outcomes for all children enrolled in programs at STAR Levels 3 and 4; and
- family survey results.

The report presented analysis on the statistical associations between state supports, such as technical assistance, and provider quality outcomes, such as STAR movement. A critical indicator of success for the program is positive parent feedback; in 2010, 96% percent of parents whose children attended programs in STAR Level 3 or 4 reported that they were pleased with their child's program. While research suggests that parents tend to report satisfaction with their children's child care, the near uniform satisfaction at high STAR levels is noteworthy.

Good Better Best:

Another ongoing validation initiative is OCDEL's documentation of the empirical evidence for each research-based performance standard in Keystone STARS. As described earlier, the

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program standards, which form the bedrock of this quality improvement program, standards are organized into four increasingly stringent levels (STARS 1 through 4), which build upon each other to support program's continuous quality improvement [see Appendices (A)(1)-6a, 6b, and 6c for Keystone Stars Performance Standards for Centers, Group Homes, and Family Child Care Homes on page 159 of the appendices].

OCDEL has developed a framework to articulate the basic requirements for each performance standard in order to establish greater consistency among Regional Keys and provide more-detailed information for practitioners and programs. This framework, entitled *Good, Better, Best* (GBB), articulates Performance Standards by STAR Level and identifies the "good practice" and "better practice" which serve as the stepping stones to achieving "best practice" [see Appendix (B)(1)-2: Good, Better, Best Executive Summary, on page 337 of the appendices]. The GBB framework articulates the rationale and philosophy behind each standard, provides supporting research and sources of evidence for each standard, and outlines best practices for each standard, resources, and sources of evidence. Embedded in the Good Better Best document for each standard is a list of citations for empirical research and a summary of the findings. The document helps STARS program staff maintain consistency and serves as a reference tool regarding the research supporting individual STARS Performance Standards.

(1). Designator Reliability

The STARS system is further validated through the STARS Designation process, described in detail on page 114, above. This process ensures that programs meet the program standards for STAR ratings. In addition, the Designation process itself is validated through a reliability check process for Designators, described in detail on page 115, above. The reliability check process helps OCDEL determine whether standards need to be better clarified, if any component of the designation process needs to be better defined, or if Designators need additional training or support. In 2010-2011, the reliability check revealed agreement by designators on 96.6% of the Performance Standards. The Reliability Protocol also requires that Designators indicate the extent to which a performance standard has been met based along the continuum of quality in the Good, Better, Best Framework. In 2010-2011, the reliability check revealed that of those standards that were met, Designators agreed on 72.6% of the level of quality that the provider demonstrated based on the GBB.

(2). Effectiveness of Provider Supports in STAR Movement

Resources to providers such as tiered reimbursements, merit awards, and technical assistance are intended to help providers improve program quality and move up the STARS ladder. STARS Technical Assistance (TA) is an intensive, one-on-one service provided to early learning providers intended to help the facility meet the specific Keystone STARS standards and move up STAR levels. On average, Keystone STARS providers spend approximately two years at each STAR level, with the exception of Start with STARS (providers remain at the Start with for an average of less than a year). Because the requirements become increasingly stringent at each STAR level, the average length of time programs remain at each level increases slightly at higher levels.

A unique strength of Pennsylvania's unified data system is that it provides the state with information about whether or not providers received TA and whether they completed the TA action plan and ties this information to program results. Pennsylvania data from 2010-2011 reveals that child care providers who received TA are 2.2 times more likely to advance a STAR level than providers not receiving TA; the odds are higher for those who completed their TA action plan. More information about these results is provided in Appendix (B)(4)-3: Keystone STARS Technical Assistance Accountability Plan Benchmarks, on page 382 of the appendices. While the results are consistent with the view that TA results in a greater likelihood of advancing levels, however, the characteristics of centers that self-select to participate (and maintain participation) in TA may also be involved in how much centers improve. The potential exists for experimental evaluation focusing on the content and dosage of TA.

(3). Effectiveness of Workforce Supports in Staff Retention:

Education and Retention Awards (ERA) are financial awards provided to Keystone STARS directors and staff to assist with the costs of obtaining specialized degrees, credentials, and professional development related to early childhood education and development. A further intent of the ERA is to assist providers in establishing a stable workforce as they work toward higher levels of quality by reducing turnover and improving the education of teaching staff. To be eligible, a provider must meet site-specific and staff-specific requirements. Analysis of Pennsylvania administrative data reveals that staff receiving an ERA are twice as likely to remain at the location than staff not receiving an award.

(4). Classroom Quality Measures:

Keystone STARS standards require that reliable ERS assessors conduct bi-annual assessments at STAR 2 for family child care providers and for all providers moving to or renewing at STAR 3 and 4. Classrooms to be assessed are determined at random and at least one third of all classrooms participate in the assessment process. These objective assessments using valid and internationally accepted tools are a great source of evidence for programs in their continuous quality improvement plans.

Inter-rater reliability for ERS assessments is assured through extensive training, as well as follow-up reliability checks. The ERS reliability protocol is important for obtaining reliable scores across multiple regions and time points. The Pennsylvania ERS team maintains reliability on each of the four Environment Rating Scales by conducting assessments with two team members (either an assessor and their supervisor or two peers), during which the assessor's initial scores must be within 85% of the finalized scores. A newly hired assessor must be reliable five times on an individual scale in order to be able to conduct independent assessments on that scale. After they have established that initial reliability, assessors must do quarterly reliability visits for the first year of employment and semi-annual reliability assessments thereafter.

In 2009, additional ERS data was collected on a sample of Start with STARS, STAR 1, and STAR 2 providers to investigate quality at lower STAR levels. The study collected ERS data on infant/toddler and preschool classrooms in a random sample covering all 6 regions, 3 provider types, and 3 STAR lowest levels. The data show a strong association between STAR level and classroom quality as measured by the ERS and serves to lend validity to both as measures of program quality. Findings show a consistent incremental increase in average ERS score by STAR level, demonstrating the increasing quality of providers at each STAR level.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) is a research-based observation tool, developed at the University of Virginia, to assess the quality of preschool classroom interactions. The CLASS™ provides a common lens for observing classrooms and has been used by early childhood educators, policy-makers, and researchers to measure and improve classroom practices in the areas of emotional, organizational, and instructional support. In March of 2010, the Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) conducted a statewide pilot of the CLASS™; the objective was to investigate the following questions:

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- What are the potential uses of this tool to support quality improvement across the continuum of early care and education services?
- What is the value and feasibility of using the CLASS™ as a supplement or alternative to assessments of classroom quality currently in use?

After these two research questions were considered, a third area of investigation was:

- What is the cost-benefit of small or full scale implementation of the CLASS™?

Of specific interest in the evaluation of cost-benefit was the ease of administration, relevance to teachers in their classroom practice, utility as a training opportunity for teachers, and value for directors as a quality improvement tool.

Assessors were recruited and trained to reliability. Preschool providers were randomly sampled across all active STAR 3 and 4 child care centers. The sample was stratified by region to ensure uniform coverage across the commonwealth. Results of Pennsylvania's pilot of the CLASS™ follow national trends, scoring high to low on emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support, respectively. Preschool classrooms tended to score highest on Emotional Support (5.76), indicating that most classrooms were pleasant for children and teachers.

Classrooms in the pilot also scored high on Classroom Organization (5.06), indicating that classroom activities typically provided learning opportunities during transitions, and children knew where they were supposed to be and what they should be doing. Classrooms tended to score lowest on Instructional Support (3.65), suggesting that teachers were missing opportunities to scaffold learning for children, to extend and deepen the meaning of daily activities, and to provide rich, detailed language to enhance understanding and vocabulary.

Across all rated items, STAR 4 classrooms were found to score slightly higher than STAR 3 classrooms. This relationship supports the use of CLASS™ and Keystone STAR ratings as valid measures of program quality. Although STAR 4 centers scored higher across all CLASS™ dimensions, the relative strengths of subscales were different between STAR 3 and 4 providers. Behavior Management and Productivity were higher than Teacher Sensitivity and Regard for Student Perspectives in STAR 4 centers, which was reversed in STAR 3 centers. This inversion of relative strengths may reflect chance variation, or may indicate something important about what is encouraged to facilitate quality at those different levels. Further use may help identify Professional Development to drive consistency across all STAR levels.

(b): Assessing Whether Differential Levels of Quality are Related to Child Outcomes

Beginning in 2009-2010, OCDEL collected enrollment and outcome data for children enrolled in programs at STAR Levels 3 and 4 the Early Learning Network data system. This system collects child outcome data three times from authentic assessments, which are teacher observation-based tools that measure child progress in seven domains of learning and development. Staff receive online and regional face-to-face training on both the principles of authentic assessment and use of the online tool for reporting child outcomes. OCDEL has analyzed this child outcome data to determine whether there was a relationship between higher levels of provider quality (as measured by STAR level, ERS scores, and staff qualifications) and residualized gains in child outcomes. These analyses revealed significantly larger gains for children who attend higher-quality Early Learning and Development programs. These results suggest that participating in a program with a higher STAR Level rating leads to greater gains for children.

(c): Gaps in the System for Validating the TORIS

Pennsylvania's TQRIS system, Keystone STARS, includes child care and Head Start programs across the state. Nearly 70% of child care centers statewide participate in STARS and participating programs enrolled approximately 170,000 children in 2010-11. However, OCDEL needs to further determine and demonstrate the extent to which STARS protocols directly support better child outcomes. Although national and Pennsylvania-specific research has firmly linked program quality indicators to child outcomes, there is little clear national evidence to date to link the implementation of evolving QRIS programs to improved program quality—and even less to link such changes to improved child outcomes. The range of factors involved in providing early childhood programs, and the complexity of different provider systems make it challenging to measure direct effects of QRIS support on children—although the impact of high quality overall is understood to be quite consistent.

(d): Goals for Validating the TORIS

Pennsylvania is uniquely positioned to address this research gap and rigorously assess the extent to which program participation in the STARS system has a significant, measurable effect on child outcomes. With RTT-ELC funding, OCDEL plans to add to existing knowledge about the link between early learning program quality and child outcomes by determining:

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- whether the tiers defined in the Keystone STARS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately and meaningfully reflect differential levels of program quality, and
- whether these differential levels of quality are directly related to child outcomes.

(e): Next Steps

With RTT-ELC funding, Pennsylvania plans to continue and expand upon earlier efforts to conduct ERS and CLASS™ assessments for providers at all levels of quality. These additional data will supplement the analysis of all existing administrative data collection described above. Specifically, Pennsylvania will use the CLASS™ as a criterion measure in the validation study because it is not included in any components of quality measurement in the STAR system and is a measure that has evidence of predictive validity to child outcomes. CLASS™ assessments will be conducted in the centers at STAR levels 1 and 2 in which the sample of 1000 children will be drawn from for examination of child outcomes (described below), as well as a sample of STAR 3 and 4 centers. Use of this external criterion in each of the STAR levels will enable analysis to demonstrate that the tiers accurately reflect different levels of quality.

With funding, Pennsylvania will extend the examination of child outcomes to include a sample of children participating in centers at STAR levels 1 and 2 as well. This work will extend beyond concurrent examination of gain scores in child outcomes in two ways: by encompassing STAR levels 1 and 2 (rather than only 3 and 4) in analyses, and by following children longitudinally to third grade, with analyses taking into account both family risk factors and characteristics of the elementary schools children attend.

With RTT-ELC funding, OCDEL will be able to add to existing knowledge about the link between early learning program quality and child outcomes. Pennsylvania understands that the strength of the effects of different levels of quality on children's developmental gain scores may differ by the extent to which they are exposed to contextual risk (including family demographic characteristics and neighborhood characteristics). OCDEL will convene a team of expert researchers to analyze child outcome data from 2009 on. Pennsylvania's child outcome data comes from a mature system with high participation, and robust data on inputs, outputs and outcomes for providers, staff, children and parents. Changes in quality levels over time, both overall and on specific quality components (including GBB tool as described above, provider ERS scores, director credentials, staff qualifications, retention rates, and private accreditation)

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will be related to systems inputs such as financial awards, technical assistance, and professional development. Further, this data can also be linked to child and family demographics, parent survey responses, and child outcomes from birth to 3rd grade.

By working with external evaluators who are expert in the development and validation of state TQRISs, Pennsylvania will build on the state's capacity for data collection through an integrated early childhood data system linked to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System. This work will include a local team of researchers, who will conduct the ongoing evaluation effort and a national team who will provide guidance and feedback to ensure the evaluation's objectives and methods are consistent with best practice and informed by other national and state research. The core team of researchers will work directly with state administrators and program staff to provide field training, data management support, and data analytics, and final report preparation.

The first task for the evaluation team will be to build upon existing evaluation and data analysis to clearly define the research questions to be addressed in the multi-year study. The questions will stem from the guiding objectives to determine whether the STARS tiers accurately reflect differential levels of quality, and whether differential levels of quality are related to gain scores in children's outcomes. The team will also identify necessary data and its availability. Quality tiers will be examined in relation to gain scores on child outcomes and to family responses on surveys. If sufficient data is available, we will look at whether gain scores increase more among participating children before and after a center has improved to a higher level of quality. We will evaluate the potential for experimental designs evaluating the role of specific forms and dosages of TA on quality improvement and child gain scores.

OCDEL will also retain a national expert for consultation for this process. Dr. Marty Zaslow, Senior Scholar at Child Trends and Director of the Office for Policy and Communications for the Society for Research in Child Development, to partner as a consultant in this multi-year evaluation effort. Dr. Zaslow has presented nationally, participated in and reported on numerous national research studies, and authored theoretical and methodological papers, books and monographs, committee reports and policy briefs. In addition, OCDEL will look for opportunities to contribute to and learn from the Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium, funded through the Administration for Children and Families Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation (ACF OPRE) and Child Trends. The consortium conducts literature

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reviews, compiles quality measures, and provides meeting summaries, briefing papers, webinars, research briefs, and research-to-policy/research-to-practice briefs.

Pennsylvania understands that child outcomes are needed from programs at differing levels of quality in order to assess whether these different program quality levels are related to differences in child outcomes. The state already collects outcomes for all children at the top two STAR levels and plans to collect outcomes in a random sample of lower STAR level providers for this evaluation. OCDEL activities include providing or contract for training, materials, and incentives needed for assessing up to 1,000 additional children. Researchers will advise OCDEL on the approach to sampling and analyzing the data in order to ensure the study is valid and sufficiently powered. The purpose of collecting additional child outcomes is to differentiate results across all STAR levels; further stratification will be performed as feasible to examine the contextual effects of family demographics and community risk factors, such as poverty, neighborhood cohesion, toxic stress, and access to quality programs – all of which may affect the impact high-quality programs have on child outcomes.

Pennsylvania welcomes the opportunity to add to the unfolding national perspectives on research based studies around efficacy and validation of TQRIS as well as investigating how supports and other elements of the system interact to support quality of programs and positive outcomes for children, especially those at risk.

(f): Evidence for (B)(5)

(1): Pennsylvania’s High Quality Plan to Validate the Effectiveness of STARS, the State’s TQRIS

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	Pennsylvania has completed validation studies over the course of Keystone STARS implementation in October 2003, December 2004, and December 2006 by the University of Pittsburgh’s Office of Child Development and a program report in 2010. Specific areas of the Keystone STARS system such as Technical Assistance, Designator Reliability, family satisfaction and implications of the ERA supports have been researched.
Key Goals	Pennsylvania is uniquely positioned to rigorously assess a) whether the tiers accurately reflect differential levels of quality, and b) whether differential levels of quality are related to child outcomes as well as investigate other pertinent research questions in collaboration with national experts and other states. With external evaluators and national consulting partners who are expert in the development and validation of state TQRISs, Pennsylvania will leverage the state’s mature program and integrated data system to empirically assess the validity of Keystone STAR ratings, and the impact of the program on improved program quality and improved child outcomes.
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Assemble team of program administrators, in-state researchers and national consultants <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Execute contract with Dr. Zaslow and state evaluation team for the duration of the project b. Reach out to other selected states and ascertain ability for collaboration in research/evaluation c. Plan detailed steps for scope of work over the life of the grant d. Plan the research objectives and methods to assess the validity of the STAR ratings as indicators of quality, and the association to child outcomes e. Pennsylvania proposes to use the available resources to assess the link between child outcomes and quality levels both concurrently and in centers before and after improvement in quality has occurred over time. Pennsylvania also proposes to examine the links between specific quality improvement supports and the components or quality that improve over time 2) Data collection and preparation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Using existing training resources and state data system, collect child outcome data for sample of children at lower STAR levels 3) Data Analysis and Research

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Required Elements	Description of Element
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assess data elements available and gaps in data collection, make a plan b. Prepare annual interim reports c. Prepare final evaluation report
Rationale for Activities	<p>Pennsylvania is committed to implementing early learning programs which improve outcomes for children, particularly those with high needs at risk for school success. The research and validation studies will inform investments toward successful practice and policy and implementation modifications.</p> <p>Pennsylvania’s system already has high participation and robust data on inputs, outputs and outcomes for providers, staff, children and parents. With small amount of additional data collection on child outcomes in a sample of low STAR level providers, the state will extend previous evaluations with analysis data that has not previously been included in evaluation reports; this includes financial awards, technical assistance, and professional development can be linked to measures of quality such as STAR level, duration at STAR level, specific performance standards and the extent to which a provider is exceeding the minimum requirements of a standard, provider ERS scores, CLASS™ scores, director credentials, staff qualifications, staff retention rates, and private accreditation.</p> <p>This data can also be associated to child and family demographics and outcomes such as parent survey responses, and child outcomes from birth to 3rd grade. with a focus on gain scores. While previous work has considered concurrent relationships with child outcomes, the proposed work will look longitudinally through 3rd grade, taking into account school features like percentage of children receiving free and reduced price lunch.</p>
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	Throughout the Commonwealth, using system data and selected sampling procedures with a special emphasis on understanding how programs and services impact high need, at risk communities.
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	Pennsylvania has demonstrated a unique ability to take activities, programs and systems to scale.
How State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs	The state will evaluate data by different provider types to better understand how Keystone STARS, systems supports and the quality initiative is impacting different provider types. Through integrated data system, consistent metrics are used across all program types, facilitative cross-program analysis and supports.
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	The State will establish the study and evaluation to pay particular attention how the system is succeeding in regard to the needs of children with high needs at risk for school success. The evaluation team composed of state administrators, external evaluators, and national consultants, will focus their research objectives and methods to evaluate and provide recommendations around the program’s services for children with high needs.

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Required Elements	Description of Element
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Execute contract with Dr. Zaslow for the duration of the project	Summer 2012	OCDEL : Director Bureau ELS FAP Director Dept. Sec OCDEL	Research Analyst
Clearly define beginning research questions to be addressed in the multi-year study	Fall 2012	National Consultant Director Bureau ELS FAP Director	Research Analyst FAP Staff
Reach out to other selected states and ascertain ability for collaboration in research/evaluation	Fall 2012	National Consultant Director Bureau ELS FAP Director	
Plan detailed steps for scope of work over the life of the grant	Fall 2012	National Consultant Director Bureau ELS FAP Director	Research Analyst FAP Staff
Prepare procurement documents to contract with state evaluation team (Research Contractor)	Fall 2012	FAP Director	FAP Staff
Award procured contract to Research Contractor	Winter 2013	FAP Director	FAP Staff
Assess data elements available and gaps in data collection, make a plan	Winter 2013	Research Contractor National Consultant	Staff Research Analyst

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Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Collect data, analyze results	Throughout RTT-ELC Grant	Research Contractor National Consultant	Staff Research Analyst
Prepare annual interim reports	Annually Beginning Fall 2013	Research Contractor National Consultant	Staff Research Analyst
Prepare final evaluation report	Summer 2015 through end of calendar year 2015	Research Contractor National Consultant	Staff Research Analyst

FOCUSED INVESTMENT AREA (C): PROMOTING EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN

The State must address two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C). Up to 60 points are available.

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.

(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--
 - o Proof of use by the types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State,
 - o The State's Early Learning and Development Standards for:
 - Infants and toddlers
 - Preschoolers
 - o Documentation that the standards are developmentally, linguistically and culturally appropriate for all children, including children with disabilities and developmental delays and English Learners,
 - o Documentation that the standards address all Essential Domains of School Readiness and that they are of high-quality,
 - o Documentation of the alignment between the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and the State's K-3 standards

(C)(1): Developing and Using Statewide, High-Quality Early Learning and Development Standards

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan for developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development standards, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan. Appendix (C)(1)-1, on page 409 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood were developed in 2004 through cross-sector collaboration from the Departments of Health, Education and Welfare, along with representatives from child care, Early Intervention, school districts, Head Start, higher education, family support programs and researchers.

(a): Evidence that Standards are Appropriate Across Each Age Group and Cover Domains of School Readiness

Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood cover the Infant/Toddler, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade age groups, and include the essential domains of school readiness, as outlined in see Table (A)(1)-6: Current Status of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards, on page 22. Additional standards include the key domains of Creative Thinking and Expression, Social Studies, Science (including Environment and Ecology), and Partnerships for Learning.

Pennsylvania's standards are research-based according to age and development and are the foundation for curriculum, assessment, instruction and intervention within early care and education programs. Children with diverse needs, including culture and English Language Learners are addressed within the Standard's Introduction and Guiding Principles. Young children with disabilities meet standards consistent with their individual family service plans (IFSP) or individualized education programs (IEP) goals developed by teams in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and Pennsylvania's Early Intervention Services System Act (Act 212 of 1990). The skills needed for young English

Language Learners to become proficient in English are fully embedded in the Pennsylvania's Standards for Early Childhood, which are published in both English and Spanish.

(b): Evidence that Standards are Aligned with K-3 Academic Standards

Pennsylvania expanded its efforts to create a true continuum of learning from birth through grade three by commissioning an alignment study in 2009. Drs. Sharon Lynn Kagan and Catherine Scott-Little, nationally-recognized experts in Early Learning and Development, reviewed the degree of alignment between Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood and the early grades of the state's K-12 system. Their analysis addressed four parameters: balance, coverage, depth, and difficulty and found that the state's standards and assessments are strong and that they show good alignment across age/grade levels. According to the study, "Pennsylvania is to be congratulated on developing a cohesive set of standards that address birth through second grade." OCDEL used key findings from the study to frame the 2009 revision of its Learning Standards. OCDEL also developed a Learning Continuum that demonstrates the sequence of skill development from infancy through Kindergarten and published the continuum as a companion piece to the Learning Standards [see Appendix (A)(1)-7: Early Learning Standards Continuum, on page 192 of the appendices]. A crosswalk of the Pennsylvania Kindergarten Learning Standards and the Common Core Standards for Kindergarten was conducted and strong alignment was evidenced.

OCDEL is currently collaborating with the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education to integrate the Learning Standards for Preschool – 2nd Grade into the K-12 Standards Aligned Systems Portal (SAS). SAS is the state's comprehensive standards repository, which incorporates six elements that create a framework for continuous school improvement and child/student success and achievement: Clear Standards, Fair Assessments, Curriculum Framework, Instruction, Materials and Resources, and Interventions [see Appendix (A)(1)-5: Standards Aligned System Fact Sheet, on page 158 of the appendices]. While still in its infancy, this comprehensive approach to support student achievement by integrating Pennsylvania's early care and education community into the K-12 system, is innovative and ground-breaking work that will create a genuine continuum of learning from birth through grade 12. Learning Standards for Early Childhood currently embedded in the SAS portal include reading, writing, speaking and listening, and math. Science standards are in the process of being vetted by an

outside contractor and social studies standards have been reviewed and await the vetting process. Standards for other key learning domains yet to be reviewed include creative thinking and expression, health, wellness and physical development, approaches to learning, and social and emotional development. OCDEL plans to convene a group of stakeholders to review and vet the standards for these domains.

OCDEL's collaboration with the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education also includes developing and embedding the full curriculum framework for Pre-K through grade 2 into the SAS portal. To continue this work, OCDEL must further refine Pennsylvania's current standards (booklets) and the associated professional development modules being created for rollout.

(c): Evidence that the Standards are Incorporated in Program Standards, Curricula, Assessments, the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and Professional Development

Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood are currently used as a framework for instruction statewide and are incorporated both into the guidance for Keystone STARS (the state's TQRIS) and into the PA Pre-K Counts and Head Start State Supplemental Assistance Programs. The state is in the process of revising the Private Academic Nursery School and Kindergarten regulations to require the use of Pennsylvania Learning Standards as a framework for curriculum development and instruction. All early care and education programs licensed through the Department of Public Welfare receive copies of the Learning Standards for Early Childhood and all state funded programs use curricula and assessments that have been aligned to the standards. Seven publishing companies have aligned their curricula to Pennsylvania's revised standards and two have aligned assessments. OCDEL is also working with other publishing companies on assessment alignment in conjunction with the development of the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework described in section (C)(2), which begins on page 170. OCDEL is currently piloting this standards-based framework.

In addition to analyzing alignment between the state's early learning and K-12 standards, Kagan and Little's alignment study described above also examined the degree of alignment between the state's early learning standards and its early learning assessments. The summary of findings served as the impetus for OCDEL to begin developing its Keystone Child Outcomes Framework.

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The Learning Standards for Early Childhood are an integral part of the core-series training for Keystone STARS (state's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System). In addition, the standards helped frame the revision of the state's Core Body of Knowledge (its Workforce Competencies Framework) and are fully embedded within the Pre-K to 4th Grade Teaching Certificate.

Pennsylvania has several health and wellness initiatives that align to the National Let's Move Campaign and all initiatives fully align to and incorporate Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood. *Keystone Kids Go* is an initiative in Pennsylvania focused on improving young children's nutrition and physical activity. *I am Moving I am Learning* is a proactive approach for addressing childhood obesity while enhancing school readiness in young children birth to five within Early Care and Education settings. The *Go Green* Initiative is designed to put early learning programs on a path towards achieving excellence in environmental health and conservation. Lastly, the Nutritional and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care is a research-tested intervention designed to enhance policies, practices, and environments in child care by improving the nutritional quality of food served, the amount and quality of physical activity and facility nutrition and physical activity policies and practices. The ways in which these health initiatives integrate with the state's Learning Standards for Early Childhood are illustrated in Appendix (C)(1)-7: Standards Integration with Health Initiatives, on page 430 of the appendices.

(d): Evidence that the State has Supports in Place to Promote Understanding of and Commitment to the Standards across Programs

The Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System (PQAS) is a system for certifying individuals who provide professional development and technical assistance to early childhood and school-age professionals. PQAS maintains a registry of approved Professional Development Instructors (PDIs) to help ensure that professional development activities meet quality standards. PQAS instructors provide ongoing professional development on the Learning Standards for Early Childhood as well as Linking Standards, Assessment and Curriculum. All professional development offerings are listed on the Pa Key on-line training calendar affording practitioners easy search options and registration. Penn State's Better Kid Care Program provides educational materials, learning experiences and programs to child care providers, parents, and employers

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throughout the state of Pennsylvania. Better Kid Care offers on demand lessons and lessons by mail that are linked to Pennsylvania Learning Standards and are available to early care and education practitioners throughout the state. The Standards Aligned System (SAS) portal and OCDEL's webpage both include Learning Standards for Early Childhood. The SAS webpage offers additional Standards based documents and resources such as a crosswalk of Pennsylvania Learning Standards with NAEYC Performance Criteria, Head Start Development and Early Learning Framework, Pennsylvania Academic Standards, Keystone STARS performance standards and Pennsylvania's Core Body of Knowledge. Documents advising teachers on how to link Pennsylvania Learning Standards and curriculum, sample lesson plans and blank templates that include and describe the incorporation of Pennsylvania Learning Standards are also found on the SAS webpage.

Other resources in place to help all audiences become familiar with and understand the Learning Standards for Early Childhood include several companion documents for the standards:

- *Kindergarten Here I Come!*, *Kindergarten Here I Am*, *Learning is Everywhere!*, and *Every Day I Learn through Play!*, which are guides for families, practitioners and school districts that provide a range of activities families can use at home to support learning and development;
- a Standards Wheel for Relative/Neighbor providers and families, which outlines developmental milestones for children at different age levels across the key developmental domains;
- *Recipes for Readiness*, which provides various family-friendly activities that help families promote the skills that Kindergarten teachers are looking for as children enter their classrooms;
- Puzzles for practitioners and professional development instructors that focus discussion on guiding principles behind the Learning Standards; and
- DVDs containing the Learning Standards for early care and education practitioners.

See Appendices (A)(1)-9a and 9b, which begin on page 221 of the appendices, for samples of these documents. These resources have been distributed through libraries, child care information services, county child care councils and the state's Local Education and Resource Networks (LEARN) Teams, described in C4. The resources are provided in English and Spanish and are

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also aligned with the state's Learning Standards for Early Childhood, as illustrated in Appendix (C)(1)-6 on page 429 of the appendices.

The Gate Opener Project is working to develop a sustainable support structure through 4 year colleges and universities to meet the identified needs of and increase the number of working adults who succeed in obtaining their Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Child Development Bachelor Degrees and/or Certification as part of their participation in Keystone STAR Levels 1, 2, 3, or 4; PA Pre-K Counts (PKC); and/or Head Start (HS) Programs. Many of these 4-year colleges and universities include the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood and the Standards Aligned System as part of their pre-service coursework for practitioners.

(e): Gaps in the Use of Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood

Three key gaps exist in the use of Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood:

- 1). Not all of the Standards' Key Learning Areas are currently integrated into the SAS portal for Pre-K through grade 2.
- 2). Some standards still need to be incorporated into the portal, including standards in domains of Science, Social Studies, Approaches to Learning, Social Emotional Development, Health, Wellness and Physical Development and Creative Arts and Expression.
- 3). Once the updates are completed, providers will need professional development on the updates, changes and uses for the revised curriculum framework and learning standards revisions.

(f): Goals for the Use of Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood

To demonstrate the foundational role early childhood instruction serves in the continuum of school readiness and success.

(g): Next Steps for the Use of Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood

(1): Embed the additional key learning domains into the K-12 Standards Aligned System Portal.

Pennsylvania will build on strengths in place with the current Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, 1st, and 2nd grade standards that are embedded into the K-12 Standards Aligned System (Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening and Mathematics). The Office of Child Development and Early

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Learning (OCDEL) will convene a stakeholder group to work on remaining standards in the key learning areas/domains of Science, Social Studies, Social and Emotional Development, Health, Wellness and Physical Development, Approaches to Learning, and Creative Arts and Expression. OCDEL will continue to work in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education to incorporate the above said remaining standards into the Standards Aligned System (SAS) Portal.

The culmination of this work creates a need for further refinement to Pennsylvania's current Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and 1st and 2nd grade Learning Standards for Early Childhood booklets. Booklets will mirror the Standards in the Standards Aligned System (SAS) Portal.

(2): Refine and embed the Pre-K-2 Curriculum Framework into the K – 12 Standards Aligned System Portal

OCDEL and Office of Elementary and Secondary Education currently are involved in the refinement of the Pre-Kindergarten – 2 Curriculum Framework, which includes Big Ideas, Essential Questions, Concepts, Competencies and Standards. Key learning areas/domains of Reading, Writing, Speaking, Listening, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies are almost finalized and will need uploaded into SAS (phase 1). Once phase 1 is complete, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) will convene a stakeholder group to work on the curriculum framework for key learning areas/domains of Social and Emotional Development, Health, Wellness and Physical Development and Creative Arts and Expression. Once finalized this will need uploaded into SAS (phase 2).

(3): Create and implement professional development modules that provide training on the updates to SAS, Curriculum Framework and Standards.

Professional Development on the updates to SAS, Curriculum Framework and Learning Standards for Early Childhood will be developed and offered through a Professional Development Instructor's Institute (PDII) for PQAS instructors. PQAS instructors will then roll out this ongoing training to early care and education practitioners throughout the State of Pennsylvania. Higher Education will receive training and will adapt their pre-service coursework to reflect changes in SAS, Curriculum Framework and Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade Learning Standards for Early Childhood.

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

(1): Proof of Standards Use by Early Learning and Development Programs

All programs that participate in Keystone STARS are required to use the standards. Requirements for use intensify for programs to move up the STARS ladder and receive higher STARS ratings. Appendix (C)(1)-2: Required Use of Standards in Early Learning and Development Programs, on page 410 of the appendices, documents the use of Early Learning and Development Standards by Keystone STARS Early Learning and Development Programs (including STARS-designated child care providers and all PA Pre-K Counts Programs).

(2): Documentation of Standards

Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood cover the Infant/Toddler, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, 1st grade, and 2nd grade age groups, and include the essential domains of school readiness. Documentation of these Early Learning and Development Standards is provided in Appendices (A)(1)-4a, 4b, and 4c, which begin on page 12 of the appendices, provide the standards for Infants/Toddlers, Pre-K, and Kindergarten.

(3): Documentation of Developmental, Linguistic, and Cultural Appropriateness of Standards

Pennsylvania has developed standards that specifically address the individual needs of a diverse population of children, including low-income children, children with disabilities and developmental delays, and English Learners. Documentation of how the state's Early Learning and Development Standards address developmental, linguistic, and cultural differences is provided in Appendix (C)(1)-3: Culturally and Linguistic Appropriate Standards in Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood, on page 412 of the appendices.

(4): Documentation that the Standards are High-Quality and Address School Readiness

Provide documentation that the standards address all Essential Domains of School Readiness and that they are of high-quality is provided on the last two pages of Appendices (A)(1)-4a, 4b, and 4c, which provide the Learning Standards for Infants/Toddlers, Pre-K, and Kindergarten. These documents begin on page 12 of the appendices.

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(5): Documentation that the Standards Align with State's K-3 Standards

Provide documentation of the alignment between the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and the State's K-3 standards is provided in Appendix (C)(1)-4: Alignment of Curricula and Assessments on page 416 of the appendices and Appendix (C)(1)-5: Alignment Study, on page 419 of the appendices.

(6): High Quality Plan for (C)(1): Developing and using Statewide, High-Quality Early Learning and Development Standards

Required Elements of a High-Quality Plan	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	<p>Pennsylvania’s Learning Standards for Early Childhood are used as a framework for instruction and are incorporated in the standards for the Keystone STARS Tiered Quality Review and Improvement System, Pre-K Counts, and state-funded Head Start Supplemental programs.</p> <p>All State funded programs use curricula and assessments that have been aligned to the standards.</p> <p>Standards for all age groups (Infant/Toddler, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten) cover the essential domains of school readiness and serve as the foundation for instruction and assessment within early care programs. The Standards directly address the needs of children with high needs, including English Language Learners.</p> <p>The Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System (PQAS) maintains a registry of approved Professional Development Instructors (PDIs) and PQAS instructors provide ongoing professional development on the Learning Standards</p> <p>OCDEL is currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collaborating with the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education to incorporate the Learning Standards for P-2 into the state’s Standards Aligned Systems Portal (currently K-12). • refining the Pre-K-2 curriculum framework for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. • piloting a Standards based Kindergarten Entry Assessment Reporting Framework. • providing technical assessment on Learning Standards and alignment with curriculum and assessment. • working with 4 year colleges and universities to further embed Standards for Early Childhood into the pre-service requirements for practitioners.
Key Goals	To demonstrate the foundational role early childhood instruction serves in the continuum of school readiness and success.

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Required Elements of a High-Quality Plan	Description of Element
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<p>Extend the access and connection of statewide, high quality early learning standards and curriculum framework to the K-12 Standards Aligned System, by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Including all of the Standards’ Key Learning Areas on the SAS portal for Pre-K through grade 2. 2). Developing and embedding the full curriculum framework for Pre-K through grade 2 into the Standards Aligned System portal (finish incorporating standards in domains of Science, Social Studies, Approaches to Learning, Social Emotional Development, Health, Wellness and Physical Development and Creative Arts and Expression). 3). Developing and delivering professional development on the updates, changes and uses for the revised curriculum framework and learning standards revisions.
Rationale for Activities	<p>Planned activities build on strengths in place with the current standards embedded into the K-12 Standards Aligned System.</p> <p>Once the current refinement of the Pre-K-2 curriculum framework is complete and all Standards are embedded into SAS, the state will need to print Learning Standards for Early Childhood booklets to mirror the refined standards on the Standards Aligned System Portal. The state will develop professional development on the updates, changes and uses for the revised curriculum framework and learning standards and roll out of this training will take place across the State.</p>
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	<p>SAS is a no-cost, online resource tool that is available to anyone in the State. Standards, Curriculum Framework, Fair Assessments, Instruction, Interventions and Materials and Resources are available without registering. The use of Teacher Tools for specific use in the classrooms requires registration and again registration is free. This Portal has been promoted statewide, Pre-K – 12, since December 2009.</p>

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Required Elements of a High-Quality Plan	Description of Element
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). OCDEL staff will collaborate with the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) to incorporate the additional domains into the K- 12 Standards Aligned System Portal. 2). Statewide stakeholders will review, refine and vet the additional standards, which will then be added to the K-12 Standards Aligned System Portal. 3). OCDEL/OESE will further refine the Learning Standards for Early Childhood to align them with the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten standards in the revised Standards Aligned System portal. 4). OCDEL will create and implement professional development modules that provide training on the updates to SAS, curriculum framework and standard. Modules will be offered through the Professional Development Instructor’s Institute) to PQAS instructors throughout the State. 5). PQAS instructors will roll out this ongoing training to early care and education practitioners throughout Pennsylvania. 6). OCDEL will collaborate with Institutions of Higher Education to adapt their pre-service coursework to reflect changes in the Standards Aligned System, Curriculum Framework and Learning Standards for Early Childhood. 7). Throughout the state, aspiring educators and those seeking to improve their credentials will learn about the new standards in college-level courses.
How State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable	All state funded programs will continue using the Learning Standards for Early Childhood (Infant/Toddler, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten). Departments and agencies will continue to assess and identify needs of their affiliate programs and provide technical assistance accordingly.
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	The SAS Portal includes tools and resources for ELL, children with disabilities or developmental delays and information for families. The Portal is designed to help teachers improve their overall instruction to promote outcomes for all children.
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

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Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed for (C)(1)

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
<p>Key Activity 1 Include all of the Standards’ Key Learning Areas on the SAS portal for Pre-K through grade 2: Science, Social Studies, Health, Wellness, and Physical Development, Creative Arts and Expression, Social and Emotional Development, and Approaches to Learning</p>	Fall 2015	OCDEL Office of Elementary and Secondary Education	SAS information technology contractors
<p>Key Activity 2 Develop and embed the full curriculum framework for Pre-K through grade 2 into the Standards Aligned System portal.</p>	Fall 2014	OCDEL Office of Elementary and Secondary Education	SAS information technology contractors
<p>Key Activity 3 Review and refine written learning standards documents and companion documents.</p>	Fall 2015 to Fall 2016	OCDEL PA Key Stakeholders	Printer
<p>Key Activity 4 Develop and deliver professional development on the updates, changes and uses for the revised curriculum framework and learning standards revisions.</p>	Fall 2016	OCDEL PA Key Stakeholders	

(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.

(C)(2): Supporting Effective Uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section of this criteria provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan for supporting effective uses of comprehensive assessment systems, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan, including a timeline with milestones. Appendix (C)(1)-1, on page 409 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

Pennsylvania has incorporated the components of a comprehensive assessment system into its requirements for state-funded programs that serve the state's most vulnerable children, including state-funded Pre-Kindergarten, Head Start, and Early Intervention programs, and programs in the higher tiers of Keystone STARS, the state's Tiered Quality Rating Improvement System.

Teachers and local and state administrators use multiple sources of data to understand Pennsylvania's children and to offer varied supports to those children who are most at risk by combining program quality, teacher-child, and child assessments to achieve positive outcomes for children.

(a): Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to Select Appropriate Assessment Tools and Approaches

The state's Comprehensive Assessment System includes assessments of program quality, assessments of teacher-child interactions, and child assessments, including formative and developmental screeners.

1: Assessment of Program Quality: Since 2002, Pennsylvania has used the Environment Rating Scales (ERS) as the benchmark classroom assessment tool to monitor program quality for the Keystone STARS and PA Pre-K Counts programs. OCDEL selected this tool because of its applicability to all ages (infant/toddler, preschool, school age) and varied settings (center and home-based). The ERS serves as a reliable and valid tool for Quality Rating Improvement Systems and research projects around the globe. ERS tools are used across program types and have well-developed training materials and understandable progressions for improvements that programs undertake to improve quality. Pennsylvania's use of the ERS has provided both a

strong foundation for recognition of quality and continuous quality improvement and a standard for monitoring programs.

2: Assessment of Adult-Child Interactions: In 2010, OCDEL conducted a statewide pilot of Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™), a valid and reliable tool that measures the quality of teachers' and caregivers' interactions with children. The objective of the pilot was to examine the usefulness of the tool in supporting quality improvement and to investigate the feasibility of using this tool as an additional resource for those programs that were seeking quality assessment materials to complement their existing resources. Programs participating in the pilot receive training and technical assistance to support their use of this instrument. The pilot project was designed to evaluate the use of CLASS™ assessment results: a). as a way to inform technical assistance and professional development at the state and local program levels, b). as an additional source of evidence for programs as they establish continuous quality improvement goals, and c). as a resource to explore the relationship between components of program quality and child outcomes.

3: Child Assessment: Pennsylvania's approach to child assessment has three parts: screening, observation-based assessment, and child outcome reporting. OCDEL requires programs to complete a screening within 45 days of children's entry into programs to identify children with potential risk for learning. This screening is followed by ongoing observation-based assessment using a valid and reliable assessment measure (selected by the program) that is aligned with the Learning Standards for Early Childhood. Programs currently report child outcomes into Pennsylvania's unified data system through the online versions of authentic assessment tools. Programs use multiple sources of evidence to complete their selected observation-based assessment. Teachers and administrators can access individual child, classroom, and parent reports from the online system to support classroom instruction and share information with families (teachers have access only to their own students' information and can share this information only with each child's own family). OCDEL analyzes the data from the online system to understand children's progress over time and across program types.

(b): Working with Early Learning and Development Programs to Strengthen Educators' Understanding of Assessments in the Comprehensive Assessment Systems

Pennsylvania supports providers' use of a comprehensive system of assessment for decision-making and quality improvement throughout its programs. OCDEL works with programs in several ways to strengthen early educators' understanding of its comprehensive system and to increase their awareness of the importance of both child and environmental assessments:

- Providing written guidance related to the components of the state's Comprehensive Assessment System in three key documents: 1). the Revised Report and Guidelines on Early Childhood Assessment for Children from Birth to Age 8, which emphasizes the importance of viewing assessment and curriculum development as a continuous process. 2). a companion document, Summary of Assessment Measures, which offers information about the extent to which several assessment tools align with Pennsylvania's standards for learning and 3). the Review of Early Childhood Classroom Observation Measures, which discusses the important of and tools for assessing the quality of the early childhood classroom environment. These documents were completed in 2007 by cross-sector stakeholder groups.
- Integrating information about assessments in the state's Standards Aligned System (see Appendix (A)(1)-5: Standards Aligned System Fact Sheet, on page 158 of the appendices), which provides multiple online resources for practitioners and programs.
- Embedding assessment into the providers' Core Body of Knowledge, which defines key competencies that are expected of qualified early education practitioners, and including assessment as a key topic area in Pennsylvania teacher pre-service coursework as well.

(c): Aligning and Integrating Assessments and Sharing Results

Pennsylvania is the only state that currently meets all 10 fundamentals of coordinated state Early Learning and Development data systems identified by the Early Childhood Data Collaborative. Pennsylvania has established uniform data collection through Pennsylvania's Enterprise to Link Information for Children Across Networks (PELICAN), a network of subsystems that manage data for PA Pre-K Counts, Keystone STARS, Child Care Works Subsidy, Provider Certification, Head Start, Early Intervention. PELICAN also includes an Early Learning Network (ELN) subsystem designed to guide instruction, inform state policies, and increase efficiencies across all programs overseen by OCDEL.

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Currently, ELN tracks both child outcomes and ERS scores for participating OCDEL programs and PELICAN integrates that data with other statewide child care data in one central locale. In addition, PELICAN Early Intervention (EI) provides a mechanism for data-sharing between Infant/Toddler and Preschool EI programs, limiting the need for duplicative assessments. For children enrolled in programs other than EI, data sharing is implemented at the local level through agreements between community partners including families, early education programs and school districts. This data sharing, which supports children's transition into formal school settings, includes screening and assessment results and recommendations for follow-up referrals. OCDEL provides guidance and resources to programs for effective implementation of their local agreements.

(d): Training EC Educators to Administer Assessments and Interpret and Use Results

Through its comprehensive professional development system, OCDEL provides multi-strategy training on the components of the comprehensive assessment system across the continuum of programs and services through annual conferences, online training, and regional face to face events and includes it within pre-service teacher certification. These robust trainings focus on the purposes and uses of various assessments, how to appropriately administer and interpret assessments and how to use the assessment data to inform and improve instruction and program quality. Twenty trained instructors offer professional development on the Environment Rating Scale through the Pennsylvania training system. There are currently 849 instructors that are certified to offer varied training events on child assessment.

The Office of Child Development and Early Learning offers ongoing professional development on ways in which assessment interacts with curriculum and instruction to support children's positive outcomes. These learning events focus on interpreting assessment results to individualize and adapt instruction to meet children's unique needs. Training on specific assessment tools and authentic assessment strategies emphasize and incorporate Pennsylvania's learning standards and the Standards Aligned System.

(e): Gaps in the State's Comprehensive Assessment System

Despite the existence of the state's Comprehensive Assessment System, many providers still lack the deep knowledge and understanding of children's developmental progress necessary to be able to adapt their instruction effectively to children's diverse skill levels and learning needs.

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Administrators and policy-makers, likewise, don't always have a complete picture of children's developmental status across the domains critical to school readiness. In addition, the state's ability to monitor changes in children's development and achievement over time is incomplete.

(f): Goals for the State's Comprehensive Assessment System

OCDEL's Comprehensive Assessment System provides a solid foundation for helping programs and practitioners meet the needs of children and improve child outcomes. Through RTT-ELC grant funding, OCDEL plans to strengthen this comprehensive system to reach two key goals:

- 1). increase providers' understanding of the developmental progress and needs of the children they serve across a broad range of cognitive skills and increase their ability to adapt their instruction to meet group and individualized student needs and to monitor individual, class and program-wide achievement and developmental gains over time to measure effectiveness of service.
- 2). ensure that state and local decision-making is informed by data from a coordinated and cohesive valid and reliable comprehensive assessment system.

(g): Key Activities/Next Steps

The state has identified several key projects to enable it to reach its goals for enhancing its ability to use assessments to better understand children's needs and progress.

(1): Build a Coordinated and Cohesive Comprehensive Assessment System (Keystone Child Outcomes Framework):

OCDEL is continuously reviewing and refining its strategy to ensure a Comprehensive Assessment System. The state's existing model for assessment has focused on all components of a Comprehensive Assessment System; however to build a stronger, more cohesive system, these components must be understood and used as a whole. Pennsylvania will use existing infrastructure, which has been successfully implemented, to create a more effective, efficient and comprehensive system in which multiple providers can accurately, consistently, and validly report on child outcomes using a selection of different tools.

To better coordinate its assessment system, Pennsylvania plans to build on the state's current assessment work and provide an effective means to coordinate and align the data collected from multiple, valid and reliable observation-based measures from birth through 2nd grade. With

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support from RTT-ELC funds OCDEL will develop and fully implement the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework (KCOF), a standards-based birth-to-Pre-Kindergarten child outcomes reporting framework that is anchored in the state's proposed Keystone Kindergarten Inventory (described in section E1 of this document) and is mapped to multiple authentic assessments. The proposed framework will be modeled in part on the Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO) Center's national methodology for reporting child outcomes to the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) using multiple-state-selected assessments as sources of evidence. While OSEP does not require every state to use identical assessments, the data the states collect through their assessment measures must include specific child outcomes. The ECO center has worked with states to align their respective tools to produce consistent and reliable national data.

Similarly, Pennsylvania's proposed KCOF will align multiple authentic assessments which assess the full range of essential cognitive and non-cognitive domains (see Appendix (C)(2)-1: Domains and Standards of the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework, on page 431 of the appendices) and have been shown to be valid, reliable and appropriate for use with children with High Needs, including low-income children, English Language Learners, and children with developmental delays or other disabilities to common, standards-based outcomes reporting tools for infant, young toddlers, older toddlers, and preschoolers. The goals of this effort are twofold:

- to enable providers to understand the development progress and needs of the children they serve across a broad range of cognitive skills, to adapt their instruction to meet group and individualized student needs and to monitor individual, class and program-wide achievement and developmental gains over time to measure effectiveness of service.
- to enable state-level administrators and policy-makers to better understand the status of the state's children across a broad range of cognitive and non-cognitive domains, to monitor changes in the status of children's achievement and development over time and to inform policy.

While technically challenging to construct, this valid and reliable framework will provide a national model for aligning multiple assessment measures to a common, standards-based framework. Although development of KCOF will be technically challenging, vendors and national experts believe that this work is feasible and very much needed; furthermore, they believe that Pennsylvania is strongly positioned to execute this exciting national model.

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In order to develop, validate, and implement the KCOF, OCDEL will:

- Work with expert assessment consultants and multiple stakeholders groups to identify the criteria for selecting the assessments that will be aligned to the framework.
- Work with consultants and assessment vendors to align and calibrate each assessment to the KCOF, including mapping assessment indicators and developing scoring algorithms to produce consistent information across these similar but different tools. This work will also include primary data collection and psychometric analysis to establish the consistency of information.
- Integrate KCOF into the OCDEL data system. This work has already begun and all modifications to the state's current data system have been allocated using state dollars.
- Train providers on updates to outcomes reporting. Since this new framework builds on the state's current process, we anticipate a seamless transition to the KCOF. Proposed training modules are outlined in Appendix (C)(2)-2: Assessment Training Modules for Keystone Child Outcomes Framework, on page 433 of the appendices.

A full timeline of all activities and the individuals/organizations responsible for completing them is provided in the High Quality Plan for (C)(2), which appears in the evidence section, below. Following the High Quality Plan is description of the domains and standards included in the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework and a listing of the training modules to be developed.

(2): Create Systems to Increase Providers' Understanding of the Assessment System and Use of Assessment Tools

a). Delivery of a Developmental Screening Curriculum to Health Care Providers: Partnerships between health care and special education providers expand the opportunities to identify children with potential learning risks when they are very young. OCDEL plans to partner with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP) to deliver an educational curriculum on the use childhood developmental screening within primary practice settings. The training will meet the needs of the approximately 5,000 primary care providers and their professional staff in an estimated 1,650 primary care practice sites statewide, focusing on those in high-need communities.

Currently, many practices do not have established protocols to assure universal developmental screening of all children, identify appropriate screening tools to accomplish accurate screening

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using a validated tool, and refer patients to community resources such as Early Intervention. The Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP) has experience in developing and conducting education programs for primary care providers using a national training model called Educating Practices In their Communities (EPIC). EPIC programs in Pennsylvania have included modules in immunization, child abuse, smoking cessation counseling, newborn hearing screening, breastfeeding, pediatric obesity, and medical homes for children with special health care needs. Altogether, these programs have trained over 25,000 health care professionals in thousands of practices in the state in the last 15 years. The PA AAP has successfully worked with the Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians, the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association, the Pennsylvania Section of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and other primary care organizations to endorse and promote these programs among their membership.

This partnership will train presenters who will conduct 100 training sessions in each of the three years of the grant-funded project. The presenters will primarily disseminate the training on-site at primary care settings and also through grand rounds, pediatric staff meetings at community hospitals, regional/state meetings for physicians, residency training programs, nurses, nurse practitioners/physician assistants and other ancillary office staff. As part of this project, promotional and ancillary materials, webinars, and a website will be developed and an evaluation will be conducted.

b): Design and Implement Training Modules on the Comprehensive Assessment System: The development of the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework (KCOF) provides an opportunity to offer providers a greater understanding of the full comprehensive assessment system and to train them to effectively implement the tools that are part of the system. In order to highlight the comprehensive nature of a system of assessment and to make training more effective, OCDEL plans to use RTT-ELC funds to develop a comprehensive set of learning modules. These training modules will include detailed information and practice with all components of a Comprehensive Assessment System, will be asynchronous web-based trainings, which provide ongoing feedback and real-life examples, and will support the implementation of KCOF. The modules will be built from existing professional development, research-based best practice and Pennsylvania specific exemplars. The asynchronous web-based nature of the modules will allow for on-going dissemination of training, as well as attention to the diverse training needs of multiple programs.

(h): Evidence for (C)(2)

(1): High Quality Plan for Supporting Effective Uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	Pennsylvania has a comprehensive system of early childhood assessment that is integrated into the state’s unified early childhood data system. The comprehensive assessment system includes appropriate assessment tools and approaches, training for educators to help them understand the purposes of the assessments within the comprehensive system, an approach for systems alignment and sharing of assessment results, and training for educators to help them appropriately administer assessments and interpret their results.
Key Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). increase providers’ understanding of the developmental progress and needs of the children they serve across a broad range of cognitive skills and increase their ability to adapt their instruction to meet group and individualized student needs and to monitor individual, class and program-wide achievement and developmental gains over time to measure effectiveness of service. 2). increase state-level administrators’ and policy-makers’ understanding of the status of the state’s children across a broad range of cognitive and non-cognitive domains. 3). increase the state’s ability to monitor changes in the status of children’s achievement and development over time to better inform policy.
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Develop and implement the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework to be used across state-funded programs. 2). Partner with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP) to deliver an educational curriculum on the use childhood developmental screening in primary practice settings to 5,000 primary care providers and their professional staff in an estimated 1,650 primary care practice sites statewide, focusing on those in high-need communities. 3). Combine and refine available professional development on assessment into a comprehensive set of modules, which include on-going practice and feedback. Modules will be offered in an asynchronous web-based format, which will include on-going feedback and will be incorporated into system of professional development and higher education pre-service content.
Rationale for Activities	<p>PA’s existing model for assessment has focused on all components of a Comprehensive Assessment System. However, to build a stronger, more cohesive system these components need to be understood and used as a whole. Planned activities will help the state 1) more effectively use existing infrastructure and components that have been successfully implemented and 2) create a more effective, efficient and comprehensive system.</p> <p>The activities address gaps – specifically the need to strengthen and streamline the system of assessment across and</p>

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Required Elements	Description of Element
	between programs and to offer continued support to program administrators and practitioners in the selection, implementation and use of assessment measures. These activities will support a more informed and effective workforce in the area of assessment, which will in turn strengthen classroom instruction and program quality.
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	Available to all state-funded Early Learning and Development, with emphasis on higher-level QRIS participating programs. However, all programs will have access to web-based training modules.
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	After pilot, modules will be further refined and will be rolled-out state-wide.
How State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable	Training modules will be developed in collaboration with multiple stakeholders from a variety of programs. Choice in the selection of assessment measures will be provided to meet the needs of diverse programs.
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	The implementation of KCOF will include focused attention on appropriate selection of and uses of assessment measures that are culturally and linguistically responsive, as well as responsive to differences in ability. Likewise, responsiveness to differences in culture, language and ability will be embedded within the developed training modules. Some modules will focus more intentionally on these areas.
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed for (C)(2)

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
1). Develop and implement the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework to be used across state-funded programs.			
Review the content of the Child Outcome Framework and conduct an alignment analysis to ensure that the framework is aligned with the standards at each age level	Spring 2012	Consultant	OCDEL
Select assessments to be used with (KCOF): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop criteria upon which assessments would be selected. • Evaluate instruments that are submitted for consideration to see if they meet the proposed criteria; at minimum this would include: review of the psychometric properties of the instrument (reliability and validity), and alignment analyses (balance, depth, and coverage) Convene a stakeholder process to approve assessments for 0 – 5.	Spring 2012	Consultant	OCDEL
Conduct an item by item analysis to compare the degree to which the difficulty of each assessment item aligns with the corresponding item on KCOF for approved assessments.	Spring 2012	Consultant	OCDEL
Integration of KCOF into the OCDEL data system. This work has already begun and all modifications to our current data system have been allocated using state dollars.	Winter 2013	Consultant	OCDEL
Pilot KCOF to collect data that can be used to complete the psychometrics needed to develop a scoring system.	Winter 2013	Consultant	OCDEL
Translate indicator data from multiple assessments to KCOF and validate the proposed scoring methods.	Summer 2014	Consultant	OCDEL
Fully implement KCOF in state-funded programs	Summer 2014		OCDEL

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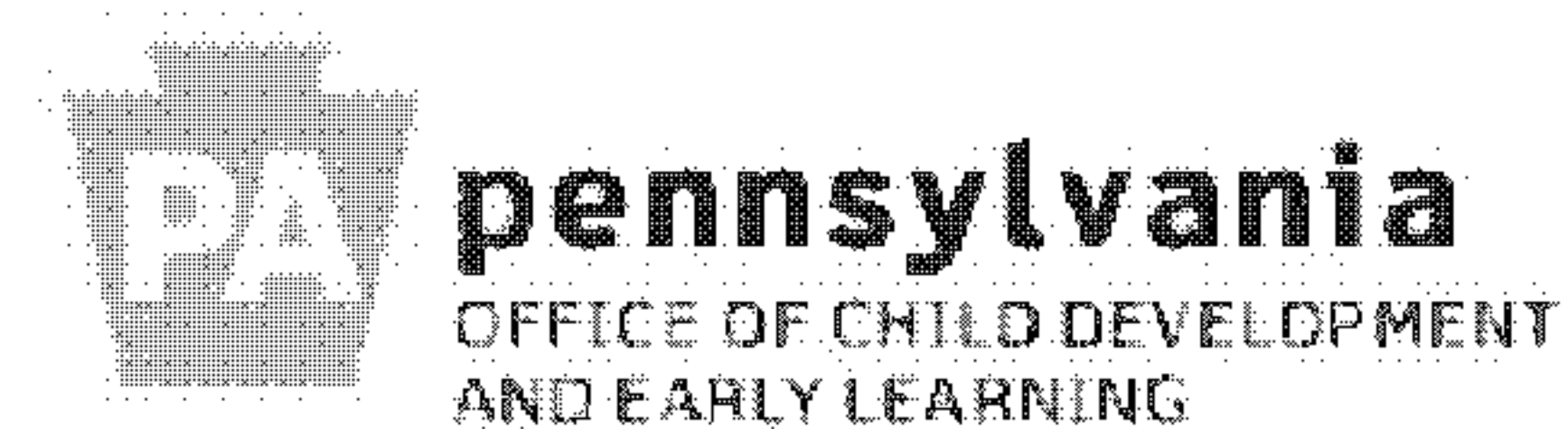
Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
2). Partner with the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (PA AAP) to deliver an educational curriculum on the use childhood developmental screening focusing on high-need communities.			
Convene an advisory committee of pediatric developmental physicians, primary care providers, parents, early intervention specialists, OCDEL advisors, and other appropriate participants	Spring 2012	PA AAP	OCDEL
Update a curriculum, practice protocols and resources in developmental screening applicable to Pennsylvania	Spring 2012	PA AAP	OCDEL
Secure CME/CEU continuing education credits with an accredited academic institution	Spring 2012	PA AAP	OCDEL
Develop the operational protocol for delivery of the educational sessions	Spring 2012	PA AAP	OCDEL
Recruit and train a network of primary care providers and Early Intervention specialists to deliver the curriculum	Spring 2012	PA AAP	OCDEL
Market the educational sessions to primary care practices, health systems, managed care organizations	Spring 2012 through Spring 2015	PA AAP	OCDEL
Monitor the delivery of educational sessions	Spring 2012 through Spring 2015	PA AAP	OCDEL

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Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
3). Combine and refine available professional development on assessment into a comprehensive set of modules, which include on-going practice and feedback.			
Bring together a cross-sector stakeholder group to identify and research content, write modules	Spring 2012	OCDEL	PA KEY
Build modules into asynchronous web-based format	Spring 2012 through Spring 2013	OCDEL	PA KEY
Pilot comprehensive set of training modules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine pilot sample and implement pilot • Conduct evaluation after implementation of each module and at conclusion of entire set of modules Revise training modules as needed	Spring 2012, set one; full set Spring 2014	OCDEL	PA KEY
Full-scale implementation including marketing of training modules	Spring 2014	OCDEL	PA KEY

(2): Domains and Standards of the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework

September 2011



KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-K ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Approaches to Learning

- Constructing Knowledge
- Organizing and Understanding Knowledge
- Applying Knowledge
- Learning Through Experience

Cognitive Thinking and General Knowledge: Mathematical Thinking

- Numbers, Number Systems and Relationships
- Computation and Estimation
- Measurement and Estimation
- Geometry

Cognitive Thinking and General Knowledge: Scientific Thinking

- Biological Sciences
- Physical Sciences
- Environment and Ecology

Health, Wellness and Physical Development

- Health and Safety Practices
- Physical Activity: Gross Motor Coordination
- Concepts, Principles and Strategies of Movement: Fine Motor Coordination

Language and Literacy Development

- Learning to Read Independently
- Reading, Analyzing and Interpreting Text
- Reading, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature
- Types and Quality of Writing
- Speaking and Listening

Social and Emotional Development

- Self-concept/identity
- Self-regulation
- Pro-social Relationships with Adults
- Pro-social Relationships with Peers

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INFANT/TODDLER ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Approaches to Learning

- Constructing Knowledge
- Organizing, Understanding and Applying Knowledge
- Learning Through Experience

Cognitive Thinking

- Mathematical Thinking and Expression
- Scientific Thinking

Health, Wellness and Physical Development

- Health and Safety Practices
- Physical Activity : Gross Motor Coordination
- Concepts, Principles and Strategies of Movement: Fine Motor Coordination

Language and Literacy Development

- Literacy Development
- Language Development

Social and Emotional Development

- Self-concept/identity
- Self-regulation
- Pro-social Relationships with Adults
- Pro-social Relationships with Peers

INITIAL OUTLINE OF ASSESSMENT TRAINING MODULES

To be reviewed and refined by key stakeholder group

- **Module 1: Introduction to the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework**
Essential Questions: What is the purpose of reporting child outcomes? How does the framework relate to the previous reporting requirements? How does the framework work across the birth to Kindergarten continuum? How do I report outcomes into the data system?
- **Module 2: What is assessment?**
Essential Questions: What is assessment? What are the different types of assessment? What are the purposes for assessment? How is assessment linked to standards, curriculum, and instruction?
- **Module 3: Child Assessment: Screening**
Essential Questions: What is screening? What should I consider when selecting a valid and reliable tool (culturally, linguistically, developmentally appropriate/ what tools do you want/ cost/ training/ effective implementation)? What do I do with this information?
- **Module 4: Child Assessment: Formative assessment/ Part 1**
Essential Questions: What are the similarities/ differences between direct assessment and authentic assessment? What should I consider when selecting a valid and reliable tool (culturally, linguistically,

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developmentally appropriate/ what tools do you want/ cost/ training/ effective implementation)? Which tools can I choose from, i.e., which measures have been aligned to the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework?

- Module 5: Child Assessment: Formative assessment/ Part 2

Essential Questions: What are the components of authentic assessment (observation, work samples, checklists, matrices, etc.)? How do I complete an objective observation? How do I choose work samples? What information should I include with a work sample? When and how should I complete skills checklists/matrices? How do I organize collected information? What do I do with the collected information?

- Module 6: Introduction to Program Assessment

Essential Questions: In what ways can “quality” be defined? Why is it important to assess the quality of my program? What should I consider when selecting a valid and reliable tool (culturally, linguistically, developmentally appropriate/ what tools do you want/ cost/ training/ effective implementation)? What measures of program quality are available (ERS, CLASS™, PAS, etc.)?

- Module 7: Environment Rating Scales

Essential Questions: What rating scales are available? Who should complete an assessment? What areas are assessed? How does the scoring work? What do scores mean? How can I use this tool to improve classroom quality? How can I use this too to improve overall program quality? How are the results entered into the statewide data system and how are these results used at the state level?

- Module 8: Additional Measures of Program Quality

Essential Questions? What assessments are available to measure teacher effectiveness? How can these tools be used to improve overall program quality? What additional measures are available to assist program administrators to make informed decisions about quality improvement?

- Module 9: Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS)/ Part 1

Essential Questions: What are the components of a comprehensive assessment system? How do these components work together within the system to help me make informed decisions at the child level, program level, community level, state level?

- Module 10: Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) Part 2

Essential Questions: How is information gained from the CAS shared with stakeholders (families, community, and policy maker)? What is my role in sharing this information? What resources are available to support my effective use of CAS?

(C)(3): Identifying and Addressing the Needs of Children with High Needs to Improve School Readiness

Pennsylvania has chosen not to respond to this selection criterion.

(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--
 - o 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,
 - o 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.

(C)(4): Engaging and Supporting Families

Note: for the reviewer’s convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state’s plan for engaging and supporting families, described below, fits the federal requirements of a “high-quality” plan. Appendix (C)(1)-1 provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan. Appendix (C)(4)-1: Gears for Family Engagement provides a graphic depiction of the state’s family engagement system.

Family engagement is a crucial element in the education of our youngest children, especially for families of children with high needs. Family engagement in their children’s learning is critical to improving learning outcomes. Many families, however, particularly those with high needs, face barriers to engagement and require additional support from states and providers to make informed choices about their children’s early learning. In addition, providers need support and training to increase their capacity to meet the needs of families with high-needs children. Pennsylvania’s overarching goal for family engagement is to connect the systems in high need communities that support strong partnerships between families, communities, and schools to promote children’s school readiness and achievement.

(a): The Progression of Culturally and Linguistically-Appropriate Standards for Family Engagement

The state’s solid foundation of support for family engagement includes its Learning Standards for Early Childhood, program standards, professional development system, community-based efforts and materials, resources and data. Pennsylvania’s commitment to partner with families is evident in the extent to which early education and development programs have integrated the state’s family support and engagement philosophies, approaches, and strategies into their policies and requirements. Each level of these learning standards includes a “Partnerships with Families and Community” domain. Learning standards for Infants/Toddlers, Pre-K, and Kindergarten [included in Appendices (A)(1)-4a, 4b, and 4c, beginning on page 12 of the appendices] are comprehensive and inclusive of all families, ages, and state-funded program types – including Keystone STARS, PA Pre-K Counts, Early Intervention, Head Start, Home Visiting, and Family Support programs.

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Pennsylvania requires programs to use the standards as the basis for program curriculum. The standards recognize the impact parents and other influential adults have on program design, children's goal planning, and classroom and home activities.

The state has produced a series of five family-friendly companion documents for the standards in both English and Spanish, the two most frequently-spoken languages in Pennsylvania [Appendices (A)(1)-9a and 9b, which begin on page 221 of the appendices, provide samples of these documents]. School districts and county early learning teams also use these guides as a link between preschool and Kindergarten.

The state's child care licensing regulations require parent communication, assure parents access to their children's child care programs, and require that families receive a child service report twice a year that includes information related to a child's strengths, the next developmental milestones and how families can help their child at home. In addition, parent involvement is required in PA Pre-K Counts and Keystone STARS. STARS tiered program standards require increasing levels of parent engagement at each successive STAR level, as demonstrated in the Keystone STARS Performance Standards in Appendices (A)(1)-6a, 6b, and 6c, which begin on page 159 of the appendices. Early learning and development programs are monitored based upon these program standards and engage in continuous quality improvement efforts with support from our professional development and technical assistance system.

(b): Increasing the Number and Percentage of Early Childhood Educators Trained to Implement Family Engagement Strategies

Pennsylvania offers its teachers learning opportunities through varied professional development events and modalities. Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System, which is its early childhood training registry, lists 615 instructors that have identified family engagement as an area of training expertise. In fiscal year 2010-11, nearly 600 professional development events were offered on family engagement.

Since 2006, Pennsylvania has focused on the use of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors framework, which focuses on five research-based Protective Factors that give parents what they need to parent effectively, even under stress. The framework compiles the protective factors into a meaningful and easy-to-understand format for teachers, providers, and administrators of Early Learning and Development programs to use when engaging high-needs

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families. In 2010, Pennsylvania developed and implemented a train-the-trainer module based on this framework and disseminated materials and training across the state to over 40 instructors, who in turn offered a minimum of two training sessions in each of the state's six regions. In 2010-2011, nearly 800 providers across service systems were trained in the framework. In addition, the state's technical assistants who work with early education and development programs have integrated the framework in their work and the newly-formed Pennsylvania Infant/Toddler Specialist Network now uses the framework inform its early learning programs.

(c): Promoting Family Support and Engagement Statewide:

Pennsylvania employs a statewide Special Assistant who works across early learning programs to strengthen family engagement efforts and provides support to families through the Parent Advisory Committee of the Early Learning Council. In addition, Pennsylvania's family support and home visitation programs use a family-centered approach, which recognizes family strengths and builds upon relationships with families to achieve optimal child and family outcomes. In this approach, families actively participate in developing policies, designing and evaluating programs, and selecting services, which are community-based and build upon informal supports and resources.

In Pennsylvania, family engagement is also at the core of all Early Intervention services, Early Intervention providers are required to support family participation by helping families to identify their priorities and become lead team members in the planning and delivery of services for their children. The Early Intervention team consults with each family and identified caregivers to ensure supports and services are individualized, coordinated, and comprehensive.

Pennsylvania has made great progress in promoting the importance and use of family support and engagement efforts throughout the state by leveraging existing resources within partner agencies, including:

- Pennsylvania's unique and highly-successful county-based Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN) Teams, which include local stakeholders and promote grassroots efforts in family engagement and parent involvement in decision making. These teams also provide training and support for families as their children transition into early care and development programs, preschools, and Kindergarten and they develop cross-sector partnerships to

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coordinate transition strategies within their counties. Appendix (C)(4)-2: LEARN Teams, on page 436 of the appendices, provides a listing of these teams.

- Evidence-based home visitation programs, which are administered by multiple state departments in Pennsylvania and supported by strong working relationships with the models' national offices. These programs prioritize effective family support and engagement to build strong and sustainable relationships between the families and their home visitors and to promote positive outcomes for children and families. Appendix (C)(4)-3: PA Home Visiting Programs, on page 438 of the appendices, provides a listing of these programs.
- Services and supports from agencies supported by Children's Trust Fund (CTF), a child abuse and neglect prevention grant program, which has focused its grant making to support center-based and home-based family child care providers in using the Strengthening Families Protective Factors framework. This framework is designed to build stronger relationships with the families of the children in their care, thus reducing the incidence of child abuse and neglect. Grantee agencies help child care providers learn more about this framework and implement concrete strategies that incorporate the framework's five Protective Factors in their work with children and caregivers. In Pennsylvania, 35 CTF grantees across the state have provided services and supports to nearly 6,000 child care providers to date. Grantees have also disseminated information about the importance of family support and engagement to the broader early care and education field, including family and neighbor providers.
- Resource and referral assistance to high-need families, provided through Local Child Care Information Services (CCIS) agencies and through the state's a web-based provider search feature, which enables all families to locate early education and development programs that match their specific needs. Print materials are available (and also posted online) for families on a wide variety of topics including: how to choose a quality Early Learning and Development program, understanding Keystone STARS and information on how to access and navigate Early Intervention services. Web based resources and materials offer information in areas such as literacy, physical and mental health and nutrition and information related to all of our Early Learning and Development programs is available.

Pennsylvania also has a wealth of information, data, and resources families can access to learn more about programs and supports and to learn about their child's growth and development. In

addition to information and data for families use, communities and providers have access to information and data to assist in their planning efforts to engage families, including the Risk and Reach report [a summary of the report is included in Appendix (A)(1)-3 on page 10 of the appendices], which offers annually-updated demographic information by county about the children and families in Pennsylvania and the services they are accessing and an annual cross-program Family Survey [see Appendix (A)(1)-11 on page 234 of the appendices]. This data shows that families have strong connections with early learning providers but need stronger connections with community resources and other families for support. Responses also indicate that OCDEL's programs are well-received and high quality, as well as indicating families continue to seek additional opportunities to develop relationships with their children's teachers.

(d): Gaps in Family Engagement

Early Learning and Development programs that provide services to families with high-needs children need additional support to develop effective approaches to family engagement and become better partners with families in supporting their children's Early Learning and Development. The diverse families served by these programs need greater access to high-quality and culturally-appropriate literacy materials to better support their children's emerging and developing literacy skills and help ensure their children are ready for school.

(e): Goals for Family Engagement

Pennsylvania is in a unique position to strengthen and coordinate these varied grassroots efforts, capitalizing on its well-established foundation of community relationships and existing strengths. Through the proposed RTT-ELC project, Pennsylvania will build on this foundation, and develop a multidimensional, cross-systems approach to creating partnerships between schools and High Needs Families to promote children's school readiness and achievement. The goals of this effort are to:

- 1). Increase the effectiveness of Local Community Systems to: a). ensure an integrated approach to family engagement that identifies and effectively meets the needs of high-need families and children, and b). increase provider awareness, knowledge and attitudes around family support and engagement philosophies and family-centered approaches across service systems.

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- 2). Increase families' access to high-quality and culturally-appropriate literacy materials by providing books to families through the expansion of two highly-successful initiatives: a) Pennsylvania's One Book program, which distributes books and literacy information to early learning programs across the commonwealth and b) Pennsylvania Reach Out and Read, the nationally-recognized cross-sector collaborative program between health care providers and educators.
- 3). Increase the effectiveness and accessibility of state Web-Based Resources to: a). help families identify needs and easily access resources that meet those needs, increase parents' capacity to promote quality early learning for their young children, and help families make more-informed choices about their child's early learning, b). build the capacity of individuals working with high-needs families to engage families in their children's early learning, c). build parent demand for quality early learning opportunities and enable them to educate their local communities and leaders about the need for quality early learning opportunities locally, d). increase public access to information about quality early learning programs, including provider outcomes and results, and e). support public access to and evaluation of information about provider quality.

(f): Key Activities/Next Steps

Below is a summary of the steps the state will take to create this statewide approach. The C4 High Quality Plan, provided as item (C)(4)(d) in the evidence for this criterion, lists specific details for these activities and provides a timeline that includes benchmarks and staff responsibilities for each activity.

(1): Increase the Effectiveness of Local Community Family Engagement Systems

- a). Develop and Implement the Family Engagement Project: OCDEL convenes community-centered teams to design a statewide family engagement strategy based upon the state's Learning Standards for Early Childhood and Early Learning and Development program standards and the Strengthening Families framework. The teams will consist of representatives from family-based support agencies in high-risk communities. This strategy will help local teams develop and implement community-based processes and tools to engage the families of high-needs children in their area. The teams will also develop and implement a formalized community-based family engagement assessment process, a key component of which will be creating a web-based

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Community Scorecard that will provide increased public access to a comprehensive collection of information (see 2b, below). The framework, processes, tools, and materials developed through the project will create a sustainable statewide system of supports for high-need families and the programs that serve them.

OCDEL will provide support and coaching during the implementation of these plans, including: providing access to an online learning community specific to family engagement, offering follow-up training, technical assistance and coaching, and developing additional products and resources as needed (e.g., translated documents). When completed, the Family Engagement Project will have created both a sustainable statewide strategy for family engagement and models and tools that be used beyond the life of the grant. These models and tools include ways to involve multi-level stakeholders in integrated community-based approaches to family engagement, effective ways to assess family engagement at the community level, effective strategies for working with families of high-need children, and products and materials to support family engagement. The opportunity for mentoring relationships within communities will increase the capacity to promote culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies to more fully engage High Needs Families.

b). **Expand the Number and Capacity of Strengthening Families Instructors:** As indicated earlier, a total of 40 instructors have been trained to support providers' understanding of the Strengthening Families framework. These instructors have focused on helping programs integrate the Strengthening Families' Five Protective Factors work with children and caregivers. By expanding the Strengthening Families' Train-the-Trainer system to include a broader representation of participants, OCDEL will increase provider awareness, knowledge and attitudes around family support and engagement philosophies and approaches across service systems. OCDEL will target for inclusion representatives of various service systems (including child welfare, mental health, health & education, faith-based, etc.) and focus on services that support Children with High Needs (including English Language Learners, low-income children, homeless children, children in foster care, and children in rural areas). This process will build the capacity of families to parent effectively, develop meaningful relationships with their children, and support their children's education and development.

(2): Increase Families' Access to High-Quality and Culturally-Appropriate Literacy Materials

With RTT-ELC funding, OCDEL plans to expand its One Book Every Young Child Campaign. Since 2006, Pennsylvania's Commonwealth libraries have partnered with local early childhood providers to bring high quality books and supplementary activities to the children enrolled in those programs. Head Start and Keystone STARS programs have benefited from local dignitaries' visits to the facilities during which the dignitaries read to the children and leave copies of the selected book behind for children to access. Resource guides accompany the book. The guides provide teachers and families with extension activities and educational information about literacy and its link to school readiness and learning.

Pennsylvania will expand this popular program by providing the annual book selection and corresponding take-home resources to every child in the state's Head Start programs and homeless shelters and to children in early intervention and public Pre-Kindergarten programs.

The book selection and information about literacy learning and its connection to school success will also be offered to families in high-needs areas, (e.g., high-poverty pockets in rural and urban settings, the foster care settings, and public housing) and to families who apply for child care subsidies or who visit health clinics. Pennsylvania will also complete translations of One Book selections so that families can own copies of the books in their home language. In addition, to help the One Book Campaign "come alive" for families, the state will design and disseminate museum-quality traveling trunks containing standards-based activities that are adaptable for all ages and abilities.

With RTT-ELC funding, OCDEL plans to provide thousands of children in Pennsylvania access to the Reach Out and Read program, shown to significantly increase language comprehension skills and families' engagement in reading aloud. Fourteen independent research evaluations have shown that children participating in Reach Out and Read have higher receptive vocabulary scores. Preschool age children in the program have vocabularies and comprehension levels that are six months ahead of their nonparticipating peers. Parents who have participated in the program are four times more likely to read aloud to their children regularly than parents who haven't; non-English speaking families who have participated are 10 times more likely to read aloud to their children.

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OCDEL will purchase thousands of brand-new, culturally and age-appropriate books for low-income children; train members of the primary care health centers on the standardized Reach Out and Read methodology; recruit additional volunteers and transform each waiting room into a literacy-rich environment. Reach Out and Read literacy materials will include “reading tip” bookmarks for parents and their children and developmental milestones of early literacy handouts for parents and medical providers.

In addition, parents, particularly those from high-needs communities, will leave each appointment with an understanding of the developmental, social, and academic benefits of sharing books with their children. Appendix (C)(4)-4: Reach Out and Read Research, on page 443 of the appendices, provides the research that demonstrates this program’s effectiveness. Appendix (C)(4)-5: PA One Book Distribution, on page 445 of the appendices, provides the state’s book distribution list to date.

(3): Increase the Effectiveness of Web-Based Resources for Family Engagement

a). Develop and Implement the Early Learning GPS Web-Based Tool: Families don’t always know how to ensure quality learning experiences for their children. According to a 2011 survey of parents and CCIS agencies, many families don’t know which resources to trust or what questions to ask to determine program quality levels. Consequently, they use their comfort level with a program as a proxy for program quality. OCDEL plans to develop an Early Learning GPS (Guiding Parents Smoothly) tool to help provide parents and families with information about their children’s early learning.

The GPS will help families identify the resources they need and provide them with information that will help them informed choices, including information about health, safety/security, child development, and choosing an early learning program. The GPS will also include a “find your child care match” app for computers, iPhones, and iPads that will help parents find programs that meet their priorities. OCDEL will develop booklets, discussion guides, and training modules to help individuals working with families guide those families through the GPS and have meaningful conversations about promoting early learning.

b). Develop a Web-Based Community Scorecard: Pennsylvania will develop a web based Community Scorecard to provide relevant community level information about the status of

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young children and the programs and professionals that serve them. The Scorecard, available to the general public, will provide information relevant to family members, community planning organizations and leaders, policy-makers, and schools, including: types of Early Learning and Development programs available each community, program participation in Keystone STARS, the qualifications of program staff, community risk factors, the size and diversity of the child population, and aggregate assessment and outcome information for children birth through third grade.

The Community Scorecard will offer family members outcome data from the K-Entry Inventory and 3rd Grade State Standardized Test Scores when selecting an early learning program. Parents will be able to make early learning choices based on early learning programs' ability to prepare children for school success. Community planners, policy-makers and schools will also be able to use this information to identify opportunities and challenges related to program access and child outcome gaps.

(g): Evidence for (C)(4)

(C)(4)(a)(1): Progression of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Family Engagement Standards -

The state's progression of culturally- and linguistically-appropriate family engagement standards addresses parent access, ongoing two-way communication, parent education, outreach to family members, training and support children's transitions, linkages with community supports, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development. The progression of Learning Standards for Infants/Toddlers, Pre-K, and Kindergarten is provided in Appendices (A)(1)-4a, 4b, and 4c, which begin on page 12 of the appendices. The progress of STARS performance standards for Centers, Group Homes, and Family Child Care Homes is provided in Appendices (A)(1)-6a, 6b, and 6c, which begin on page 159 of the appendices.

(C)(4)(a)(2): Documentation that Progression of Standards Enhances Family Capacity -

Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards and Program Standards, in particular the TQRIS Standards for Keystone STARS, and our certification regulations create a solid foundation of family engagement strategies and activities including: 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.

Evidence of these strategies and activities, included in our Early Learning Standards and Program standards can be found in the appendices cited in (C)(4)(a)(1), above. In addition, Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a High-Quality Family Engagement Strategy, which is included in the evidence section for Criterion (A)(1), provides further evidence of the ways in which Pennsylvania's standards enhance family capacity.

(C)(4)(b): Training and Support for Early Childhood Educators

Currently, OCDEL's PQAS system indicates the number of Professional Development Instructors who are qualified to provide training on topics related to Family Engagement. In

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addition, the number of Professional Development events that were provided related to Family Engagement and the participants for each, as well as an aggregate number of participants can be derived from the system. In FY 2009-2010 a total of 615 instructors provided professional development statewide in the area of family engagement. Nearly 600 Family Engagement professional development opportunities were provided with nearly 10,000 Early Childhood Educators participating.

OCDEL anticipates that the number of Professional Development Instructors who are qualified to provide training on topics related to Family Engagement will increase by 15 percent, adding about 100, for a total of approximately 700 instructors. While it will be expected that each instructor provide one to two professional development opportunities on Family Engagement topics, it is not possible to anticipate an unduplicated number of Early Childhood Educators that will receive this training.

The PQAS system's Core Body of Knowledge is divided into knowledge topics as well as knowledge levels. Individual Early Childhood Educators will participate in multiple Family Engagement professional development events at varying levels of instruction. We anticipate the number of instructors will continue to increase by 15% each year, thereby increasing the number of training events and participants.

(C)(4)(c): Documentation of Existing Resources to Promote Family Support and Engagement -

Pennsylvania's existing resources to promote family support and engagement, include:

- County-based Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN) Teams that include local stakeholders and supports to promote grassroots efforts in family engagement, parent involvement in decision making, and training and support for families as children transition into early care and development programs, preschools and Kindergarten. Appendix (C)(4)-2: LEARN Team Grantees, on page 436 of the appendices, provides a listing of these teams.
- Evidence-based home visitation programs, which are administered by multiple state departments in Pennsylvania and supported by strong working relationships with the models' national offices. Appendix (C)(4)-3: PA Home Visiting Programs, on page 438 of the appendices, provides a listing of these programs.

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- The Risk and Reach survey, which offers annually-updated demographic information by county about the children and families in Pennsylvania and the services they are accessing [see Appendix (A)(1)-3: OCDEL Program Reach and Risk Report Summary on page 10 of the appendices, for further information specific to the identification of high-risk areas in Pennsylvania].
- An annual cross-program Family Survey [see Appendix (A)(1)-11 on page 234 of the appendices].

(C)(4)(d): High Quality Plan for(C)(4) – Engaging and Supporting Families

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pennsylvania supports family engagement through its early learning standards, program standards, professional development system, community-based efforts and materials, resources and data, across all ELD programs. • A statewide Special Assistant works across ELD programs to strengthen family engagement efforts. • Pennsylvania’s Learning Standards for Early Childhood are comprehensive and inclusive of all families, ages, and programs. • Pennsylvania child care licensing regulations require parent communication and access. • PA Pre-K Counts and Keystone STARS include parent engagement in TQRIS system. • Pennsylvania’s early childhood training registry has 615 instructors that have identified family engagement as an area of training expertise; in fiscal year 2010-11, nearly 600 professional development events were offered on family engagement. • Pennsylvania uses the Strengthening Families Protective Factors framework and crafted a train-the-trainer module to disseminated materials and training across the state. • Pennsylvania has a family support and home visitation program system. • Early Intervention services and Early Intervention providers are required to support families’ high level of participation • Local Child Care Information Services agencies provide resource and referral assistance to High Needs Families. • Pennsylvania has a web-based provider search that enables families to ELD programs that match their specific needs.
Key Goals	<p>Overall Goal: Connect systems in High Need communities that support strong partnerships between child, family, community and school to promote children’s school readiness and achievement.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Increase the effectiveness of Local Community Systems to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a). Ensure an integrated approach to family engagement that identifies and effectively meets the needs of high-need families and children. b). Increase provider awareness, knowledge and attitudes around family support and engagement philosophies and family-centered approaches across service systems. 2). Support Families’ Access to High Quality and Culturally Appropriate Literacy Material

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Required Elements	Description of Element
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a). Increase the number of families who receive the annual One Book materials 4). b). Increase families’ access to high quality and culturally appropriate literacy materials through Pennsylvania Reach Out and Read 3). Increase the effectiveness of state Web-Based Resources to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a). guide and support families to help them identify additional resources they need and more easily access those resources; increase parents’ understanding and knowledge about promoting quality early learning for their young children; help families make more-informed choices about their child’s early learning. b). build the capacity of individuals working with high-needs families to engage families in their children’s early learning. c). build parent demand for quality early learning opportunities and enable them to educate their local communities and leaders about the need for quality early learning opportunities locally. d). increase public access to information about quality early learning programs e). increase public access to information about provider outcomes and results f). support public access and evaluation of the provider quality information provided.
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Expand Local Community Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a). Develop and Implement the Family Engagement Project b). Expand the Number and Capacity of Families Instructors 2). Support Families’ Access to High Quality and Culturally Appropriate Literacy Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a). Increase the number of high-risk children who receive a copy of the annual One-Book selection b). Increase families’ access to high quality and culturally appropriate literacy materials through Pennsylvania Reach Out and Read 3). Expand Web-Based Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a). Develop and Implement the Early Learning GPS b). Develop and implement a web-based Community Scorecard .
Rationale for Activities	<p>Family engagement, particularly for families of children with high needs, is a strong factor in improving child learning outcomes.</p> <p>Families, particularly families with high needs, face particular challenges and struggles that require additional support from states and providers.</p> <p>Families, particularly families with high needs, can benefit from targeted efforts to increase access to support and resources, guide their ability to make informed choices about their children’s early learning.</p> <p>Early literacy is a strong predictor of children’s school success. Providing families with information about ways</p>

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Required Elements	Description of Element
	<p>to share books and words with children, along with opportunities to receive books will improve learning outcomes.</p> <p>Families with high needs can benefit support that increases their participation in voice in the development of ELD systems and helps them better communicate with ELD policy-makers and program administrators.</p> <p>Providers need increased awareness and capacity to meet the needs of families with high-needs children.</p>
<p>Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented</p>	<p>1a). Family Engagement efforts will be targeted to specific high need communities, as identified through Risk and Reach Report.</p> <p>1b). Strengthening Families Train the Trainer will include participants that are representative of Pennsylvania.</p> <p>2a). One Book and accompanying resources will be disseminated in early learning development programs across the state, targeted to high need communities, as identified in the Risk and Reach report, with specific emphasis on homeless shelters, Head Start facilities, Early Intervention programs, and Child Care and Information Services offices.</p> <p>2b). Reach Out and Read will target high need communities across the Commonwealth that currently are not participating in the nationally recognized program, using a list from the National Reach Out and Read office and the Office of Child Development and Early Learning’s Risk and Reach Report to identify communities for recruitment.</p> <p>3a). The GPS will be developed at the state level with the support of the work group.</p> <p>3b). The Community Scorecard will be available statewide.</p>
<p>Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out</p>	<p>1a). Statewide framework, community assessment, and materials and resources developed will be available statewide.</p> <p>1b). Strengthening Families Train the trainer will include participants from across the state.</p> <p>2a). One Book will use build on existing successful strategies that have used the six Regional Keys’ outreach with LEARN teams to seek readers within communities who have disseminated books as they read. Surveys to community providers and data bases will be used to determine mailing lists and strategies for distribution.</p> <p>2b). The Reach Out and Read Pennsylvania team will use a model from the National Office that has been successful in 4 other states that are doing similar projects. The National Office will provide technical assistance and the Office of Child Development and Early Learning will work with existing Reach Out and Read offices in the state and with the Pennsylvania American Academy of Pediatrics offices to initiate this project.</p> <p>3a). LEARN Teams will conduct outreach in each county to raise awareness of the GPS and provide training to other individuals to use the GPS with families; those trained will share information about and use the GPS among their networks.</p>

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Required Elements	Description of Element
	<p>3a). Public forums will be organized by local LEARN teams in local communities to further raise awareness of the GPS, the importance of quality early learning and any existing needs for services.</p> <p>3a). The state will use social media/networking to publicize the online GPS and Find Your Child Care Match app.</p> <p>3b). The Community Scorecard will be available statewide.</p>
How State will address the needs of different types of ELD Programs	<p>1a and b): For both initiatives representation will include all Early Learning and Development programs, including MIECHV.</p> <p>2a and b): These initiatives will include all of Pennsylvania’s Early Learning and Development programs.</p> <p>3 a and b): The Community Scorecard will incorporate data across all OCDEL programs.</p>
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	<p>1a). The Family Engagement Project will focus on partners within High Needs communities to develop the strategies, resources and materials to engage families of High Needs children.</p> <p>2a). One Book will target dissemination of books in locations with high-needs children including homeless shelters, Head Start centers, Early Intervention programs and Child Care and Information Service agencies.</p> <p>2b). Reach Out and Read programs are housed in health care clinics that serve low income families.</p> <p>3a). Individuals who work with families with high-needs children will be provided the discussion guide, GPS booklet and trained on how to use the GPS to engage families in meaningful conversations about their child’s early learning. These may be representatives from CCIS or County Assistance Offices, WIC, pediatrician’s offices, Children, Youth and Families, homeless shelters, or domestic violence centers.</p>
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed for (C)(4)

Timeline/ Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Key Activity 1 (1a): Identification of high-needs communities to invite to Family Engagement Project.	Spring 2012	OCDEL	OCDEL
Key Activity 2 (1a): Identify a Consultant to assist in the development of a Community Assessment, Coordination of Project and Coaching of Participants and Evaluation Family Engagement Project impact.	Summer 2012	OCDEL	OCDEL

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Timeline/ Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Key Activity 3 (1a): Development of Community Assessment of family engagement.	Summer 2012	Consultant	OCDEL
Key Activity 4 (1a): Rollout of Family Engagement Project.	Fall 2012	Consultant	OCDEL
Key Activity 5 (1a): Coaching and technical assistance of Community Teams	Fall 2012 to Fall 2014	Consultant	OCDEL
Key Activity 1 (1b): Creation of resources and supports as identified through community assessment process.	Fall 2012 to Fall 2014	OCDEL	OCDEL
Key Activity 2 (1b): Adaptation of current Train the Trainer Curriculum and Toolkits of Strengthening Families Protective factors framework.	Spring 2012	OCDEL	CONSULTANT
Key Area 3 (1b): Recruitment of participants for the Strengthening Families Train the Trainer.	Spring 2012	OCDEL	CONSULTANT
Key Area 1 (2a) Develop traveling trunk materials that support the One-Book selection	Winter 2012	State Library	OCDEL
Key Area 2 (2a) Design accompanying standards-based resource guides	Winter 2012	State Library	OCDEL
Key Area 3 (2a) Expand distribution to target locations that serve high-risk children	Spring 2012	State Library	OCDEL
Key Area 4 (2a) Offer training to professionals within agencies on literacy and read-alouds	Spring 2012	State Library	OCDEL
Key Area 4 (2a) Translate the annual One-Book selection into Spanish	Spring 2012	State Library	OCDEL

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Timeline/ Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Key Area 1 (2b) Establish statewide office	Spring 2012	OCDEL	REACH OUT AND READ NATIONAL OFFICE
Key Area 2 (2b) Expand number of Reach Out and Read Sites	TO BEGIN Summer 2012-2014	REACH OUT AND READ	AAP OCDEL
Key Area 3 (2b) Train medical providers, assuring that 100 percent will have standardized training each year	Summer 2012 - 2015	REACH OUT AND READ	AAP OCDEL
Key Area 4 (2b) Select and distribute books and materials to new and existing Reach Out and Read sites	2012-2015	REACH OUT AND READ	AAP OCDEL
Key Area 5 (2b) Develop monitoring, technical assistance and site visit protocols	2012-2015	REACH OUT AND READ	AAP OCDEL
Key Area 6 (2b) Complete Evaluation	2012-2015	REACH OUT AND READ	AAP OCDEL
Key Activity 1 (3a)- develop survey questions and responses	Winter 2012	PA Key	PA KEY
Key Activity 2 (3a)- create web-based and publication versions of GPS w/discussion booklet	Summer 2012	PA Key	PA KEY
Key Activity 3 (3a) – develop and conduct training sessions on using the GPS for individuals working with families	Fall 2012	PA Key	PA KEY
Key Activity 4 (3a) – Create print TV/radio pieces to promote GPS	Fall 2012	PA Key	PA KEY
Key Activity 5 (3a) – additional video content and other resources to support the GPS	Spring 2013	PA Key	PA KEY

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Timeline/ Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Key Activity 6 (3a) – Develop “find your child care match” application	Spring 2014	PA Key	PA KEY
Key Activity 7 (3a) – public forums on GPS	Winter 2014	PA Key	PA KEY
Key Activity 8(3a) – partner with or establish PTA-type groups for early learning	Winter 2015	PA Key	PA KEY
Key Activity 1 (3b) - Expand the existing PELICAN data repository to include additional provider STARS data to support expanded data analysis capabilities for OCDEL and to enable data aggregation for the Community Scorecard.	Fall 2014	OCDEL	
Key Activity 2 (3b) - Expand the existing PELICAN data repository to include Kindergarten assessment information and 3rd grade test results to support expanded data analysis capabilities for OCDEL, and to enable data aggregation for the Community Scorecard.	Spring 2015	OCDEL	
Key Activity 3 (3b) - Configuration of the existing ad hoc reporting tool, utilizing the additional data, to expand OCDEL’s data monitoring, research and analysis capabilities.	Fall 2015	OCDEL	
Key Activity 4 (2b) - Expand the existing Provider Search to incorporate the new Community Scorecard to provide increased public access to more information on Pennsylvania’s early learning programs.	Fall 2015	OCDEL	

FOCUSED INVESTMENT AREA (D): A GREAT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION WORKFORCE

The State must address one or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D). Up to 40 points are available.

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:
 - o The Workforce Knowledge and Competencies,
 - o 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.

(D)(1): Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework & Progression of Credentials

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section of this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's workforce knowledge and competency framework and progression of credentials, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan, including a timeline with milestones. Appendix (D)(1)-1, on page 446 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

Early childhood educators who have specific preparation, knowledge, and skills in child development and early childhood education are more likely than those without such a foundation to engage in warm, positive interactions with children, offer richer language experiences, and create more high-quality learning environments that support children's learning and development, and support families' diverse needs and interests, and improve child outcomes.

Because highly-qualified educators are critical to improving children's school readiness, particularly for children with high needs, Pennsylvania implemented a comprehensive career development system, called the Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development, which includes:

- a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;
- a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with that framework, including a career lattice of credentialing opportunities, a registry data system, compensation strategies to address education attainment and retention, and professional development opportunities leading to college credit; and
- partnerships with postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers.

(a): Pennsylvania's Statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework

Pennsylvania's common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, called the Core Body of Knowledge or CBK, details what educators need to know and be able to do in order to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes. The CBK identifies seven knowledge areas critical to early childhood professional development and

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competence: 1) *Child Growth & Development*; 2) *Curriculum and Learning Experiences*; 3) *Families, Schools and Community Collaboration and Partnerships*; 4) *Child Assessment*; 5) *Communication*; 6) *Professionalism and Leadership*; and 7) *Health, Safety & Nutrition*. An eighth category identifies specific skills and knowledge for directors/administrators. (See Appendix (D)(1)-2: Core Body of Knowledge, on page 447 of the appendices).

The Core Body of Knowledge was developed and initially implemented in 2002. Since that time, the CBK has gone through several revisions to improve the framework. The latest revision better aligns the CBK with a number of existing state and national standards.⁴¹ In addition, the revisions more comprehensively describe competence related to family engagement, cultural competence and linguistic diversity, inclusive practices, positive emotional development and behavior management.

The revisions were designed to enhance teacher quality by aligning teachers' preparation with the ages and grade levels of the students they teach; to improve the knowledge, skills and abilities of all teachers to effectively provide instruction to diverse learners in inclusive classroom settings; and to meet new federal requirements for special education teachers. The revisions were informed by a work group of stakeholders including higher education faculty; educators representing Pre-Kindergarten, K-12, Early Intervention, and Head Start; Environment Rating Scale assessors; professional development and technical assistance consultants; and representatives from Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL).

Documentation of the way in which the state's CBK addresses the elements outlined in the federal definition of a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework appears in the evidence section for (D)(1), on page 221.

(b): Pennsylvania's Statewide Progression of Credential and Degrees Aligned with the Workforce Competencies Framework

Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development is a comprehensive career development system based on the National Child care Information and Technical Assistance Center (NCCIC) Early

⁴¹ These state and national standards include: Pennsylvania Department of Education Teacher Certification Guidelines (Chapter 49-2 of the PA School Code), Pennsylvania Early Learning and Development Standards (Infants and Toddlers, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Grade 1, and Grade 2), Pennsylvania Child Day Care Regulations Chapter 3270, NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs, and NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria, and the Environment Rating Scales for Early Childhood and Kindergarten.

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Childhood Professional Development Systems Framework and the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion (NPDCI) Conceptual Framework for Professional Development. The Keys to Professional Development fully aligns with the Pennsylvania Core Body of Knowledge, the state's Workforce Competencies Framework. The Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development include the core elements of both the state's framework and these national frameworks (core knowledge; access and outreach; qualifications, credentials, and pathways; and funding and quality assurance). In addition, the NPDCI framework guides Pennsylvania in ensuring a cross-sector planning and delivery approach. To date, Pennsylvania's career development system has fully addressed over 90% of the NCCIC framework elements.

A description of the elements included in Pennsylvania's career development system framework can be found in Appendix (B)(4)-1: Pennsylvania Professional Development Framework for Early Care and Education, on page 354 of the appendices. The ongoing refinement of the plan is informed by a cross-systems professional development workgroup with representation from child care, Head Start, Early Head Start, Early Intervention, Higher Education, public schools, and OCDEL. The group has been chaired by the Chair of the Education Department at a local university.

Pennsylvania's early educator career development system provides a clearly-articulated framework that both defines pathways tied to certification (leading to higher qualifications and credentials) and supports educators as they move up the Career Lattice and within the Keystone STARS. The Career Lattice defines multiple pathways for professional growth and development for early childhood and school-age educators across Early Learning and Development programs as well as public school districts, private schools, technical assistance consultants and instructors, and higher education faculty.

It identifies qualifications, education, and certification requirements for eight levels of growth, and defines the required number of early childhood credits for each level. A copy of the lattice is provided in Appendix (B)(1)-3: Career Lattice of Early Educator Credentialing, on page 345 of the appendices. Pennsylvania has developed a protocol that provides consistency across the State in identifying and calculating Early Childhood Educator core content credits to determine placement on the Career Lattice. This protocol is provided in Appendix (D)(1)-3: Early Childhood Teacher Quality on page 468 of the appendices.

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The Professional Development Record (PDR) is a companion document to the Core Body of Knowledge, intended to help educators reflect on their own knowledge relative to the CBK, plan and track education and training, and track employment. Instructors and educators are trained on how to use the CBK and PDR and all professional development offered through the Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development is aligned/coded to the CBK. These and other tools to monitor professional development, qualifications, credentials, and placement and movement on the Career Lattice are largely paper-based and/or tracked in separate databases.

(c): Engaging Postsecondary Institutions in Aligning Professional Development Opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Representatives from Pennsylvania's postsecondary institutions have been leaders on many levels in the ongoing development of the state's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. Faculty provided expertise in the revision process for the state's CBK and in alignment of the Director Credential competencies to the CBK. Thirty-six institutions are approved to offer the nine-credit Director Credential program, which aligns with the CBK. Faculty are also engaged in the development and delivery of the Early Childhood Executive Leadership Program. This program brings Early Learning and Development programs and public school administrators together for a five-day institute and counts towards continuing education requirements for both Early Learning and Development and public school administrators.

(d): Gaps in the Workforce Competencies Framework

While Pennsylvania has made great strides to develop a common statewide progression of credential and degree opportunities aligned with the CBK, the system still has several gaps that need to be filled. Many providers and policy-makers lack a comprehensive grasp of the status of the state's early learning workforce, of the link between a high-quality workforce and improved child outcomes, and of the particular importance of high quality educators for children with high needs. And despite the importance of reaching and supporting children during their earliest developmental years, the state still lacks sufficient focus on ensuring the quality and credential of Infant/Toddler Educators. Furthermore, the state has not sufficiently tapped into its higher education resources to create partnerships that will ensure the education needs of the state's Early Childhood Educators are met.

(e): Goals for the Workforce Competencies Framework

Pennsylvania's goals in addressing these gaps are:

- 1). To help providers and state-level policy decision makers a) better understand the current and ongoing status of the state's early learning educator workforce; b) better understand the relationship of workforce qualifications, pathway progression and retention to high quality programs and improved child outcomes; c) adapt policy and practice to ensure a highly qualified workforce especially in programs serving high need populations.
- 2). To increase the extent to which the career development framework and statewide progression of credentials and degrees focuses on Infant/Toddler Educators.
- 3). To increase the engagement of postsecondary institutions in helping the state comprehensively meet the career needs of a diverse early educator workforce.

(f): Key Activities/Next Steps

OCDEL has identified two key projects to reach these goals: 1). Workforce Data Systems Enhancements, and 2). Career Development Framework Enhancements. The Workforce Data Systems Enhancement project focuses on developing a comprehensive information/technology solution including a learning management system to collect early educator workforce data in a central location that is linked to the state's early childhood state data. The key activities in the Career Development Framework Enhancements project include: 1). developing an infant toddler professional development framework and pathway that include core competencies and coursework (for credit or to articulate credit) that align with the CBK and all levels of the Career Lattice; and 2). partnering with postsecondary institutions to utilize courses aligned with the CBK including developing asynchronous online versions; and develop and implement additional career advising strategies to increase Career Lattice participation by underserved educator populations as identified in the Pennsylvania Program Reach and Risk Report 2011.

(1): Workforce Data Systems Enhancements

For nearly ten years, Pennsylvania has had a data collection system, the Pennsylvania Keys to Quality Registry, that consists of three interconnected registries: a professional development registry, an instructor registry, and a workforce registry.

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- The professional development registry is a database of professional development opportunities offered by instructors approved through the Pennsylvania Quality Assurance System (PQAS). Instructors use the registry to award credit to educators. Individual educators use it to register for professional development events; once their attendance is verified, information is entered into their personal professional development history.
- The instructor registry is a listing of PQAS-approved instructors. Instructor approval is aligned with the CBK. Pennsylvania is currently enhancing these two registries to improve accountability, highlight required PD, and provide enhanced reporting features.
- The workforce registry enables early learning educators to create a user profile in order to register for PD and maintain a personal PD history. Pennsylvania's workforce registry is currently voluntary and accessible to anyone, including all Early Learning and Development programs; organizations and staff; state and regional partners; school districts; early intervention; and PD instructors.

The work proposed through the RTT-ELC project will focus on enhancing the workforce and professional development registries to create a single comprehensive registry that contains all workforce data in one central location and makes select data accessible to Early Learning and Development program directors and regional and state program administrators and partners. The registry will incorporate data elements that are currently compiled on paper. Enhancing the registry will ensure that it is comprehensive, valid, and accessible and will expand OCDEL's data analysis capabilities.

Enhancements will include linkages to other existing early learning data systems in which child assessment and program level data is collected (e.g., STAR Level, Environment Rating Scale scores, and amount and type of technical assistance received). Through these linkages, the state will be able to consolidate information about professional development initiatives on a scalable web-based platform, which will enable OCDEL to analyze early educator workforce data, including assessment of early educators' learning, movement along the Career Lattice, retention in the field, and workforce competency self-assessments. This analysis will help the state ensure teacher quality and improved child outcomes for high need populations and guide PD planning and continuous program improvement at individual, program, regional and state levels.

(2): Career Development Framework Enhancements

a). Professional Development Framework for Infant/Toddler Educators: Pennsylvania has made significant investments in workforce development to support a progression of credentials and degrees. These investments include: developing a 15-hour orientation for new staff, director competencies, technical assistance and professional development consultants, leadership development courses with school districts; and articulation agreements. Pennsylvania is now positioned to build on this framework to address the workforce development needs of infant toddler educators as part of the common statewide progression of credentials. Some of this work has already started:

- In 2011, OCDEL identified regional specialists to provide targeted technical assistance to and coordinate infant- and toddler-specific professional development for Early Learning and Development programs that participate in Keystone STARS.
- OCDEL created an Infant/Toddler Network to coordinate a statewide system of supports, from which programs and families can access resources.
- A workgroup is currently engaged in a strategic planning process, facilitated by ZERO TO THREE, to ensure that the state's Infant/Toddler professional development framework is aligned with the Career Lattice. The framework will increase the professional level of the workforce involved with infants, toddlers and families and improve quality of care and outcomes for infants and toddlers with high needs.

Recent changes to Pennsylvania's Teacher Certification guidelines shifted the focus to Pre-K to 4, leading many colleges to reduce or eliminate coursework specific to infants and toddlers; existing courses often do not articulate toward a four-year degree. OCDEL has targeted Infant/Toddler educators as the focus for new efforts to continue to build a continuum of degrees and credentials for all early learning educators and is developing competencies and credentials for statewide voluntary Early Intervention specialists and for home visitors. These resources will be leveraged to create a combined common statewide Infant/Toddler credentialing option. Pennsylvania's plan to develop an Infant/Toddler professional development framework will ensure consistency across program models and alignment with the state's Career Lattice.

Local postsecondary institutions have a long history of offering degrees focused on child development and family studies, and have extensive knowledge and expertise the state can

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leverage as it works to develop its proposed Professional Development Framework for Infant/Toddler Educators. These postsecondary institutions will provide guidance and technical assistance to the state as it works to:

- Define alignment of Infant/Toddler career pathway along the career lattice and to define competencies for Infant/Toddler educators and implementation strategy;
- Identify the infant toddler content to be included as part of or as an add-on endorsement to the Director Credential;
- Developing infant toddler specific professional development content for new staff orientation, community-based workshops, and for college courses.
- Provide outreach to postsecondary institutions regarding articulation to credit.

b). Partnerships with Postsecondary Institutions: OCDEL plans to develop partnerships with local postsecondary institutions to align courses with the Core Body of Knowledge, including developing asynchronous online courses; and develop and implement additional career-advising strategies to increase Career Lattice participation by underserved educator populations as identified in the Pennsylvania Reach and Risk Report 2011.

Pennsylvania has implemented a number of strategies to engage postsecondary institutions in supporting educator attainment of credentials and degrees including:

- In 2008, OCDEL, the Pennsylvania Key, and the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education worked with two- and four-year postsecondary institutions offering degrees in early childhood education or child development to develop program-to-program articulation agreements. The initiative created articulation pathways and improved transfer opportunities for students and their academic credits. There are currently 56 early childhood program-to-program articulation agreements.
- The Gate Opener initiative, funded through private foundations encouraged postsecondary institutions to focus on sustainable projects to support early learning educators as they juggle full time employment and returning to school for a Bachelors degree or Early Childhood Education certification. Twenty-nine institutions participated in the project over a three year period with over 1000 educators impacted. A survey identifying barriers clearly supported the need for one-on-one counseling, advising and mentoring.

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The state has developed professional development modules for early childhood educators and directors, which are aligned with the Core Body of Knowledge, to support movement in Keystone STARS and the Career Lattice. These modules, however, are not consistently used by postsecondary faculty because logistical challenges such as faculty availability. Future work proposed through the RTT-ELC project will focus on developing stronger partnerships with postsecondary institutions to enable them to better incorporate the modules into existing coursework, including online option. OCDEL will work to increase awareness of the modules through webinars and other focused outreach strategies.

Additionally, enhanced partnerships with postsecondary institutions will include new strategies to move the instructor-led, in-person module content to an asynchronous online platform offering credit. These courses will support renewals for Directors, Child Development Associate, and School-Age Care Credentials and may lead to credits towards an Associate Degree. Funds from the RTT-ELC project will support the work of postsecondary institutions to put the modules online for credit at their institution, with articulation agreements to apply these credits to other institutions. The partnership will allow for reduced tuition for early educators in return for funding of course development. RTT-ELC funds will also enable Pennsylvania to develop asynchronous self-learning tools to help educators better understand the Pennsylvania Keys to Quality Professional Development Framework including the Core Body of Knowledge, the accompanying Professional Development Record, and the Pennsylvania Career Lattice. These tools will allow faculty to view content and assign modules to students at any time in the semester. Funds will also allow OCDEL to develop an online community and online newsletter, webinars, tools, and other resources designed specifically for postsecondary institutions.

The Gate Opener Project has also identified tools to support one-on-one advising to reduce barriers to career advancement. RTT-ELC funds will enable Pennsylvania to develop Career Advising Competencies for Early Learning and Development administrators, professional development instructors, technical assistance consultants, and postsecondary institutions to use to help educators determine what professional development will allow them to enter or advance in the field. The Career Advising Competencies will align with the revised Core Body of Knowledge. A career resource guide will outline the many diverse pathways available to early learning educators to advance in the field. The guide will identify potential internships as a mechanism to recruit students specifically to support children in high-risk communities.

(g): Evidence for (D)(1)

(1): The State's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Framework

The Pennsylvania Core Body of Knowledge is the state's framework of Workforce Knowledge and Competencies. All early childhood and school-age professionals working with children ages birth to 12, regardless of role or setting, are required to master the Core Body of Knowledge (CBK). The CBK is based on a number of guiding principles:

- Levels are defined so that career advancement does not mean movement away from direct work with children.
- Each professional role has room to develop from entry to mastery in knowledge base and competence (there are master-level teachers and entry-level directors).
- All early childhood roles and settings are included in the profession and the CBK is relevant in all settings (child care centers, child care homes, Head Start, pre-K programs, schools serving children birth through age 8, nursery schools, early intervention programs, faith-based programs and school-age programs serving children up to age 12).
- Developing and sustaining positive relationships are the foundation for applying the knowledge base and for demonstrating the core competencies. These relationships which include adult to child, child to child, professional to parent, professional to professional and professional to community are essential to the coordination of each child's learning experiences, opportunities and outcomes.
- Understanding and application of the social and cultural context of children and their families is essential to the creation of developmentally and individually appropriate learning environments and developing positive relationships.
- Practitioner movement through the early learning career lattice is practitioner driven and based on how one chooses to progress, current levels of education and experience, as well as current work settings and plans for future career advancement. Whether the practitioner chooses to grow within a particular role or grow into the next role, growth is determined by the practitioner using the CBK and PDR as supportive documents to help chart a course of professional development.
- The CBK represents a set of core knowledge statements along with what a practitioner should be able to do with the knowledge at three different levels of competence. The

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knowledge statements only provide an outline of the core knowledge areas, which are to be used by instructors and faculty to develop educational experiences with greater depth and breadth in a specific content area. Further, the competency statements illustrate only some of the cognitive and performance skills that are expected of professionals who have acquired the core body of knowledge. Given the continuum of development, practitioners learn how to relate to children based on the children's developmental needs and readiness for the next steps of learning. Practitioners should also be able to generalize and creatively apply their increasing knowledge.

- The Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards provide guidance for practitioners about many of the CBK knowledge areas and competencies.

A full copy of Pennsylvania's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Framework appears in Appendix (D)(1)-2: PA Core Body of Knowledge, on page 447 of the appendices. Appendix (D)(1)-4: Educational Requirements for Select Early Childhood Programs in Pennsylvania, on page 478 of the appendices, outlines educational requirements at each Keystone STAR Level.

(2): Documentation that the Framework Addresses Required Elements and is Designed to Improve Child Outcomes

Pennsylvania's Workforce and Knowledge and Competency Framework is called the Core Body of Knowledge (CBK). The CBK addresses the elements outlined in the definition of Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and is designed to promote children's learning and development and improve outcomes as evidenced below.

a). The Core Body of Knowledge is Evidence-Based

The CBK comprehensively identifies what early childhood practitioners need to know and be able to do according to evidence-based, best practice. Incorporating state and national principles, which target quality programming for children and excellence in professional development opportunities for practitioners, the CBK coherently links and aligns with standards recognized by the following early childhood organizations:

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children's Professional Preparation Standards and Accreditation Criteria;
- National Council for Professional Recognition Child Development Associate Credential Standards;
- The Head Start Performance Standards;
- Pennsylvania Keystone STARS Standards (QRIS);
- Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards (Infants and Toddlers, Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade);
- Pennsylvania Department of Education Teacher Preparation Guidelines Pre-K-4; and
- Pennsylvania Pre- K Counts Standards.

The CBK competencies enumerate key learning content areas, including Child Growth and Development; Curriculum and Learning Experiences; Families, Schools and Community Collaboration and Partnerships; Child Assessment; Communication; Professionalism and Leadership; and Health, Safety and Nutrition, as well as Director/Administrator competencies in Program Administration and Organization.

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b). The Core Body of Knowledge Incorporates Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, Child Development, Health, and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Family Strategies

Each key learning content area of the Pennsylvania’s CBK includes three levels – understanding, application, and analyzing and evaluating. Levels are based on Bloom’s classification of cognitive skills. The CBK incorporates all areas stated above throughout all Competency Levels and Knowledge Areas and contains the following knowledge areas specific to part (b) of the federal definition of “Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.” Areas found in the Pennsylvania CBK specific to part (b) are: Child Growth and Development; Families, Schools and Community Collaborative Partnerships; Child Assessment; and Health, Safety and Nutrition.

Specific examples include:

Definition Element	Pennsylvania Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) Competency Statement	CBK Pg. #
Early Learning & Development Standards	<u>Child Development (competency K1C2.15)</u> addresses supportive practices in the Early Learning Standards and adapting them based on the child’s developmental needs.	Page 6
	<u>Curriculum and Learning Experiences (competency K2C2.17)</u> addresses employing program elements of the curriculum to provide content as defined in the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards and the Guiding Principles.	Page 10
	<u>Program Administrations and Organization (competency D1C3.7)</u> addresses adopting and evaluating appropriateness of program curriculum in terms of Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards and the Standards Aligned System.	Page 36
Comprehensive Assessment Systems	<u>Curriculum and Learning Experiences (competencies K2C3.8)</u> addresses using assessment tools (ERS, TPOT, TPITOS, CLASS™, ELCO) to modify and continuously improve the learning environment.	Page 8
	<u>Child Assessment (competencies K4C1.13 - 3.13)</u> implementing & evaluating informal and formal (work & play samples, digital cameras and videos, checklists) assessments to monitor children’s learning and development and <u>competencies (K4C1.22-3.22)</u> which address defining, selecting, using and analyzing age, individual and developmentally appropriate strategies to prepare children to meet identified educational outcomes.	Page 20 Page 21
Culturally & Linguistically appropriate strategies to work with families.	<u>Communication (competencies K3C1.3-3.3)</u> addresses meaningful opportunities and practices (formal & informal) to engage families from diverse backgrounds in becoming involved in discussions about their child’s development and learning; and <u>competencies (K3C1.8-3.8 and 3.9)</u> address programming to support families and children with concerns, stressors or in crisis due to living in poverty, disabilities, domestic violence, mental health needs, learning English as a second language, or family changes (birth, death, loss of job, military deployment, incarceration, divorce, homelessness, substance abuse.). <u>Competencies K5C1.2 - 3.2</u> address defining, using and evaluating effective communication through spoken, written or sign language and/or assistive devices which respect family values, cultures and developmental appropriateness.	Page 14 Page 15 Page 22

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Definition Element	Pennsylvania Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) Competency Statement	CBK Pg. #
	<i>Professionalism and Leadership</i> (competencies K6C1.13-3.13) address defining, demonstrating and transmitting cross cultural knowledge, skills and disposition in ethical, collaborative ways to improve learning outcomes for children that consider; race, ethnicity, language, religion, gender, full range of ability and/or disability, socio-economic status and sexual orientation.	Page 30

c). The Core Body of Knowledge Includes Early Mathematics and Literacy Development and Effective Instructional Practices

Pennsylvania’s CBK incorporates early mathematics and literacy at all Competency Levels across three Knowledge Domains, specifically as illustrated in the examples below:

Definition Element	Pennsylvania Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) Competency Statement	CBK Pg. #
Early Mathematics development & instruction; Literacy development & instruction	<i>Curriculum and Learning Experiences</i> (competencies K2C1.19 -3.19 addresses curriculum content and lessons based on research, child development and the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards and include mathematical thinking, expression, early math foundations, exploring and problem solving, language and literacy development.	Page 10
	<i>Child Development</i> (competencies K1C1.5 -3.5) addresses identifying, using knowledge and analyzing the appropriateness of evidence-based instructional practices that include cognition, language and literacy.	Page 5
	<i>Communication</i> (competencies K5C1.10-3.10) addresses summarizing, demonstrating and planning programs in support of building vocabulary, making connections to prior knowledge, enhancing concept development, facilitating higher level thinking and valuing the home language.	Page 25

d). The Core Body of Knowledge Incorporates Effective Use of Data

Pennsylvania’s incorporates the use of data to guide instruction and program improvement across all Competency Levels in four Knowledge Areas as illustrated in some specific examples below:

Definition Element	Pennsylvania Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) Competency Statement	CBK Pg. #
Effective use of data to guide instruction and program improvement;	<i>Curriculum and Learning Experiences</i> (competencies K2C1.2-3.2) which addresses applying research based practices and evaluating environments, instruction and learning experiences to meet the needs of all learners and to modify for continuous quality improvement.	Page 7
	<i>Communication</i> (competencies K4C1.6-3.6, 7 & 8) address arranging and modifying the environment to authenticate evaluation techniques; implementing assessments and synthesizing information to gather valid information through multiple dimensions, sources, instruments and points; and using this information to improve teaching and child outcomes.	Page 19

Definition Element	Pennsylvania Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) Competency Statement	CBK Pg. #
	<u>Professionalism and Leadership</u> (competencies K6C1.6-3.6) which addresses defining, reflecting and analyzing assessment data to modify and improve environments for children and use as a tool for continuous quality improvement.	Page 27

e). The Core Body of Knowledge Includes Effective Behavior Management Strategies

Pennsylvania’s CBK incorporates behavior management across all Competency Levels and six Knowledge Domains, specifically as illustrated in the examples below:

Definition Element	Pennsylvania Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) Competency Statement	CBK Pg. #
Effective behavior management strategies	<u>Child Growth and Development</u> (competencies K1C1.2-3.2) addresses identifying, applying and analyzing principles and concepts of child development theories in working with children including, Psycho-social, Social-cultural and Behavioral theories.	Page 4
	<u>Curriculum and Learning Experiences</u> (competencies K2C1-3.5, 6, 7 & 8) address identifying, implementing, guiding and analyzing strategies to help children with self-regulation, social problem solving, positive, appropriate, acceptable behavior, conflict mediation, cooperation and collaboration.	Page 8
	<u>Program Administration and Organization</u> (competencies D2C2.3-3.3) addresses documenting, communicating and evaluating ways in which environment and curriculum support play and enhance children’s connectedness, pro-social development and foster self esteem, confidence, competence and self regulation.	Page 36

f). The Core Body of Knowledge Incorporates Feedback from Experts at Postsecondary Institutions, Other Early Learning and Development Experts, and Early Childhood Educators.

The revisions to the CBK were informed by a work group of stakeholders including early childhood education faculty from state and private higher education institutions, Pre-Kindergarten, public school, early intervention, Head Start, environment rating scale assessors, professional development and technical assistance consultants. The rollout plan includes focus groups and presentations to various stakeholder groups in the fall to gather additional input.

(3): High Quality Plan for (D)(1) – Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a Progression of Credentials

Required Elements of a High-Quality Plan	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	<p>Pennsylvania has developed and implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a comprehensive career development system, called the Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development. • the Pennsylvania Keys to Quality Registry system, which consists of three separate registries a) a professional development registry; b) an instructor registry; c) a workforce registry. • a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, called the Core Body of Knowledge or CBK, that details what educators need to know and be able to do in order to promote children’s learning and development and improve child outcomes. • a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with its Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. This statewide progression includes a career lattice of credentialing opportunities across Early Learning and Development programs.
Key Goals	<p>The state has three goals for enhancing its work in this area:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). To help workforce providers and state-level policy decision makers to a) better understand the current and ongoing status of the state’s early learning educator workforce; b) better understand the relationship of workforce qualifications, pathway progression and retention to high quality programs and improved child outcomes; c) adapt policy and practice to ensure a highly qualified workforce especially in programs serving high need populations. 2). To increase the extent to which the career development framework focuses on infant toddler educators. 3). To increase the engagement of postsecondary institutions in helping the state comprehensively meet the career needs of a diverse early educator workforce.
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<p>Key Activities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Workforce Data Systems Enhancements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop a comprehensive information/technology solution to collect early educator workforce data and professional development data in a central location and that is linked to the state’s early childhood state data system. 2). Career Development Framework Enhancements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an infant toddler professional development framework and pathway that include core competencies and coursework (for credit or to articulate credit) that align with the Core Body of Knowledge and all levels of the

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Required Elements of a High-Quality Plan	Description of Element
	<p>Career Lattice;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnering with postsecondary institutions to utilize courses aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework including developing on line versions and • develop and implement additional career advising strategies to increase Career Lattice participation by underserved educator populations as identified in the Pennsylvania Reach and Risk Report 2011.
Rationale for Activities	<p>To effectively support the state’s efforts to improve educator quality, the workforce registry must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be more comprehensive, • consolidate independently-validated information from multiple data sources, • be fully computerized, and • include linkages to other existing early learning data systems in which child assessment and program level data is collected (including program STAR Level, environment rating scale scores, amount and type of technical assistance received). <p>To ensure the system comprehensively meets the needs of all educators, the state must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specifically address the workforce development of infant toddler educators as part of the common statewide progression of credentials. • Engage postsecondary institutions in utilizing course materials aligned with the CBK including the development of asynchronous on line courses for credit • further engage Higher Education faculty in helping the workforce navigate the Pennsylvania Career Lattice
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	Statewide
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	See timeline, below.
How State will address the needs of the different types of ELD Programs, if applicable	The Pennsylvania Career Lattice encompasses all ELD Programs and defines multiple pathways for professional growth and development for early childhood and school-age educators
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	Pennsylvania will strengthen its workforce by offering data driven professional development and supports targeted to all educators who serve children with high needs in order to improve children’s school readiness.

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Required Elements of a High-Quality Plan	Description of Element
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed for (D)(1)

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
1. Workforce Data Systems Enhancements:			
Determine the data elements needed for the professional development registry/learning management system Determine options and costs for development or purchase of necessary platform to support system	Spring 2012	PA Key	
Crosswalk workforce data collected by stakeholders in statewide workforce system (e.g. OCDEL Bureau of Certification)	Spring 2012	PA Key	
Define and implement process to assign unique educator ID for early learning educators linked to Department of Education Teacher Certification registry	Spring 2013	PA Key	OCDEL
Coordinate with Department of Education to share Teacher Certification Information with registry	Fall 2013	OCDEL, PA Key	PDE
Enhance Early Learning Data System ad hoc reporting tool to use data from workforce registry data system	Spring 2012	OCDEL	IT Vendor
Identify Educator information that is self-reported, reported by program, verified	Spring 2012	PA Key	
Identify general system requirements and business rules/functionality, user roles	Spring 2012	PA Key	
Update instructor and professional development registries to reflect CBK revisions	Fall 2012	PA Key	
Develop system for periodic, mandatory updates of workforce data by the individual. Examples: Connect individual provider demographic to facility unique identifier; professional development registry/learning management system, career lattice levels; staff qualifications; credentials; and employment information	Summer 2012 and ongoing	PA Key	

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Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Hire and seat seven people at the Regional Keys to support registry enhancements and PD system	Spring 2012	Regional Keys	
Develop an automatic system to archive inactive user records	Spring 2014	PA Key	
Develop a reporting system to assist state wide systems and Early Learning and Development programs effectively manage work force data	Winter 2014	PA Key	
Develop online system to complete CBK/PDR to self-assess knowledge aligned with knowledge areas create individual professional development plan as part of common statewide progression of credentials	Spring 2014	PA Key	
Research and design of Learning Management System	Fall 2013	PA Key	
Full implementation of Learning Management System	Spring 2015	PA Key	
Full implementation of on-line CBK/PDR	Winter 2014	PA Key	
Analyze workforce data linking staff qualifications to facility STAR level and child outcomes	Fall 2015	OCDEL	
2) Career Development Framework Enhancements			
a). Develop a Professional Development Framework for Infant/Toddler Educators			
Identify workforce through survey	Spring 2012	PA Key	
Complete scan of existing professional development and courses (infant/toddler)	Spring 2012	PA Key	
Review/coordinate efforts between Early Intervention and Home Visitors to develop competencies; lessons learned from Keystone Babies regarding staff qualifications and potential content	Spring 2012	PA Key	OCDEL
Explore opportunities for recognition of the Infant/Toddler career pathway and credential within regulations and standards	Spring 2012	OCDEL	PA Key
Define alignment of Infant/Toddler career pathway along the career lattice	Spring 2012	OCDEL	PA Key
Develop infant toddler educators competencies aligned with the CBK and implement	Winter 2013	OCDEL	PA Key/PD Vendor

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Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Define and create infant toddler professional development (include family engagement/support engagement models: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 hours needs-based (i.e. 6 hrs. for New Staff Orientation, 30 hrs. at level II of Career Lattice); • 4, 3-credit courses; • Infant/Toddler “add-on” to the director credential and implement. 	Summer 2012 – Spring 2015	OCDEL/PA	Postsecondary Institutions PD Consultants
Implementation of professional development modules	Winter 2013 and ongoing	PA Key	Regional Keys and Postsecondary Institutions
Engage postsecondary institutions in offering infant toddler coursework and articulation of course work	Summer 2012 and ongoing	OCDEL, PA Key	Institutes of Higher Education
b). Develop resources and courses for postsecondary institutes aligned with the CBK and Career Advising Strategies			
Increasing number of articulation plans statewide	2014/15	PA Key	
Career advising competencies to be used by Higher Education, Professional Development Instructors, TA Consultants, Directors	Winter 2012	PA Key	Contractor
Update and align all existing competencies to reflect current work and CBK (TA, instructor, STARS Managers)	Spring 2013	PA Key	
Develop internship opportunities outside of public school student teaching in all Early Learning and Development programs	Fall 2013	PA Key	
Develop resources for postsecondary institutes: asynchronous on line credit courses based on CBK; on-line community newsletter; webinars designed for faculty and counselors based on rollout of new initiatives and tools (2/yr.); online self-learning tools for higher education community (faculty, advisors, counselors) and one for students with assignments for exploring PA career options; and career resource guide	Spring 2012 – Fall 2015	PA Key	Contractor

(D)(2): Supporting Early Childhood Educators in Improving Knowledge, Skills & Abilities

Pennsylvania has chosen not to respond to this selection criterion.

FOCUSED INVESTMENT AREA (E): MEASURING OUTCOMES AND PROGRESS

The State must address one or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E). Up to 40 points are available.

(E)(1): Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry. (8 pages maximum)

If the State chooses to respond to this selection criterion, the State shall write its full response in the text box. 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

Describe 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).

(E)(1): Understanding the Status of Children’s Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry.

Note: for the reviewer’s convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state’s plan for understanding the status of children’s Early Learning and Development at Kindergarten entry, described below, fits the federal requirements of a “high-quality” plan. Appendix (E)(1)-1, on page 479 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

Pennsylvania has taken a number of strategic steps to understand the school readiness of its children, and is ahead of many other states in this regard. In 2008, Pennsylvania was the first state to commission an external analysis of the alignment among the state’s Learning Standards for Early Childhood, the K-12 standards, and the statewide birth-to-five assessments. OCDEL commissioned Drs. Lynn Kagan and Catherine Scott-Little, trusted leaders in the field of assessment, to conduct this study on Pennsylvania’s standards and the outcomes reporting tool used in state-funded Early Learning and Development programs. Results of the alignment analysis served to validate the use of the outcome reporting tools as well as make slight improvements to the balance, coverage, depth, and difficulty of the early learning standards. The revised standards were published in 2009. (See section C1 for details on development and use of learning standards and its continuum developed through Kindergarten to grade 3.)

Pennsylvania has also been progressive by partnering with the U.S. Department of Education to extend the 2010 Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011), the third in a series of longitudinal studies of young children conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Pennsylvania is the only state to enhance this national effort by conducting a statewide representative oversample of children, using the ECLS-defined sampling methodology and battery of standardized assessments. As a result, Pennsylvania can better understand both the impact of its early learning programs on children’s Kindergarten readiness and the value of current assessment efforts in early childhood and Kindergarten programs. The ECLS-K:2011 Pennsylvania oversample will provide important information on

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children's Early Learning and Development and transition into Kindergarten, and provide a benchmark to understand progress through elementary school.

The state has also been active in validating assessment tools. In 2010, the state partnered with an assessment vendor to validate the scoring algorithm for the assessments (authentic assessment tools designed for Early Learning and Development programs), and to vertically equate the assessments for 3- and 4-year-olds. The results of these studies have been made public. The scoring study has been useful for Pennsylvania and other states that use assessment data for statewide reporting and analysis. The vertical equating study has also benefited states that use these assessments by allowing child-level growth to be tracked across multiple forms of the instrument.

Pennsylvania has demonstrated a history of commitment and capacity to bring innovative approaches to implementing a reliable and valid standards-based comprehensive assessment system. These strengths lay a foundation to build on as Pennsylvania continues to develop and implement the Kindergarten entry child outcome-reporting tool.

Status of Pennsylvania's Children

Each fall, a new class of 150,000 Pennsylvania children enters Kindergarten exhibiting widely disparate levels of the skills and abilities they will need to succeed academically and socially during their school career and beyond. While many children arrive with the necessary foundation for success, many others lag behind in one or more critical domains: language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, physical well-being and motor development, and/or social and emotional development. National data indicates anywhere from one quarter to one half of all children are not ready for Kindergarten because of family, social, health, and economic background. Unless they are identified early and receive appropriate, effective intervention, the children who lag behind when they enter Kindergarten have difficulty catching up to their peers.

Even before children reach Kindergarten, the achievement gap is already in evidence: of the children who enter Kindergarten with skills deficits, disproportionate percentages are at risk due to disabilities or developmental delays, living in poverty level households, limited English proficiency, are migrant, are homeless, or are in foster care. A significant percentage of the

students identified as not ready for Kindergarten are considered “high-needs” students because they fall into one of these categories.

(a): Gaps in Understanding the Status of Children at Kindergarten Entry

Despite the clear indication that many children – particularly those with high needs – are at risk of academic failure, the state has lacked a consistent method by which to assess Kindergarten readiness and report early student achievement across all school districts. While the state has implemented a strong early childhood comprehensive assessment system (see section C2), Pennsylvania does not have a standard tool to gauge school readiness. This lack of a common tool makes it difficult to compare statewide data across districts, allocate and prioritize resources for early childhood programs, and inform policy, particularly in regard to closing the achievement gap.

The RTT-ELC provides Pennsylvania with the opportunity to develop and implement a new suite of child outcome reporting tools organized through a single framework that measures child development and progress from birth to age eight, covers a broad range of outcome domains, and is anchored at children’s transition to Kindergarten.

Kindergarten entry is a critical time both for children and families and for the systems that serve them. This finite time period in a child’s life is the year in which academic foundation for success is solidified. Although a national definition of “Kindergarten readiness” remains unsettled, a general consensus is forming around the notion that Kindergarten standards should be a focus and benchmark for Early Learning and Development programs. In the Kindergarten year, children consolidate and augment the developing cognitive, literacy and language, physical, and social-emotional skills they will need to succeed in school and to master increasingly complex academic concepts in successive grades. Children who enter Kindergarten with high needs are typically behind in the development of those skills. Children whose skills lag behind need more support to acquire their skills and they may require targeted intervention to set them on path to success. It is a critical point for schools, districts, and state-level policy-makers because Kindergarten entry provides a measurement benchmark against which they can establish baselines for the new cohort of children across the five essential domains of school readiness in order to better track trends over time, assess the extent to which the collective investment in Early Learning and Development programs is making a difference, and determine areas where

additional services or supports are needed. Without precise baselines, progress for children cannot be accurately measured and services cannot be effectively targeted.

Recognizing the value of collecting data on children as they enter Kindergarten and comparing results for those who have experienced Early Learning and Development programs with those who did not, Pennsylvania included a Kindergarten Assessment plan in its previous Race to the Top application. To prepare that application, the state engaged stakeholders and piloted the use of an online teacher observation tool in Kindergarten during the 2009-2010 school year. Surveys of school principals and teachers indicated that the participating districts felt that “authentic assessment” is beneficial to instruction and child learning. Respondents said that ongoing structured teacher observations of children help with monitoring progress, guiding instruction, structuring student assessments across grade levels, and preparing for Response to Instruction and Intervention. Respondents mentioned additional training as a way to better support Kindergarten assessment, including training for principals on the principles of early childhood education, and training for Kindergarten teachers in the use of the assessment tool.

(b): Goals for Understanding Status of Children at Kindergarten Entry

Pennsylvania’s key goal is to increase the understanding of the status of children at Kindergarten entry on the part of families, teachers, administrators, and policy-makers. By increasing this understanding, the state will help families better support children’s Early Learning and Development, help teachers provide more effective instruction, and enable administrators and policy-makers to make more informed decisions about early childhood services at the program, local, regional, and state levels. The state plans reach this goal by aligning and systematizing the collection of data from district-selected assessments to provide a coherent picture of student outcomes both in individual classrooms and across the state.

To be effective, efforts to implement Kindergarten Entry Assessments must be part of a larger strategy of child outcome reporting that is not limited to a single point in time, but follows students through their early childhood and school career. To best inform local instruction and state level decisions, this strategy must span the age continuum both conceptually and operationally. Pennsylvania plans to advance the state’s current assessment work to develop and fully implement the Keystone Child Outcome Framework a standards-based birth-to-eight child outcome reporting framework that is anchored at Kindergarten entry, and mapped to multiple

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authentic assessments which teachers can use to measure children's development and progress and to report child outcomes to the state (see section C2 for a description of the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework).

OCDEL has been using Work Sampling Online in all preschool programs since the 2008-2009 school year and the following year introduced the use of Ounce online for infant and toddler programs. Pennsylvania continues to promote authentic assessment and through this proposed plan, will be able to broaden the vision of assessment to include multiple reliable assessments that report outcomes in a common tool for children from birth to 3rd grade.

The proposed Kindergarten entry tool, the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory, will both guide educators in better understanding children's needs and targeting instruction to those needs and create a big-picture understanding of children's Kindergarten readiness across the state. This data will not be used to determine placement in a program, class or special education, or to deny or exclude access to services for those children who are age eligible. The assessment data will also not be used to determine Kindergarten eligibility.

Consistent with the vision of assessment for early childhood, the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory will not replace the classroom-level assessment tools that teachers and districts currently use, but rather will compile, align, and integrate data from those sources of evidence to create a standard and reliable picture of child outcomes at Kindergarten entry. Schools will continue to use existing authentic strategies to gather the information they need to make sound decisions about children's skill levels.

This inventory will enable the state to align and systematize the collection of data from district-selected assessments. Because the inventory will standardize the types of child data that districts report, it will serve to enlighten parents, guide teacher instruction, and inform policy by providing a coherent picture of student outcomes both in individual classrooms and across the state.

By 2014, all state-funded Early Learning and Development teachers and public school Kindergarten teachers will report child outcome data using this common standards-based child outcome framework.

(c): Key Activities/Next Steps for Understanding the Status of Children at Kindergarten Entry

(1): Pilot Project

Currently, Pennsylvania is piloting a tool that will become the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory, a child Kindergarten readiness inventory, reported by teachers at the beginning of the Kindergarten year. The Keystone Kindergarten Inventory covers the five essential domains of school readiness: language and literacy development, mathematical thinking and expression, early scientific development, approaches to learning, physical well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development. Appendices (E)(1)-2 and (E)(1)-3, on pages 480 and 481 of the appendices, provide the Infant/Toddler and Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten frameworks for the inventory. In addition, it is built on Keystone Child Outcomes Framework (described in section C2), which provides practitioners with a set of foundational guiding principles that define curriculum, approaches to teaching, and how children should be assessed. Pennsylvania has a documented commitment to setting appropriate expectations for children including those with special needs.

In March 2011, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) held a meeting to gain stakeholder recommendations for the development of an instrument that could be used in a pilot study to determine the status of children as they enter Kindergarten. Invited participants included Kindergarten teachers, preschool and Head Start personnel, administrators, and content specialists in math and literacy. Using the information from the group, OCDEL developed a Kindergarten entry teacher observation tool and series of supporting documents for recording, tracking, and summarizing individual and class outcomes.

In April 2011, 27 teachers who had participated in the development of the draft instrument agreed to participate in a pre-pilot to test out the administration of the tool. Teachers provided structured feedback related to administration time; relevance to current assessment tools; discerning levels of proficiency; confidence in the results; usefulness of optional tools; levels accurately reflected each standard; use of current supports for instruction; access to additional resources/supports; benefits of tracking child outcomes; additional training. In May, OCDEL held three focus groups with administrators and teachers not familiar with the tool to review, discuss, and provide feedback on the tool, the Guide, and the optional forms. The feedback was used to revise training materials.

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The pilot phase began in July 2011 with training for 52 Kindergarten teachers and interested administrators; representing 20 schools in seven districts. Participants attended a mandatory webinar, which introduced them to the K entry tool, the process and the related documents, followed by a face-to-face full-day regional training to learn the tool and establish reliability of reporting outcomes.

The pilot training included administration of the tool, identification and uses of sources of evidence (i.e. portfolio samples of work, videos, photographs, standardized and curriculum based assessment), practice administering and rating children using model scenarios, and exercises to establish reliability. Pilot data will be compiled and analyzed to establish the reliability of the child outcome data, revise and finalize the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory, and determine the inter-rater reliability and the internal consistency of domain scales. Further, analysis will be conducted to verify that the pattern of responses does not differ for subgroups, such as English Language Learners and children with special needs. OCDEL will host a series of focus groups and develop an online professional learning community on the Standards Aligned System portal with teachers who participated in the pilot to further refine the tool, training, and reliability protocol.

(2): Planned Activities

OCDEL will engage in several targeted development and validation activities in order to fully develop the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory as part of a larger program of assessment from birth to eight (see Section C2). Drs. Kagan and Scott-Little will: a). review the content of the Kindergarten Child Outcomes Reporting Framework and conduct an alignment analysis to ensure that the framework is aligned with the standards (in 2012-13), and b). serve as advisors to OCDEL during the process of refining the Kindergarten Reporting Framework (in 2012 through 2015). Conditional on evidence of the feasibility, reliability, and appropriateness of the tool, Pennsylvania is committed to begin phased implementation of the tool in the Fall of 2013, with **full implementation by Fall 2014** (see below).

By May 2013, the trainings will be placed into a series of online modules to support districts in a range of needs including a) selection of tools and assessment approaches, b) structured observation during daily instruction (see section C2), c) reporting child outcomes through the online system, d) maintaining reliability of outcome reporting at an empirically-derived gold

threshold, and e) using child reports for instruction and family engagement. Additional training and coaching may be necessary for those that do not initially meet reliability.

When fully implemented, the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory will enable districts and teachers to establish a baseline for the status of children, identify gaps, track trends over time, and make effective decisions about how to allocate district-level investments for Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten. The Keystone Kindergarten Inventory will be a powerful tool for guiding statewide Early Learning and Development policy.

(3): Rationale for Activities

Despite the comprehensive nature of Pennsylvania's early childhood data and assessment systems, the state still must address the need for a common, statewide Kindergarten entry child outcome-reporting tool, aligned to state Early Learning and Development standards, that districts can use to inform instruction and that the state can use to make resource and policy decisions. To accomplish its goal for a common tool to gauge Kindergarten readiness, OCDEL must ensure that:

- the strategies of structured teacher observation will be used to report reliable and appropriate data measuring children's progress toward the domains of school readiness
- the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory provides information that is valid for all groups of children, including those with high needs;
- the tool is part of larger birth-to-eight comprehensive assessment framework that will enable Pennsylvania to accurately, consistently, and validly report on child outcomes across programs and over time.

Identifying and tracking data through a common assessment framework will enable OCDEL to better respond to the Governor, legislators, policy-makers, parents, and other members of the public when they ask, "How are our children doing?" "What are the skills and knowledge children bring to the Kindergarten class?" "What do we have to do to ensure children succeed in school?" The data can also help state agencies better coordinate, more efficiently allocate funds, and more effectively establish policies and programs that can support young children and their families, especially those at risk.

(d): Alignment with Early Learning and Development Standards

Pennsylvania has implemented a comprehensive system of early childhood assessment that links data across all Early Learning and Development programs (described in C2 and E2). The proposed efforts build upon the state's strong commitment to standards-aligned assessment.

The Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards include vertically-aligned standards for each age group from birth through grade 3 (infants/toddlers, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and grades 1, 2, and 3) all of which directly link to the state's 3rd-grade academic standards. Because these standards outline the states' expectations for children at each level, many other states have begun to look to Pennsylvania's standards as the basis for their own standards.

These standards, which also align with the five essential domains of school readiness, define the emerging skills that students are expected to demonstrate. In addition, the standards identify children's different approaches to learning (children's innate dispositions and styles of learning), an understanding of which is essential for developing children's mastery of skills. The language and math domains are also aligned with Common Core Standards, which were adopted by the Pennsylvania State Board of Education on July 1, 2010.

(e): Validity, Reliability, and Appropriateness for the Target Population

Because the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory is a standards-based reporting framework, accommodations for children with special needs are integrated (See section 1 C1 for details on the how culturally and linguistically diverse children as well as children with other special needs can meet the state standards). The Keystone Kindergarten Inventory explicitly captures information about the English language proficiency level of English Learners determined through administration of the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Measure of Developing English Language – a nationally-recognized assessment tool built on the principles of language development, which assesses student progress in English language acquisition. Capturing this reliable information about language proficiency will inform data use and reporting for teachers and administrators.

(f): Phased Implementation, with Tool Administered to All Children by 2015

Pennsylvania plans to implement in phases, beginning in the 2012-2013 school year with full statewide implementation in the 2014-2015 school year, according to the following timeline:

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- 1). 2010-2011: Pilot (underway):
 - Continue the collection of child outcome data in the 2010-2011 school year;
 - Engage external evaluators to analyze item and scale reliability from pilot data;
 - Conduct survey and focus groups with participating teachers; and
 - OCDEL refines inventory, training and reliability protocol using findings.
- 2). Sept 2012: Pilot of revised and extended tool:
 - Using a random sample of districts, pilot the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory.
 - Engage external evaluators to: a). determine the minimum sample size needed for robust analysis; b). conduct detailed item and scale analysis for state level data as well as salient subgroups in the population; and c). release final analytic report on the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory (by Feb 2013).
- 3). May 2013: Deploy web-based data collection and training modules:
 - Enhance the Standards-Aligned System (SAS) portal to allow Kindergarten teachers enter child outcomes in a convenient online system, with which they are already familiar; and
 - Put training in web-based modules for asynchronous training and reliability.
- 4). Sept 2013: Year 1 roll-out (voluntary).
- 5). Feb 2014: Year 1 data report and updated validation.
- 6). Sept 2014: Fully implement Keystone Kindergarten Inventory in all Pennsylvania school districts.

(g): Integration with Statewide Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)

Strong Early Learning and Development programs comprise qualified teachers, research-based curriculum, observation and assessment, and family engagement to create the best possible learning environment for the child. These indicators of quality are linked with children's improved communication skills, greater cognitive development, more effective social-emotional skills and peer relationships, and better academic outcomes. By collecting early learning and Kindergarten entry outcome data, states are better able to assess the extent to which the collective investment in Early Learning and Development programs is making a difference in children's skills and knowledge at K entry.

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Pennsylvania uses the Pennsylvania Information Management System (PIMS) to manage student, teacher and school level K-12 information. PIMS, PELICAN, and certain data sets related to higher education are linked in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System to collect child service and outcome information for students from birth to 20. Kindergarten child outcomes that are entered into the K-12 teacher portal will be linked to PELICAN ELN through the SLDS virtual bridge (see section E2).

Leveraging the SLDS, the inventory will be used at the state level to conduct early childhood program evaluation and determine mediating contextual factors that can impact early learning.

(h): Funding from other Federal and State Resources

Pennsylvania has demonstrated funding commitment to build and maintaining systems which provide the infrastructure that will be used to capture and report Kindergarten outcomes (see section E2 for description of state early childhood and state longitudinal data systems). The approach to entering and reporting K outcome data leverages existing state data systems which have been developed and are currently being used. Additionally, federal funding has already been secured through Grant 3 amounting to \$1,100,000. This SLDS money will be used to link the child K entry outcome data to the SLDS. Pennsylvania originally planned to fund the development of the K entry tool with funds from round 1 of the K-12 RTT grant. RTT-ELC will provide needed resources to develop the K entry tool.

(i): Evidence for (E)(1)

(1): High Quality Plan for (E)(1) – Understanding the Status of Children’s Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry

Required Elements of a High-Quality Plan	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	<p>While many public school districts have implemented local Kindergarten screening, Pennsylvania does not have a standard tool to gauge school readiness. This lack of a common outcomes reporting framework also makes it difficult to compare statewide data across districts, allocate and prioritize resources for early childhood programs, and inform policy, particularly in regard to closing the achievement gap.</p> <p>Pennsylvania has an existing child outcome framework and promotes authentic assessment by requiring all ELD providers to use two assessment tools (Ounce Scale and Work Sampling System).</p> <p>The state needs to map all assessments to a common framework in order to create a comprehensive statewide system for reporting on child outcomes and assessing Kindergarten readiness across the state.</p> <p>The proposed project will create this framework (the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework).</p> <p>A more detailed description of the current background and status of the state’s plan for understanding the status of children’s learning and development at Kindergarten entry is provided in the narrative for criterion (E)(1).</p>
Key Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). To enable providers in Pennsylvania is to a). understand the developmental progress and needs of the children they serve across a broad range of cognitive and non-cognitive skills; b). adapt their instruction to meet individualized student and group needs; and c). track individual, class-wide, and program-wide achievement and developmental gains over time to measure the effectiveness of their services. 2). To enable state-level administrators and policy-makers to a). better understand the status of the state’s children across a broad range of cognitive and non-cognitive domains; b). monitor changes in the status of children’s achievement and development over time; c). inform policy by providing a longitudinal picture of early learning outcomes in the classroom and across the State; and d). adapt policy to improve students’ Kindergarten readiness, especially for high-needs children.

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Required Elements of a High-Quality Plan	Description of Element
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<p>These activities are described in further detail in the narrative for criterion (E)(1):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Conduct an external validation of the state’s current child outcomes framework to ensure that the framework reflects the balance, coverage, and depth of the State’s Learning Standards for Early Childhood. 2). Identify the criteria for selecting the early childhood assessments that will be aligned to the framework. 3). Align and calibrate each assessment to the common child outcomes framework. 4). Conduct additional validation work. 5). Enhance the Standards-Aligned System with online training, data collection and reporting. 6). Train providers to use the system.
Rationale for Activities	<p>To accomplish its goal for a common assessment, OCDEL must ensure that the proposed framework consists of valid child outcome indicators; that the authentic assessments providers will use provide reliable and appropriate data; and that all assessments selected align with the proposed framework.</p>
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	<p>Statewide, in phases: The Keystone Kindergarten Inventory will begin voluntary implementation in the 2013-2014 school year and all districts will be required to implement in the 2014-2015 year, conditional on meeting conventional standards of test reliability.</p>
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	<p>Statewide, in phases as described in the narrative above, with the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory fully implemented in all Pennsylvania school districts by 2014.</p>
How State will address the needs of the different types of ELD Programs, if applicable	<p>Each type of ELD program will be able to select an authentic assessment tool that meets its own needs, but is also fully aligned with the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework.</p>
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	<p>Authentic assessments aligned to Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework will be valid, reliable, and appropriate for the needs of low-income children, children with developmental delays and other disabilities, and English Learners. Validity of the tool for all populations will be assessed empirically through psychometric analysis</p>
Financial Resources for Implementation	<p>Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.</p>

Timeline and Milestones for (E)(1)

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
Develop standards-based birth-to-eight child outcome reporting framework	Fall 2012	OCDEL, Sharon Lynn Kagan and Catherine Scott Little	
Extend framework finalize Keystone Kindergarten Inventory	Fall 2012	OCDEL	Sharon Lynn Kagan and Catherine Scott Little
Reliability and validity analysis	Winter 2013	External consultants and peer review	
Data System development for training and data entry	Spring 2013	OCDEL and SAS System vendor	
Begin training and phased implementation on voluntary basis	Spring 2013	OCDEL and SAS System vendor	
Framework use by 100% of districts to report K entry outcomes	Fall 2014	PA Department of Education	

(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.

(E)(2): Building or Enhancing an Early Learning Data System to Improve Instruction, Practices, Services, and Policies

Note: for the reviewer's convenience, the evidence section for this criterion provides a table that summarizes the way in which the state's plan for understanding the status of children's Early Learning and Development at Kindergarten entry, described below, fits the federal requirements of a "high-quality" plan. Appendix (E)(1)-1, on page 479 of the appendices, provides the logic model that informed this high-quality plan.

Innovation and data-driven decision-making are essential to creating an accountable high-quality early childhood system. These state's vision and willingness to innovate has placed Pennsylvania at the vanguard of early childhood data-system development. Ten years after first beginning to build a unified, integrated, and longitudinal early childhood data system, Pennsylvania is now ready to progress to a new phase of systemic data-driven quality improvement. Pennsylvania proposes to use the RTT-ELC funding opportunity to develop and share new tools for families, teachers, community leaders, and policy-makers that converts raw data to timely and actionable information that promote Kindergarten readiness and positive outcomes for children, especially those who are high needs.

A recent 50 state survey by Early Childhood Data Collaborative found that Pennsylvania was the only state to have all ten fundamentals of coordinated state Early Childhood Education (ECE) data systems:

- 1). A unique statewide child identifier,
- 2). Child-level demographic and program participation information,
- 3). Child-level data on child development,
- 4). The ability to link child-level data with K-12 and other key programs,
- 5). A unique program site identifier with the ability to link with children and the ECE workforce,
- 6). Program site structural and quality information,
- 7). A unique ECE workforce identifier with ability to link with program sites and children,

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- 8). Individual-level data on ECE workforce demographic, education and professional development information,
- 9). A state governance body to manage data collection and use, and
- 10). Transparent privacy protection and security practices and policies.

Our achievements are the result of bold vision and over ten years of commitment – a commitment that continues with the current Administration. Systems development began in 2002 at which time Pennsylvania’s early childhood information systems were decentralized and relied on antiquated IT and manual reporting with no real time information. The legacy systems had disparate practices, which led to autonomous program management, limited controls, and service delivery barriers. The original intent to develop a single integrated system for all early childhood programs was to centralize program data and allow administrators to effectively and systemically manage programs that serve children and their families.

The following timeline highlights major initiatives of our implementation strategy.

Date	Initiative	Outcome
2002	Provider Management	Established a centralized repository for all Early Learning and Development providers and automated provider and resource and referral management.
2003 to 2004	Enrollment & Financial Management	Centralized and automated child care subsidy enrollments, payments, funds management, reporting, and wait-list management.
2006 to 2007	Case Management & Eligibility Determination	Integrated and automated child care subsidy eligibility determination for TANF, Food Stamps, General Assistance, low-income and former TANF families in the Child Case into system.
2007 to 2008	PA Pre-K Counts	Established a centralized repository for all 3-4 year old children participating in the state Pre-Kindergarten program.
	Business Intelligence & Reporting	Data warehouse provided fiscal, performance and statistical reports and an Executive Dashboard.
2008	Client Self Service	Citizens can perform screening, apply for benefits and perform redetermination and parents can directly access information of providers offering child care services in their communities.
	Provider Self Service	Providers can apply for state licensing and update their own information at their convenience.
	Provider Certification	Automates the Provider Certification process, which included tracking inspections, complaints and issuing certificates.

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2009	Keys to Quality	Maintains quality rating information for child care providers and supports the administration and monitoring of the state QRIS.
2009 to 2010	Early Intervention	Automate the assessment, service plan, and financial management for the Early Intervention Infant/Toddler & Pre-School programs.
	Keys to Quality Phase 2	Expanded the QRIS data system to include Technical Assistance (TA) and made other modification to increase quality and access to data.
	Provider Search Expansion	Expanded citizen access to information for Early Learning programs.
	Early Learning Network	Enabled Pennsylvania to better understand the children served by providing a platform for collecting, tracking, and analyzing information about children, classrooms, staff and providers across all program types.
2010	ELN Ad Hoc Reporting	Enhanced OCDEL's data analysis solution to support increased efficiency, flexibility and capacity for responding to departmental, legislative, or right-to-know questions or requests.
2011	Enhanced Provider Self-Service (PSS) & Child Care Works (CCW)	Enabled providers to manage their monthly attendance invoices electronically and to support regional staff review and approval/rejection of provider invoice updates.
	ELN Expansion & Modifications/Reports	Added additional programs, flexibility, and users to the ELN system and expanded grant functionality; added new reports for ELN users.

Current Developments:

- Statewide Longitudinal Data System Virtual Bridge: Using existing common student identifiers, OCDEL is building a data reporting solution to link its Early Childhood Education and K-12 data warehouses.
- Child Outcomes Reporting: OCDEL is defining and implementing a strategy to improve the process of capturing, managing and reporting on child assessment information.
- Head Start Federal Reporting: OCDEL is facilitating the collection and consolidation of data on services to children. This initiative will initially focus on service provided by federally-funded Head Start and Early Head Start, but will provide a mechanism to receive and manage data from any external data systems such as those that support Home Visiting programs, licensed nurseries, and other state agencies serving young children.
- Longitudinal Child Outcomes Report: OCDEL is enabling all Early Learning and Development to have secure access to a report providing aggregate information about the

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3rd grade outcomes for children who they served, as compared to other children in their local district, county, and state. This initiative leverages the Statewide Longitudinal Data System to provide longitudinal outcomes that are specific to an individual provider.

Pennsylvania's Early Childhood Data System

The assemblage of management information systems used for monitoring and accountability purposes is collectively named PELICAN – Pennsylvania's Enterprise to Link Information for Children Across Networks. Personally identifiable information contained in PELICAN is delinked from service and outcome data so it remains confidential. Information in the data warehouse cannot be used to identify an individual child or family and is not shared with outside entities. Data in the early childhood systems is protected by the same security protocols as other programs in the state such as Medical Assistance and Income Maintenance. These protocols require secure and encrypted servers that are tested for vulnerabilities, unique user names with strong passwords, and different user roles that are assigned specific security levels and access. In addition, publicly released data is only reported at an aggregate level, with masked counts below 10, so that families and children can never be recognized.

PELICAN is a highly integrated information system – linking data both within OCDEL and across state agencies within Pennsylvania. PELICAN uses a number of enterprise systems to uniquely identify and track consumers, providers and educators. The enterprise systems include the following:

- Master Client Index (MCI) – to assign a unique identifier for all consumers within the Pennsylvania Departments of Public Welfare, Insurance and Aging.
- Pennsylvania Secure ID (PA SID) – to assign a unique identifier for all children participating in OCDEL programs and children in school from Kindergarten through postsecondary education within the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).
- Master Provider Index (MPI) – to assign a unique identifier for all provider legal entities and physical locations within the Pennsylvania Departments of Public Welfare.
- Pennsylvania Professional ID (PPID) – to assign a unique identifier for all educators within Early Childhood and K-12 systems.

The enterprise systems assure standardization in the assignment of unique identifiers for each of the demographic groups. These systems also standardize the collection of a minimum set of

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demographic data by defining what information is mandatory and the manner in which it is captured and stored.

PELICAN also has links to other systems within the Department of Public Welfare. These systems include the following:

- COMPASS – online system for consumers to obtain complete information on specific Pennsylvania health and human service programs or benefits available; OCDEL program consumers – current or potential – learn if they qualify for and/or apply for subsidized child care and benefits through Temporary Assistance to Needy Families TANF).
- Client Information System (CIS) – to share consumer case information following eligibility determination for TANF and SNAP consumers when a consumer requires or requests subsidized child care; communications occur back and forth between PELICAN Child Care Works (CCW) and CIS.
- Provider Reimbursement and Operations Management Information System (PROMISE) – to enable PELICAN Early Intervention payment processing, currently for children birth to 3 years old.

These DPW systems enable specific PELICAN systems access for sharing and using information from other program offices. Sharing systems and data through a Service Orientated Architecture (SOA) minimizes the duplication of data collection and storage. Statewide efforts to minimize duplication produce multiple benefits – both for Pennsylvania and its citizens.

In 2007, the PELICAN Child Care Information Services (CCIS), administering the subsidized child care program for OCDEL, assumed responsibility for all child care eligibility services, including those formerly completed by the Office of Income Maintenance for clients receiving TANF. This “unification” of services allowed for a single, fully-coordinated child care subsidy and resource and referral system. Unification resulted in: a). \$42 million in savings during the first year; b). more children attending high-quality child care programs due to the high-quality referral system; and c). increased accountability for public dollars due to payments being processed to the provider rather than the parent, and the creation of a more integrated computerized system to better manage funds and waiting lists.

PELICAN has increased the efficiency of state programs and reduces fraud waste and abuse by standardizing and automating activities such as eligibility determination, provider payment,

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receiving and tracking complaints against child care providers, maintaining waiting lists for services, and tracking grants and budgets. Without PELICAN, OCDEL could not maintain the strong program management, accountability and monitoring that occurs today.

The result of over ten years of continued system development and maintenance is a secure and unified system that has enabled:

- 1). Reduction in time and effort for the creation of federal, statewide, local, and management reports;
- 2). Reduction in manual and/or redundant processes within and across offices;
- 3). Real time analysis allowing for monitoring and reallocating of service dollars to move children off the waiting list and maximize the number of children served; and
- 4). Consistent application of policies, notification, and business practices.

PELICAN systems were also developed with the intent of driving quality improvement efforts at the local and state level. Pennsylvania has a comprehensive early childhood system of assessment, which is integrated into the state's unified data system, the Early Learning Network (ELN). The ELN integrates financial, program, teacher, family and child information. ELN is a national model, allowing OCDEL to manage its finances more effectively by targeting resources to those programs and services that bring about good progress while considering individual circumstances and demographics that also may affect results.

The ELN securely collects information about children, teachers and programs overseen by OCDEL, including children's family demographics, health information, service referrals, attendance and enrollment details, and a unique child identifier common to both state public welfare and education data systems. ELN also includes program and workforce data such as teacher qualifications, benefits and turnover rates; classroom quality rating scores; and a unique provider identifier, which is the same teacher identifier system used by other state systems. Child developmental outcomes come from the assessment data system, which feeds into ELN (see section C2 for future initiative to expand choice of assessment under one child outcome reporting framework).

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ELN will continue to monitor outcomes on all children participating in OCDEL programs and providing OCDEL the ability to report information in the aggregate related to the following objectives:

- To determine if Pennsylvania's children are on track to succeed when they enter school and beyond;
- To determine the components of effective early education programs and under what circumstances they are making a difference in school readiness and long term academic achievement;
- To understand how financial resource levels relate to child outcomes;
- To meet state and federal reporting requirements related to child progress;
- To compare the quality of programs serving similar types of children on ability to enhance child progress and to understand which components of quality are most effective and why;
- To measure the preparedness of the Early Childhood Education workforce to provide effective education and to tailor professional development and technical assistance to address most pressing early learning needs; and
- To understand how program factors work together to impact children.

Pennsylvania has demonstrated funding commitment to maintaining systems and has partnered with private entities. Pennsylvania annually commits nearly \$25 million to early learning data systems for Child Care, Early Intervention, PA Pre-K Counts, Keys to Quality, Provider Self-Service, Child Care Certification, and Early Learning Network. Nearly \$20 million is invested from TANF, Child Care Block Grant, and Medical Assistance Information Technology funding. The state share is nearly \$4 million. The funding is used towards system maintenance, system enhancements, and new information technology initiatives. For the last two years, priority has been given to building the Early Learning Network and linking it to PIMS, the K-12 state longitudinal system.

Pennsylvania also has a long record of sharing knowledge and resources such as source code with other states. To date, OCDEL has provided technical support to at least nine states (AL, CO, GE, LA, MD, NY, OK, RI, WA) to share our experiences and models of system governance, development, and design. Two states have requested and used portions of the PELICAN source code. Pennsylvania has a record as a national leader in providing detailed

information about our state data systems at national conferences and face-to-face meetings with states. Our vision is to continue to partner with states at varying levels of system maturity to collectively improve. We are encouraged by the progress of the field and look for future opportunities to develop learning communities and coordinated efforts around future data system initiatives.

(a): Gaps for Enhancing an Early Learning Data System

Currently the system provides a limited set of static reports that contain mostly raw data. This data in its raw state does not provide the kind of analytical information that is useful to teachers in driving classroom instruction, to programs in improving quality, or to policy-makers in making systemic improvements.

Direct service providers and support coordinators spend the majority of their time in the home or community of the children they are supporting. Currently these providers lack easy access in the field to information about children and families and also lack a way to update information immediately following the services they provide.

(b): Goals for Enhancing an Early Learning Data System

Pennsylvania's key goal for enhancing its early learning data system is to offer timely, usable information that promotes child development and learning for all children, especially those who are high need. Our vision is that by doing so the state will promote quality improvement and build demand for quality as informed teachers and families make informed decisions about ways they can support children and offer the best learning opportunities both in and out of the home.

Pennsylvania and other states that are leading in system development are beginning to chart a course through new frontiers of data use, towards the ultimate goal of promoting Kindergarten readiness and positive outcomes for all children. New tools and analytics are required to maximize the use of data now being obtained. The information systems must now develop new methods of using data in ways that support the role of parents and teachers, and build demand for quality and access. This is consistent with Pennsylvania's belief that the state must play a supporting role to parents and those who directly impact children.

Currently, data from early childhood systems are used locally and statewide to improve program and workforce quality, access to high quality programs, and child outcomes. Providers and

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teachers can access data reports for the classroom, provider location, and legal entity, which document child performance and progress in relation to classroom, staff and provider quality indicators. Trainings have and continue to be developed to assist users in accessing and making use of data for informed decision making. In May 2012, Pennsylvania will launch a longitudinal child outcomes report that will provide all Early Learning and Development Providers with secure access to an aggregate report of the 3rd grade outcomes for children who they served, as compared to other children in their local district, county and state. This initiative leverages the Statewide Longitudinal Data System to provide longitudinal outcomes that are specific to an individual provider.

States with mature early childhood data systems are now looking for advanced strategies to leverage data to improve instruction, practices, and policies. Pennsylvania is in a unique position to build on national leadership and broaden the current uses of the data system in data reporting to provide actionable information to the field. Drawing on the full resources of Pennsylvania's data system, and on the guidance of national experts, we will develop and implement a suite of tools for families the public, practitioners, and policy-makers. We propose to develop dynamic dashboards for practitioners (described in this section) and families (described in section C2).

Development of additional provider and community dashboards will be completed by the end of the RTT-ELC grant period and will boost the ongoing sustainability of quality programming. This information will be available to local teachers and administrators and provide them with real time data so that they may continuously improve their performance to better meet the needs of the children they serve.

(c): Key Activities/Next Steps for Enhancing an Early Learning Data System

(1): Provider Dashboard & Management Tool: 21st Century Reports

The key objective of this initiative is to expand the tools that are available for the providers to be able to manage their programs and use the available resource effectively

Pennsylvania recognizes that the school readiness of children is directly influenced by the information available to early educators and agency directors. Pennsylvania currently has a robust statewide system that captures a wealth of data that is not yet part of the state's reporting strategy (such as provider demographics, QRIS details, technical assistance, classroom quality

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assessment scores, workforce qualifications and retention, as well as detailed child demographic, enrollment, and outcome information up to the 3rd grade year). This information will be compiled in a provider scorecard (as well as in a Community Scorecard; for more information on this tool, see description in C4, which begins on page 189).

The provider dashboard and management tool is Pennsylvania's vision to leverage the existing systems and years of data collection to offer new information to local practitioners in support of quality improvement and child outcomes. This tool will provide aggregate level information that can be viewed at the provider level in comparison to the School District and/or County. The information available on providers will build upon the current demographic and profile information currently available and expand to include provider-specific STARS participation information, Environment Rating Scales (ERS) scores, Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) scores, workforce qualifications, family survey results, and aggregate assessment/outcome information from the new Keystone Kindergarten Inventory. The provider scorecard will leverage community risk and reach information from the Community Scorecard (see description in C4, which begins on page 189) but provide a different view for providers. The Provider Scorecard will support controlled 'drill through' capabilities to access more granular levels of information with recommendations for providers. For example, a provider location may need to focus on hiring experienced early educators with specific training based on the information reported through the tool.

Planning for the new Provider tool has occurred over several years beginning with recommendations for the Early Learning Network stakeholder advisory group and 2009 planning report. High-level cost estimates were generated through extended system requirements sessions (see budget narrative). Once fully implemented, this initiative will meet multiple critical early learning objectives for the State, Pennsylvania's early learning providers, and for the larger Pennsylvania community and beyond. These objectives include: a). provide information to guide directors and teachers in instruction and continuous program improvement; b). increase retention and improve early educator quality by supporting the workforce with professional development and incentives among other opportunities; c). engage in local planning and development such as increasing the accessibility of quality early educators to high need children in their community; d). provide the state with the tools to identify the areas of "unmet" needs to serve the high risk children enrolled in early learning programs; and e). target the Provider Scorecard at supporting

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Directors by focusing the design on providing key recommendation based on data from multiple integrated systems.

OCDEL maintains a Provider Portal through which providers currently access and update provider details and will use this portal for the dashboard. The existing portal will be expanded to incorporate the new Provider Scorecard, providing secure, interactive, and dynamic access to this new tool. Also, OCDEL will offer comprehensive training on effective use of the web-based portal, requiring the development of a comprehensive set of learning modules. The training modules will be built from existing professional development on research-based best practice and Pennsylvania-specific exemplars. The asynchronous web-based nature of the modules enables on-going dissemination of training and meets the diverse training needs of multiple programs.

(2): Scheduling and Mobile Productivity Tools

OCDEL will develop a second track of the advanced data system to increase the productivity of mobile service providers. Direct service providers and support coordinators spend the majority of their time in the home or community of the children they are supporting. Pennsylvania is working to improve the efficiency of this service delivery process for the Early Intervention Infant/Toddler and Preschool services provided to children across the State. The improved processes are expected to result in a more efficient process of scheduling services, reduction of time spent traveling to appointments, and more efficient use of service provider's time outside of direct service delivery.

Because direct service providers spend the majority of their time providing services and are often away from their office, the ability to easily access information about the services they are providing while away from their computer will greatly improve their ability to respond to changing demands on their time and will improve their utilization of hours spent serving children. These tools will allow provider organizations the ability to effectively schedule the service delivery for their employees – working to help schedule the services in a manner which takes into account the existing schedule of an employee (helping to eliminate large blocks of free time), the location of an employee (helping to prevent unnecessary travel), and the skills of an employee with the needs of a family (for example, a specialization in children with Autism). The efficiency in scheduling these services allows the direct service provider organizations and

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employees the ability to work effectively in this remote model. In addition, it helps increase the efficiency with which services are confirmed, allowing children to receive these critical services in a shorter time period.

In the field, these tools help service providers keep track of their schedule, allowing them easy access to their calendar with all their service appointments. When running late for an appointment, providers can view the contact information for a child, find the telephone number of the child's parent, and call the parent to let them know they'll be a few minutes late. Tools that provide access to the names of children they're serving, relevant contact information and links to commonly-used technologies for directions, email, or phone calls helps these providers perform routine tasks in a much more efficient manner.

An important component of service delivery is recording the contact that the support coordinators have with each child. These records, called service notes, provide a detailed record of a child's service history; support coordinators routinely use them when they prepare for the next visit. Mobile access to these notes gives the coordinator a chance to prepare for the next session even when they are not in their office or at another computer. In addition, these tools allow them to record new service notes while in the field, saving the need to return to the office to enter them. This immediacy also increases the accuracy of information entered, because the provider can write the notes as soon as the visit has ended, rather than relying on handwritten notes and memory later. The end result of this system improvement will be more efficient and professional services to families and children identified as at-risk.

(3): Expand Existing Reporting Capabilities at Provider and State Level

In addition to collecting Kindergarten Entry data in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as described in section (E)(1), and collecting TQRIS data in the PELICAN information management system, as described in section (B)(2), OCDEL plans to create a parallel data-reporting track to import this data into the PELICAN ad hoc reporting tool. This track will create linkages between the existing PELICAN data repository and external data sources such as provider and parent surveys. These linkages will expand data analysis capabilities for OCDEL and enable data aggregation for the Provider Scorecard. This enhancement to the process of state and local reporting will allow improved cross-system reporting and evaluation. The key tasks are to:

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- incorporate the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory and new programs added to the Keystone STARS TQRIS into the state ad hoc reporting solution to help *state-level monitoring* and maintain new child and provider data;
- expand existing *local provider reporting* to include Keystone Kindergarten Inventory assessment data, including the Longitudinal Child Outcome Report for providers; and
- bring additional data on parent and provider survey into the data warehouse to support the 21st century provider tools.

(4): Capture New information in the PELICAN Information Management System

Pennsylvania currently captures essential data elements listed in the RTT-ELC grant requirements except the ability to monitor suspensions and expulsions. Essential data elements listed in the federal grant application that are currently captured including:

- a unique statewide child identifier to link data on that child stored in early childhood data system and records maintained by offices in the Departments of Education and Public Welfare;
- a unique statewide Early Childhood Educator identifier and a unique program site identifier;
- child and family demographic information;
- Early Childhood Educator demographic information, including educational attainment, credentials, licenses, and professional development credits;
- program-level data on the program's structure, quality, staff retention, staff compensation, work environment, and all State TQRIS data; and
- child-level program participation and attendance data.

Pennsylvania's existing system collects and links all of the required data, except program-level data on child suspension and expulsion rates. As part of the system building that is a key component of the state's RTT-ELC Early Learning and Development plan, Pennsylvania will modify its existing system to capture the reason for ending an enrollment. This minor enhancement will enable the state to better monitor the rates of suspension and expulsion and understand the impact of suspending or ending services on the continuity of services and long-term child outcomes. Pennsylvania will then be able to respond with systemic supports and program guidance.

Evidence for (E)(2)

(1): High Quality Plan for (E)(2): Enhancing an Early Learning Data System

Required Elements	Description of Element
Background/Current Status	A recent 50 state survey by the Early Childhood Data Collaborative found that <u>Pennsylvania was the only state</u> to have all ten fundamentals of coordinated state ECE data systems. In our current position after ten years of building an unified, integrated and longitudinal early childhood data system, Pennsylvania is now ready to progress beyond the activities of system development to a new phase of systemic data-driven quality improvement.
Key Goals	New tools and analytics are required to maximize the use of data now being obtained, to support the role of parents and teachers, and to build demand for quality and access. Pennsylvania proposes to use the opportunity of RTT-ELC to develop and share new tools for parents, teachers, community leaders, and policy-makers that convert raw data to timely and actionable information that promote kindergarten readiness and positive outcomes for children, especially those who are high needs. The key objective of this initiative is to expand the tools that are available for the providers to be able to manage their programs and use the available resource effectively
Key Activities to Reach Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provider Dashboard & Management Tool 2. Scheduling and Mobile Productivity Tools 3. Expand Existing Reporting Capabilities at Provider and State Level 4. Capture child suspension/expulsion information in PELICAN <p>Each of these initiatives will follow PA’s IT project life cycle including: Project charter, requirements gathering, General System Design, Detailed System Design, Testing, Training, Implementation, Maintenance.</p>
Rationale for Activities	Currently the system provides a limited set of static reports that contain mostly raw data. PA will develop and implement a suite of tools that will support parents, the public, practitioners, and policy-makers by offering timely and actionable information that encourage child development and learning for all children and especially those who are high need. Our vision is that by doing so we will promote quality improvement, and building demand for quality as informed teachers and families make informed decisions about ways they can support children and offer the best learning opportunities both in and out of the home.

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Required Elements	Description of Element
Where in State Activities will be Initially Implemented	Statewide implementation using the existing unified ECE data system and reporting infrastructure
Where/How the Activities will be Scaled Out	Activities will be scaled out according to the timeline listed below.
How State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable	The tools developed will include raw data from and provide useable information to each of the different types of Early Learning and Development programs in the state: PA Pre-K Counts, Head Start Supplemental, Early Intervention, child care and school-age child care programs, and private nursery schools.
How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs	The Provider Scorecard will support controlled ‘drill through’ capabilities to access more granular levels of information with recommendations for providers. This will support subgroup analysis and data-informed recommendations for instruction and intervention.
Financial Resources for Implementation	Sufficient financial resources have been dedicated to these activities, as outlined in the Budget Summary Narrative on page 282.

Timeline with Key Milestones for Each Key Activity Listed for (E)(2)

Activities	Milestone Date	Party or Parties Responsible	Other Key Personnel Assigned
1 Provider Dashboard & Management Tool	Winter 2015	OCDEL and PELICAN system vendor	
2. Scheduling and Mobile Productivity Tools: Finalize design Coding and system testing completed Training completed Roll out begins Full implementation achieved	Winter 2013 Summer 2013 Fall 2013 Winter 2014 Fall 2014	OCDEL and PELICAN system vendor	
3. Expand Existing Reporting Capabilities at Provider and State Level	Winter 2014	OCDEL and PELICAN system vendor	
4. Capture child suspension/expulsion information in PELICAN	Winter 2013	OCDEL and PELICAN system vendor	

VII: COMPETITION PRIORITIES

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.

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY

Priority 1: Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.

As described earlier, Pennsylvania has been a national leader in building a system designed to increase the quality of the state's Early Learning and Development Programs. A key goal for this system is to ensure that all Early Learning and Development providers can and do effectively address the specific, unique learning challenges of children with high needs. The proposed Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge project will enable Pennsylvania to enhance this system a) to help better ensure that all children – particularly children with high needs – enter Kindergarten ready to succeed and b) to close the achievement gap.

The ways in which Pennsylvania is proposing to enhance its statewide system of Early Learning and Development are described more fully in narratives for Core Area (B) and for Focused Investment areas (C), (D), and (E).

The text in these sections clearly explains how Pennsylvania's state plan for Early Learning and Development Programs improve the quality of those programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across state agencies and improving the well-established common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (Keystone STARS) that the state currently uses. The narrative in each of these sections provides details on the strategic improvements the state plans to implement in order to significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs.

A table that summarizes the way in which each criterion in those sections meets the definition of a high-quality plan appears in the evidence section for each criterion.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES

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: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS

Expanding the Pennsylvania's Keystone STARS Provider Quality Program to Include Additional Early Learning and Development Programs

Pennsylvania plans to expand the Keystone STARS provider quality program in order to increase program and provider quality for all early education and care providers that are serving children in the State. By creating access to and encouragement of participation in this program to additional early learning providers, Pennsylvania will build on the success of the STARS program, reuse the existing structure and supports that exist for this program, and broaden the community of providers that are working together in the state to improve the quality of their programs and staff.

Once fully implemented, this initiative will meet multiple critical early learning objectives for the State, Pennsylvania's early learning providers, and for the larger Pennsylvania community and beyond. These objectives include:

- Increased provider access to participation in the Keystone STARS program via the integrated PELICAN Keys to Quality system that will provide them with the knowledge and vehicle to structure their activities intended to increase the quality of their programs
- Increased provider access to the mentoring and monitoring that OCDEL provides participants in the STARS program
- Increased information for Pennsylvania to monitor provider quality across the state and across all early learning programs
- Increased information for Pennsylvania to evaluate the effectiveness of its provider quality programs and alignment of programs with the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards

This initiative will focus on expanding the existing Keys to Quality functionality within the integrated PELICAN system in order to enable the participation of additional early learning providers. These will include licensed nursery and school based pre k programs. In addition Head Start grantees will be provided increased access. It will introduce increased provider self registration and self service functionality to support provider involvement and data accuracy while also mitigating workload increases for the OCDEL and the PA Keys in the administration of the program.

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Key components of the initiative will include:

- a). Enhancements to the PELICAN Keys to Quality system to support the Application, STARS Designations, Grant Management, Classroom Information, and STARS Technical Assistance functions of the Keystone STARS program for the expanded provider types and to provide OCDEL with monitoring capabilities on the additional provider types;
- b). Enhancements to the PELICAN Keys to Quality system to support the integration of new program assessment scores as the classroom and provider/program levels
- c). Expansion of the PELICAN Keys to Quality system to incorporate the Designator Database in order to support the collection of STAR designation evaluation results for a provider location
- d). Expansion of the existing PELICAN Provider Self Service functionality to support additional Keys to Quality application and provider/program information management with a controlled workflow to support data integrity. Providers will be able to:
 - Maintain demographic and profile/contact information
 - Submit grant paperwork
 - Submit Pre-Designation and Designation requests
 - Submit TA/PD requests
 - Maintain their FTE information
 - Review the detailed results of their designation visits in order to take appropriate action to support Continuous Quality Improvement
 - Email Keys Specialists
- e). Enhancement of the PELICAN Provider Self Service functionality to enable provider self registration and administration of users and roles in order to mitigate workload on OCDEL and to automate manual functions in order to increase data integrity.

Expansion Timeline

Year 1: January 1, 2012- June 20, 2012

- Develop a crosswalk of Certification Regulations with programs standards, such as those for PA Pre-K Counts, Private Academic Licensed Nursery Schools, School District Pre-K (including Title 1 funded), Early Childhood Special Education, and Head Start.
- Develop a crosswalk of Keystone STAR Standards with other program standards, such as those for PA Pre-K Counts, Private Academic Licensed Nursery Schools, School District Pre-K (including Title 1 funded), Early Childhood Special Education, and Head Start. This crosswalk will include input and participation from Keystone STARS Advisory Members, Regional Key Directors and Staff, and other appropriate stakeholders.
- With input from Preschool Specialists, develop training materials for new provider types entering Keystone STARS.
- In anticipation of the proposed PELICAN Keys to Quality data system enhancements, train Keystone STARS Designators, PA Pre-K Counts grantees and Head Start programs to facilitate their inclusion and full participation in the enhanced system.

Year 2: July 1, 2012-June 30, 2013

- General Requirements, General Sessions Design, Detail Session Design, Testing and Go Live for PELICAN Keys to Quality Phase 3. Participation to include representation by PA Pre-K Counts grantees, Head Start grantees, Regional Key Staff, and school-based and Early Intervention stakeholders.
- Provide a STARS Designation for Head Start and PA-K Counts programs in anticipation of PELICAN Keys to Quality inclusion. All Head Start State Supplemental and PA Pre-K Counts grantees must achieve a STAR 3 level; prioritize appropriate technical assistance as needed.
- Complete designation of all Head Start and Early Head Start programs seeking designation above STAR 2 (completion of Head Start Bridge as identified in Protocol and ERS)

Year 3: July 1, 2012-June 30, 2014

- All State funded PA Pre-K Counts and Head Start State Supplemental Programs must achieve a designation of at least STAR 3 no later than July 1, 2014.

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- With stakeholder participation, develop protocols for Private Academic Licensed Nursery Schools, School District Pre-K (including Title 1 funded) and Early Childhood Special Education.
- Complete training of Licensed Nursery School, School-Based Pre-K (including Title 1 funded) and Early Childhood Special Education programs seeking participation.
- General Requirements, General Session Design, Detail Sessions Design, Testing and Go Live for inclusion of school based Pre-K programs, licensed nursery schools, and any additional non-child-care licensed providers who may be identified for participation in Keystone STARS.

Year 4: July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015

- Designation of additional non-certified Early Learning and Development Programs (school based Pre-K, licensed nursery school, Early Childhood Special Education programs).

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)

Pennsylvania has selected option (b) and has written to selection criterion (E)(1), which begins on page 232.

INVITATIONAL PRIORITIES

Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades.

The Departments are particularly interested in applications that describe the State's High-Quality Plan to sustain and build upon improved early learning outcomes throughout the early elementary school years, including by--

- (a) Enhancing the State's current standards for Kindergarten through grade 3 to align them with the Early Learning and Development Standards across all Essential Domains of School Readiness,
- (b) Ensuring that transition planning occurs for children moving from Early Learning and Development Programs to elementary schools,
- (c) Promoting health and family engagement, including in the early grades,
- (d) Increasing the percentage of children who are able to read and do mathematics at grade level by the end of the third grade, and
- (e) Leveraging existing Federal, State, and local resources, including but not limited to funds received under Title I and Title II of ESEA, as amended, and IDEA.

Priority 4: Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades.

Research Objective: Determine how local coordination between Early Learning and Development programs and school districts impacts sustained positive outcomes for high risk children.

Through RTT-ELC, Pennsylvania proposes to partner with expert researchers and the Mid-Atlantic IES Regional Education Lab (REL), to leverage the state's robust Early Childhood Education data and state longitudinal systems (described in section E2) and examine the role of Early Learning and Development services in sustained school success. Specifically, the impact on child outcomes will be analyzed in relation to local leadership and community engagement.

OCDEL, in partnership with others, proposes to combine the SLDS and mixed methods of data collection to examine the characteristics of successful communities and leaders where positive effects of quality early childhood education persist in Kindergarten and 3rd grade. Because of Pennsylvania's unique position with mature programmatic and information systems, RTT-ELC will allow us to bring together researchers with expertise in applying robust research methods to Pennsylvania's program data, and add to the knowledge-base on Early Learning and Development program effects that reduce or close the student achievement gap. Pennsylvania will also extend this work to analyze the mediating influences of student, community, and school characteristics. Our strategy to identify partners and research methodologies is described below. This work will inform school board members and districts in efforts to support the continuity of quality Early Learning and Development programs and early elementary education.

(a): Early Learning and Development and District Leadership

Information on the attributes of community and district leaders is collected through Pennsylvania's Early Childhood Executive Leadership (ECEL) Institute, which is part of a larger school leadership initiative administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The ECEL Institute focuses on what early childhood leaders and educators need to know and be able to do in order to understand and connect the variety of systems serving children (birth to grade 4) and to implement instructional improvements that will lead to student growth in cognitive, social, emotional, and attention areas. The five-day ECEL Institute held annually in eight regions of the state. It is primarily intended for superintendents and assistant superintendents, principals

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and assistant principals, and early childhood development center/facility directors. Ideally, communities of participants come from the same service area or network so that members of the early childhood and education systems can engage, integrate, and implement key concepts and approaches, thereby ensuring smooth transitions for children across communities. Under the proposed work, Pennsylvania plans to target ECEL program enrollments to communities that serve children with high needs; the needs assessment will use data from the Pennsylvania Reach and Risk Report (See Appendix (A)(1)-3 on page 10 of the appendices for a summary of this report).

ECEL participants acquire the deep knowledge and leadership skills needed to successfully identify and navigate the challenges and opportunities confronting Pre-K-to-Grade 4 early childhood developers and educators in delivering coordinated, aligned, and coherent learning experiences to students (birth through grade 4)—in collaboration with the families. Learning Objectives include: a) become familiar with advances in the science of early childhood growth and early brain development; b) develop an awareness of the important influence of early childhood educational experiences on the production of a sturdy foundation for future cognitive, social, and emotional development; c) identify the multiple contexts within which children develop and summarize the best research, policies, and practices to apply in a given context; d) acquire leadership strategies for effectively coordinating early childhood and K-4 learning environments, including transitions from preschool to Kindergarten and on to the primary grades.

Participants conduct ECEL leadership and program self-assessments; apply well-researched ECEL instructional practices; develop strategies to increase teacher, family, and community capacity for ECEL improvement; and engage in an action learning project (ALP). The ALP is a major component of the institute that allows participants to immediately apply what they have learned. Within three to four months, participants return for the final two days of institute training. Facilitators with expertise in Birth to Grade 4 leadership deliver the sessions. The National Institute for School Leadership (NISL) provides participants with an ECEL handbook, two textbooks, and a CD with support materials to prepare for each day of the institute. A NISL faculty coach helps guide participant projects between sessions. The work includes completing diagnostic tools, reading selections from textbooks, completing the online materials, and conducting and implementing the action learning projects.

(b): Local community engagement related to Kindergarten transition

The Pennsylvania Regional Keys administer funding within local communities to support Local Education and Resource Network (LEARN) Teams. These county-based groups work throughout Pennsylvania's 67 counties to inform, educate and motivate all members of the community regarding Kindergarten readiness, quality early learning, and transitions from birth-to-5 programs into school. LEARN Teams are composed of a variety of citizens throughout the community who have an interest in supporting and promoting quality early learning for Pennsylvania's children. Participants in a LEARN Team, through coordination with other entities within the community, act as a local connection between families and the resources they seek in promoting and supporting personal responsibility and choice for all Pennsylvania families around quality early learning opportunities.

LEARN Teams, in partnership with school districts, early learning professionals and families, serve a vital role in smoother transitions for children entering Kindergarten by providing resources and supports to transitioning families, increasing the awareness and messaging of Kindergarten registration through providing Kindergarten readiness resources and supports, and assisting families in registering their children for Kindergarten in the spring.

Some of the goals of these groups are to: a) provide support to families with a child transitioning into an early learning setting or those with children entering Kindergarten; b) act as a resource for early childhood education to promote OCDEL programs, such as Keystone STARS, through activities such as early learning events, early learning activities and/or other programs within a community which focus on quality early education programs and access to early learning opportunities; c) create and distribute a Report to the Community detailing the activities, goals, and outcomes of the LEARN Team; and d) work within communities to help them understand and align early childhood and school-based curricula, assessment, and instruction so that children are sufficiently prepared for success in school and beyond.

Pennsylvania collects detailed information about the activities of LEARN teams including contact and activities with specific providers and schools which participate in local planning and development activities. Through the state early childhood data system, this data can be linked to providers and associated staff and child records.

Next Steps

Pennsylvania is committed to working with partners that have expertise in applying robust methods to conduct evaluation research. Through consultation with the Mid-Atlantic Regional Education Lab, OCDEL will contract with researchers and assemble the project team. The team will plan detailed steps for scope of work over the life of the grant including the research objectives and analytic methods. Using existing state data on providers, community engagement, school leaders and child outcomes, researchers will address how the following factors impact the percentage of children at grade level in reading and math by Kindergarten and at the end of the third grade. The scope of work for researchers will include examining the extent to which Early Learning and Development Programs and elementary schools have:

- participated in local engagement activities a). around transition to Kindergarten and b). around health and family engagement;
- participated in local engagement activities with private and/or other local resources;
- employed leaders with deep knowledge and leadership skills for addressing challenges in serving children birth to Grade 4; and
- adopted and used the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood in all programs and schools.

In addition, researchers will analyze the types and quality levels of early learning programs in the community and the connections between the early learning programs and schools. The research will plan to identify best practices and factors relating to child academic success in third grade and trends or factors inhibiting success. The research will identify how sources of existing Federal, State, and local resources, including but not limited to funds received under Title I and Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act are leveraged in relationship to the goal of sustaining program effects in the early elementary grades and whether these funding strategies further affect academic results.

Throughout the process, and after completion of the study, OCDEL will share findings with local school boards, administrators, early childhood program representatives and community stakeholders.

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.

Priority 5: Invitational Priority – Encouraging Private-Sector Support

The private sector has a proud history of supporting early childhood efforts in Pennsylvania.

Members of the Pennsylvania Early Learning Investment Commission, a governor-appointed Commission, have been recruiting local business leaders to join them in developing a regional business coalition to support early education in their communities. These business-based groups are evolving through the support and encouragement of ELIC members in their local areas. With support of staff, ELIC members are educating local business executives and policy-makers about the economic importance of investing in early learning as well as identifying the needs in their own communities.

These business leaders are developing creative solutions to help increase the quality of early care and education programs, make high-quality programs more affordable, and increase the availability of qualified staff to care for low-income children. Several of these business coalitions have conducted awareness and educational events in their communities, inviting business executives to attend. Three programs are now developing scholarship programs with an emphasis on quality to supplement the resources available in their communities today. ELIC is focusing its efforts in high-risk areas: eight groups currently operate in such areas, involving approximately 50% of ELIC members. This “public-private” partnership is exciting and provides businesses the opportunities to impact in their own communities. The ELIC provided a letter of support for this application, which is included in the appendices.

Private foundations have also been instrumental in the state’s efforts to improve Early Learning and Development program quality and child outcomes. Foundations that have supported this work include: the Benedum Foundation, Friends of the Children’s Trust Fund, the Grable Foundation, Heinz Endowments, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, R.K. Mellon Foundation, Pew Charitable Trust, Wean Foundation, and the William Penn Foundation.

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Between 2004 and 2010, these private foundations contributed more than \$17 million to support early childhood efforts in the state.

Below is a listing of the initiatives and aggregate dollar amounts these foundations have contributed toward Pennsylvania's work in early childhood education to date. A significant percentage of this foundation support has been channeled through the Build Initiative, a project of the Early Childhood Funders' Collaborative, aimed at supporting state efforts to prepare our youngest children for success.

Quality Pre-K Supports – (Forerunner of PA Pre-K Counts) \$8,803,334

- Direct support to programs to build Early Childhood Education partnerships and offer quality Pre-K programming
- Development of business strategy
- Early Childhood Education Policy development - engaging local leaders to advocate for increased public investments

Public Engagement Grant \$100,000

Early Childhood Mental Health Support

- Infant/toddler mental health pilot (forerunner of early childhood mental health initiative that is now state wide) \$400,000
- Parent Child Interaction Therapy \$100,000

Accountability Grants

- Development of Early Learning Network Design \$500,000
- Implementation of Work Sampling and Ounce training as well as purchasing materials, implementation of train the trainer model \$500,000
- Development and implementation of PELICAN and ELN through extensive professional development and creation of manuals and materials, purchase of Pearson licenses \$3,665,422

Higher Education Engagement

- Support of Diversity Conference – BUILD Support*
- Program to Program Articulation Projects – BUILD*
- Gate Opener Project – increasing access to higher education \$620,660

Leadership At All Levels

- Early Learning Investment Commission – engaging over 60 high level CEO’s and presidents in support of Early Childhood Education \$215,723
- Communications to field, funders, and production of accountability reports, support of PA Promise initiative \$353,622

Professional Development

- Development of early learning standards (infant/toddler – 2nd grade printing & distribution – BUILD*
- Early learning standards alignment study and resulting revisions-BUILD
- Development of parent calendars – Here I Am, Here I Come, Learning Is Everywhere – printing and distribution – BUILD*
- Development of English Language Learners tool kit – BUILD*
- Translation of Early Learning Standards – BUILD*
- Race Matters – development of 12 hours of training on “Supporting Conversations Race and Culture in Early Childhood Setting” BUILD*
- Color Me Healthy \$400,000
- Early Childhood Education Green and Healthy Initiative \$350,000

Total BUILD Support* \$1,184,700

Children’s Trust Fund \$245,000

Total Support \$17,438,461

The three major foundations whose mission includes work in support of early childhood education in our state are: The Heinz Endowments, the William Penn Foundation, and the Grable Foundation. These three foundations are the largest contributors to early childhood efforts. In fact, as noted above, they support Pennsylvania’s participation in the BUILD Initiative, which has the goal of establishing effective statewide early childhood systems.

Pennsylvania is one of 9 BUILD states and has been a BUILD state since 2004. The Deputy Secretary of OCDEL meets with the 3 major Foundations 4 times per year to discuss progress on current initiatives and to propose new initiatives. Proposals are written following those meetings and funding is granted by the respective Board of Directors. The list above represents the results of these public-private partnerships.

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In preparation for submission of this Race to the Top Application, the Deputy Secretary of OCDEL met with representatives of these three major Pennsylvania foundations on September 20, 2011 at the Heinz Endowments offices in Pittsburgh, PA. Dr. Minzenberg reviewed the Race to the Top Summary, which has been approved by Governor Tom Corbett's Office with the foundation representatives. She asked for continuing support of Pennsylvania's early childhood work through: 1). ongoing funding of Pennsylvania's participation in the BUILD Initiative, 2). continuing support of the PA Promise Campaign which includes the salaries of the PA Key Director of Communications, and Early Learning Investment Commission Coordinator, and 3). support of the Race to the Top initiative. The representatives enthusiastically agreed to support the three themes as listed above. A letter from each of these three major Pennsylvania foundations is included in the Appendix (A)(3)-1, on page 237 of the appendices.

Each foundation has committed to involvement in further public-private partnerships with Pennsylvania's OCDEL, as the Race to the Top Initiatives unfold. The foundations must wait to commit to a monetary amount or specific project, however, until each initiative has been described in a grant proposal and approved at a Board of Directors' meeting, which take place 3 times per year. The amounts or projects will be specified when formal grant proposals are completed and approved by the foundation Boards of Directors at specified points throughout the coming years. Experience from past partnerships and initiatives as described above, letters of commitment from the foundations, and the enthusiasm of the group, ensure that support will be ongoing.

VIII: BUDGET

BUDGET PART I: SUMMARY

(A): Budget Part I -Tables

(1): Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category

<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	97,693	201,248	207,285	213,504	719,729
2. Fringe Benefits	34,956	82,713	85,194	87,750	290,613
3. Travel	1,887	1,887	1,887	1,887	7,548
4. Equipment	0	0	0	0	0
5. Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
6. Contractual	7,284,582	17,294,254	15,594,874	7,415,169	47,588,879
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	3,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	6,000
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	7,422,118	17,581,101	15,890,240	7,719,310	48,612,769
10. Indirect Costs*	0	0	0	0	0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	2,844,926	4,843,065	4,371,775	4,232,573	16,292,339
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)	10,367,044	22,524,166	20,362,015	12,051,883	65,305,108
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	9,271,460	13,121,335	9,271,460	9,271,460	40,935,715
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)	19,638,504	35,645,501	29,633,475	21,323,343	106,240,823
Columns (a) through (d): For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable					

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))

budget category.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

(2): 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)
OCDEL - Education	5,195,585	11,511,511	7,157,821	6,237,989	30,102,906
OCDEL - Public Welfare	14,442,919	24,133,990	22,475,654	15,085,353	76,137,917
Total Statewide Budget	19,638,504	35,645,501	29,633,475	21,323,343	106,240,823

(3): 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)
Expand Keystone STARS	10,270,104	12,415,665	7,417,870	7,440,140	37,543,780
Promoting Child Outcomes	2,348,519	2,852,703	1,720,787	1,160,829	8,082,838
Family Engagement	1,533,709	1,861,398	2,035,591	1,963,784	7,394,482
Workforce Effectiveness	4,303,315	9,307,121	8,630,758	4,950,561	27,191,755
21st Century Reports	500,000	8,349,875	8,735,000	4,799,388	22,384,263
Keystone Framework	386,447	392,749	634,063	480,567	1,893,826
Federal T/A	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	400,000
Invitational Priority 4	196,410	365,990	359,406	428,073	1,349,879
Total Statewide Budget	19,638,504	35,645,501	29,633,475	21,323,343	106,240,823

(4): Budget Summary Narrative

The budgets for two participating agencies are included in the budget tables: OCDEL – Pennsylvania Department of Education and OCDEL – Department of Public Welfare. OCDEL, through its dual deputate and unique governance structure, in which all Early Learning and Development programs are housed under one office, will manage and hold sole responsibility for all projects included in the grant application. Pennsylvania will benefit from this approach because planning, decision making, communication, execution, and monitoring are within one office eliminating challenges that a multi-office approach may experience. The two agencies

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identified in this grant application represent OCDEL's dual deputate and are included to show how projects and costs will be allocated across Public Welfare and Education. The two participating agencies are identified as OCDEL-Education and OCDEL-Public Welfare.

Pennsylvania has identified eight projects that taken together will result in full implementation of the high quality state plan. The list of projects includes:

- 1.) Expanding Keystone STARS. This project aligns with Core Area B and requests funds to:
 - a. Add additional programs to Pennsylvania's tiered quality rating system to include programs targeted in the application and enhance our information system to include these additional programs in the management system.
 - b. Support programs in high need areas in moving up the STAR ladder by providing more intensive supports to include STAR coaching and Family Child Care Home Mentoring.
 - c. Validate the Keystone STARS program using an independent evaluator.
- 2.) Promoting Child Outcomes. This project aligns with Core Area C(1) and C(2), requesting funds to:
 - a. Align and embed the Early Learning Standards in the K-12 Standards Aligned System (SAS) so that all educators in Pennsylvania have one professional portal that provides a comprehensive approach to support student achievement across the Commonwealth.
 - b. Subsidize authentic child observations from 3rd party vendors in an approach that fully covers the costs for early learning providers in year one, 75% of costs in year 2, 50% of costs in year 3, and 25% of costs in year 4. This assumes that providers will cover 100% of the costs in 5 years.
 - c. Develop online training modules and hold conferences to educate parents, providers, policy-makers and/or educators to strengthen their understanding of early learning child outcomes and how the state will use the data to improve and inform instruction, programs and services.
 - d. Fund pediatrician professional development on early childhood screening in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- 3.) Family Engagement. This project aligns with Core Area C(4) and requests funds to:
 - a. Expand Local Community Systems through the Family Engagement Project and increasing the number and capacity of family instructors

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- b. Support families access to High quality and culturally appropriate literacy materials
 - c. Expand web-based resources to include the Early Learning GPS (Guiding Parents Smoothly) in both online and booklet format and provide local training on how to use the GPS.
 - d. Expand Reach Out and Read using pediatricians to promote early literacy according to the Reach Out and Read model proven to have a significant effect on parental behavior, beliefs, and attitudes towards reading aloud, as well as improvements in the language scores of at-risk young children who participate.
- 4.) Workforce Effectiveness. The project aligns with Core Area D(1) and requests funds to:
- a. Develop a coordinated and comprehensive information technology solution that will enable OCDEL to collect and analyze all Early Childhood Education workforce data in one central location.
 - i. Hire staff person to certify and data enter career lattice levels of early childhood professionals to eliminate duplication of work effort across early learning programs.
 - ii. Build a home visiting scheduling component that will increase the percent of time home visitors are available for services to high need children and less time traveling excessive distances between appointments. Additional application will enable home visitors to enter case notes via smart phones to increase productivity.
 - b. Design an infant toddler professional development framework to increase the professional level of educators working with infants, toddlers, and families so they can provide better instruction and improve child outcomes
 - c. Develop and implement additional career advising strategies to increase Career Lattice participation by underserved educator populations to include an online learning community.
 - i. Hire staff person to manage higher education career advising.
 - ii. Develop asynchronous online courses in partnership with postsecondary institutions
- 5.) 21st Century Reports. This projects align with Core Areas C(4) and E(2) and requests funds to:

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- a. Leverage a cadre of existing teacher tools in the SAS system for early childhood educators.
 - b. Develop a provider dashboard and management tool that will draw on the full resources of Pennsylvania's data collection system to provide new information that programs can use to guide continuous quality improvement, improve instruction, and increase child outcomes.
 - c. Create a web-based Early Learning Community Scorecard that coordinates and makes available to the public relevant community-level information about the school readiness of young children and the programs and educators that serve them.
- 6.) Keystone Framework. This project aligns with Core Areas C(1) and E(1) and requests funds to:
- a. Develop and implement a Keystone Kindergarten Inventory Framework, which will give Kindergarten teachers information about children who do not have age-appropriate skills.
 - b. Develop and implement the Keystone Child Outcomes Framework (KCOF), a standards-based birth-to-PreK child outcomes reporting framework that is both anchored in the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory and mapped to multiple authentic instruments.
- 7.) Grantee Technical Assistance. This project aligns with the RTT-ELC requirements to set aside \$400,000 from the grant to share effective program practices and solutions.
- 8.) Invitational Priority 4. Pennsylvania is very interested in working with a research institution to analyze its rich data set to better understand sustainability of early learning program effects in the early elementary grades. Pennsylvania is well positioned with its Pre-K and K-12 longitudinal data systems and common child identifiers that can link the information together across systems.

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY

(A): Budget Part II -Tables

(1): OCDEL – Pennsylvania Department of Education

(a): Budget by Budget Category for OCDEL – Pennsylvania Department of Education

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) OCDEL - Education					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	72,411	149,167	153,642	158,251	533,470
2. Fringe Benefits	29,761	61,307	63,147	65,041	219,256
3. Travel	1,275	1,275	1,275	1,275	5,100
4. Equipment	0	0	0	0	0
5. Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
6. Contractual	3,190,928	4,369,254	3,960,415	2,963,281	14,483,878
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	3,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	6,000
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	3,297,375	4,582,003	4,179,478	3,188,848	15,247,704
10. Indirect Costs*	0	0	0	0	0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	1,298,210	2,479,633	2,378,343	2,449,141	8,605,327
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)	4,695,585	7,161,636	6,657,821	5,737,989	24,253,031
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	500,000	4,349,875	500,000	500,000	5,849,875
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	5,195,585	11,511,511	7,157,821	6,237,989	30,102,906

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
OCDEL - Education

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

(b): Budget by Project for OCDEL – Pennsylvania Department of Education

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>OCDEL - Education</i>					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
Expand Keystone STARS	30,000	30,000	30,000	50,000	140,000
Promoting Child Outcomes	2,348,519	2,852,703	1,720,787	1,160,829	8,082,838
Family Engagement	791,209	1,686,398	1,760,591	1,886,284	6,124,482
Workforce Effectiveness	843,000	1,733,796	1,917,974	1,497,236	5,992,006
21st Century Reports	500,000	4,349,875	635,000	635,000	6,119,875
Keystone Framework	386,447	392,749	634,063	480,567	1,893,826
Federal T/A	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	400,000
Invitational Priority 4	196,410	365,990	359,406	428,073	1,349,879
Total Statewide Budget	5,195,585	11,511,511	7,157,821	6,237,989	30,102,906

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

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

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

(c): Budget Narrative for OCDEL – Pennsylvania Department of Education

(Narrative is intended to assist at an Agency level on Budget Table II-1)

Personnel: Education Researcher and RTT-ELC Project Manager are budgeted at 100% each to assist Pennsylvania in delivering the high quality plan included in the grant proposal. Costs were derived using the Commonwealth Pay Schedule for each classification’s pay level. The Educational Researcher will report to the Finance, Administration Director and will be responsible for oversight of the Keystone Framework Initiative and the evaluation activities outlined in the grant application. The RTT-ELC Project Manager will report directly to OCDEL’s Deputy Secretary and will be responsible for project management activities to ensure Pennsylvania successfully implements each of the eight projects identified above.

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Year 1 – Assumes that each staff person will begin July 1 and includes six months of salaries for each position. The Education Researcher is budgeted at half the annual salary of \$69,751. The RTT-ELC Project Manager is budgeted at half the annual salary of \$75,071.

Year 2 – Year 4 - Education Researcher and the RTT-ELC Project manager salary increased by 3% annually and budgeted at 100% for 12 months.

Fringe Benefits: Fringe Benefits calculated using the Commonwealth's standard percentage of 40.10% - 30.19% for Health Care, 7.65% for FICA, and 3.26% for Retirement.

Years 1-4: Fringe Benefits charged at 41.10% for each year.

Travel: Modest travel for Educational Researcher and RTT-ELC Project Manager is included using 51 cents per mile. The Education Researcher will travel to and from meetings with independent evaluators and research institutions related to Keystone Framework. The RTT-ELC Project Manager travel will include local travel as well as travel to vendors, local communities and intermediate units to oversee implementation efforts.

Years 1-4: 1,250 miles are budgeted annually for each of the staff positions.

Contractual: Contracts will be executed to procure professional services related to information systems development and research and evaluations activities. Contracts will be executed following procurement procedures for the procurement of supplies, equipment, and other services with Federal funds that ensure that these materials and services are obtained in an effective manner and in compliance with the provisions of applicable Federal statutes and executive orders. Included in the contracts will be statements of work clearly identifying the roles and responsibilities of each party. Estimates are based on vendor's high level estimates provided to OCDEL for the work identified in the grant application.

Year 1: A total amount of \$3,190,928 is budgeted in Year 1 - \$30,000 is budgeted to secure an independent evaluator to begin work on the evaluation of Keystone STARS program; \$180,000 is budgeted to secure a research entity to assist in the Keystone Child Outcome Framework alignment; \$100,000 is budgeted to secure a research entity to assist in the development of the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory; \$2.1 million is budgeted to subsidize authentic child instruments from multiple vendors (175,000 children multiplied by \$12 per license); \$148,519 is budgeted for the American Academy of Pediatrics to deliver pediatric professional development

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on screenings; \$150,000 to secure information technology services to develop a template to communicate between Education's Teacher Information Management System and Early Learning's Teacher Registry; \$91,200 to begin development of online courses identified under career advising, and \$391,209 for Reach out and Read.

Year 2: A total amount of \$4,369,254 is budgeted in Year 2 - \$30,000 is budgeted to continue work on with an independent evaluator on the evaluation of Keystone STARS program; \$500,000 is budgeted to align and embed preschool early learning standards into the SAS system; \$180,000 is budgeted to continue work with a research entity to assist in the development of the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory; \$1,575,000 is budgeted to subsidize 75% of authentic child instruments fees from multiple vendors (175,000 children multiplied by \$12 per license multiplied by .75); \$483,408 is budgeted for the American Academy of Pediatrics to deliver pediatric professional development on screenings; \$125,000 to secure information technology services to finalize the template to communicate between Education's Teacher Information Management System and Early Learning's Teacher Registry; and \$426,948 to continue development of online courses identified under career advising, \$62,500 to develop online modules to support effective use of child outcome reporting and \$986,398 for Reach out and Read.

Year 3: A total amount of \$3,960,415 is budgeted in Year 3 - \$30,000 is budgeted to continue work on with an independent evaluator on the evaluation of Keystone STARS program; \$135,000 is budgeted to continue work to align and embed preschool early learning standards into the SAS system; \$90,000 is budgeted to continue work with research entity to assist in the Keystone Child Outcome Framework alignment; \$325,000 is budgeted to continue work with a research entity to assist in the development of the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory; \$1,050,000 is budgeted to subsidize 50% of authentic child assessment fees from multiple vendors (175,000 children multiplied by \$12 per license multiplied by .5); \$485,787 is budgeted for the American Academy of Pediatrics to deliver pediatric professional development on screenings; and \$734,037 to continue development of online courses identified under career advising, \$50,000 to develop online modules to support effective uses of child outcome reporting and \$1,060,591 for Reach out and Read.

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Year 4: A total amount of \$2,963,281 is budgeted for Year 4 - \$50,000 is budgeted to finalize work with an independent evaluator on the evaluation of Keystone STARS program; \$140,000 is budgeted to complete work to embed the preschool early learning standards into the SAS system; \$30,000 is budgeted to complete work with research entity to assist in the Keystone Child Outcome Framework alignment; \$225,000 is budgeted to complete work with a research entity in the development of the Keystone Kindergarten Inventory; \$525,000 is budgeted to subsidize 25% of authentic child license fees from multiple vendors (175,000 children multiplied by \$12 per license multiplied by .25); \$495,829 is budgeted for the American Academy of Pediatrics to deliver pediatric professional development on screenings; \$311,168 to complete development of online courses identified under career advising and \$1,186,284 for Reach out and Read.

Other: \$6,000 is budgeted to procure statistical software for the Education Researcher.

Estimates are based on OCDEL experience in purchasing statistical software. OCDEL will be responsible for procuring the software package.

Year 1: \$3,000 is budgeted to procure the initial statistical software license.

Years 2-4: \$1,000 is budgeted annually to renew statistical software license.

Total Direct Costs: The total amount equals \$15,247,704 and allocated across the following grant years: Year 1 - \$3,297,375 Year 2 - \$4,582,003 Year 3 - \$4,179,478 Year 4 - \$3,188,848

Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations,

Participating Programs and other partners:

Funds will be allocated to Intermediate Units, Intermediary Organizations and other offices within the Department of Education (Anticipated number =5). The Deputy Secretary of OCDEL will be responsible for assuring that work identified through MOU's or interagency agreements is accomplished. Budget requests are based on high level estimates provided by PDE offices, Intermediary Organizations and Intermediate Units.

Year 1: A total amount of \$1,298,210 is budgeted for Year 1 - \$100,000 is budgeted for PDE's Assessment Unit to assemble work teams in aligning and embedding the early learning standards into the SAS system, \$51,200 for an Intermediate Unit to hire (salaries and benefits for three month period at 100%) a Learning Management System director to oversee the development of

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online modules included in career advising and promoting child outcomes, \$25,600 is budgeted for an intermediate unit to hire (salaries and benefits for three month period at 100%) a higher education career counselor, \$400,000 is budgeted for PDE's Office of Library Sciences to deliver literacy programs to family and early learning providers, \$525,000 for an Intermediary offer tuition assistance to early education professionals to utilize the online courses developed under the contractual section above (\$1,500 dollars for 3 credit course multiplied by 350 students) and \$196,410 is budgeted for invitational priority 4.

Year 2: A total amount of \$2,479,633 is budgeted for Year 2 - \$231,795 is budgeted for PDE's Assessment Unit to assemble work teams and incorporate feedback into alignment and embedding of the early learning standards into the SAS system, \$104,448 for an Intermediate Unit to hire (salaries and benefits for full year at 100%) a Learning Management System director to oversee the development of online modules included in career advising and promoting child outcomes, \$102,400 is budgeted for an intermediate unit to hire (salaries and benefits for full year at 100%) a higher education career counselor, \$700,000 is budgeted for PDE's Office of Library Sciences to deliver literacy programs to family and early learning providers, \$975,000 is budgeted for an Intermediary to offer tuition assistance to early education professionals to utilize the online courses developed under the contractual section above (\$1,500 dollars for 3 credit course multiplied by 650 students) and \$365,990 is budgeted for invitational priority 4.

Year 3: A total amount of \$2,378,343 is budgeted for Year 3 - \$135,000 for PDE's Information Technology Unit to make system changes to provide OCDEL required data for inclusion in the 21st Century Reports, \$106,537 for an Intermediate Unit to hire (salaries and benefits for full year at 100%) a Learning Management System director to oversee the development of online modules included in career advising and promoting child outcomes, \$102,400 is budgeted for an intermediate unit to hire (salaries and benefits for full year at 100%) a higher education career counselor, \$700,000 is budgeted for PDE's Office of Library Sciences to deliver literacy programs to family and early learning providers, \$975,000 is budgeted for an Intermediary to offer tuition assistance to early education professionals to utilize the online courses developed under the contractual section above (\$1,500 dollars for 3 credit course multiplied by 650 students) and \$359,406 is budgeted for invitational priority 4.

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Year 4: A total amount of \$2,449,141 is budgeted for Year 4 - \$135,000 for PDE's Information Technology Unit to make system changes to provide OCDEL required data for inclusion in the 21st Century Reports, \$108,668 for an Intermediate Unit to hire (salaries and benefits for full year at 100%) a Learning Management System director to oversee the development of online modules included in career advising and promoting child outcomes, \$102,400 is budgeted for an intermediate unit to hire (salaries and benefits for full year at 100%) a higher education career counselor, \$700,000 is budgeted for PDE's Office of Library Sciences to deliver literacy programs to family and early learning providers, \$975,000 is budgeted for an Intermediary to offer tuition assistance to early education professionals to utilize the online courses developed under the contractual section above (\$1,500 dollars for 3 credit course multiplied by 650 students) and \$428,073 is budgeted for invitational priority 4.

Funds set aside for grantee technical assistance: \$400,000 is required to be set aside under the budget for grantee technical assistance. Per guidance, \$100,000 is budgeted per grant year.

Total Funds Requested: The total amount equals \$24,253,031 and allocated across the following grant years: Year 1 - \$4,695,585 Year 2 - \$7,161,636 Year 3 - \$6,657,821 Year 4 - \$5,737,989

Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan: The total amount of state investment that supports this plan directly and indirectly was previously provided in (A)(4)(a). A total of \$5,849,875 can be allocated to specific line items under the budget template. Annually \$500,000 currently used in PA Pre-K Counts information systems will be redirected and cost allocated to the 21st Century Report initiative. SLDS funding of \$3,849,875 will also be invested to import data from the K-entry Inventory into the master data repository for data analytics.

(2): OCDEL – Department of Public Welfare

(a): Budget by Budget Category for OCDEL – Department of Public Welfare

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) OCDEL – Public Welfare					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel	25,282	52,081	53,643	55,253	186,259
2. Fringe Benefits	5,195	21,405	22,047	22,709	71,357
3. Travel	612	612	612	612	2,448
4. Equipment	0	0	0	0	0
5. Supplies	0	0	0	0	0
6. Contractual	4,093,654	12,925,000	11,634,459	4,451,888	33,105,001
7. Training Stipends	0	0	0	0	0
8. Other	0	0	0	0	0
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)	4,124,743	12,999,098	11,710,762	4,530,461	33,365,065
10. Indirect Costs*	0	0	0	0	0
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.	1,546,716	2,363,432	1,993,432	1,783,432	7,687,012
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance	0	0	0	0	0
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)	5,671,459	15,362,530	13,704,194	6,313,893	41,052,077
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan	8,771,460	8,771,460	8,771,460	8,771,460	35,085,840
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)	14,442,919	24,133,990	22,475,654	15,085,353	76,137,917
<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</p>					

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency
(Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))
OCDEL – Public Welfare

and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.

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

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

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

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

Line 14: Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.

(b): Budget by Project for OCDEL – Department of Public Welfare

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i>OCDEL – Public Welfare</i>					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
Expand Keystone STARS	10,240,104	12,385,665	7,387,870	7,390,140	37,403,780
Promoting Child Outcomes	0	0	0	0	0
Family Engagement	742,500	175,000	275,000	77,500	1,270,000
Workforce Effectiveness	3,460,315	7,573,325	6,712,784	3,453,325	21,199,749
21st Century Reports	0	4,000,000	8,100,000	4,164,388	16,264,388
Keystone Framework	0	0	0	0	0
Federal T/A	0	0	0	0	0
Invitational Priority 4		0	0	0	0
Total Statewide Budget	14,442,919	24,133,990	22,475,654	15,085,353	76,137,917

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

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

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

(c): Budget Narrative For OCDEL-Public Welfare

(Narrative is intended to assist at an Agency level on Budget Table II-1)

Personnel: A Business Analyst is budgeted at 100% to assist in expanding Keystone STARS to include Head Start, school based Pre-Kindergarten and licensed nursery schools. Costs were derived using the Commonwealth Pay Schedule for each classification’s pay level. The Business Analyst will report to the PELICAN Project Manager within the Finance, Administration and Planning Unit and will be responsible for PELICAN information technology modifications and data entry of the new programs to include program demographics, assignment of unique ID, and child/family demographics.

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Year 1 – Assumes that the staff person will begin July 1 and includes six months of salaries. The Business Analyst is budgeted at half the annual salary of \$50,563.

Year 2 – Year 4 – Salary increased by 3% annually and budgeted at 100% for 12 months.

Fringe Benefits: Fringe Benefits calculated using the Commonwealth's standard percentage of 40.10% - 30.19% for Health Care, 7.65% for FICA, and 3.26% for Retirement.

Years 1-4: Fringe Benefits charged at 41.10% for each year.

Travel: Modest travel is included using 51 cents per mile.

Years 1-4: 1,200 miles are budgeted annually for this staff position to include mileage to and from information technology vendor and regional technical assistance sessions.

Contractual: Contracts will be executed to procure professional services related to information systems expansion and development and delivery of family engagement strategies. Contracts will be executed following procurement procedures for the procurement of supplies, equipment, and other services with Federal funds that ensure that these materials and services are obtained in an effective manner and in compliance with the provisions of applicable Federal statutes and executive orders. Included in the contracts will be statements of work clearly identifying the roles and responsibilities of each party. Estimates are based on vendor's high level estimates provided to OCDEL for the work identified in the grant application.

Year 1: A total amount of \$4,093,654 is budgeted in Year 1 - \$3,556,154 is budgeted to expand PELICAN Keys To Quality to include Head Start, school based Pre-Kindergarten and licensed nursery schools in provider registration, assignment of unique ID, grants and awards, reporting, and data ad-hoc, \$162,500 to begin work on the Development of the Family Engagement Project, \$10,000 to adapt the train the trainer curriculum and toolkits of Strengthening Families framework, and \$365,000 to develop the GPS application and resources.

Year 2: A total amount of \$12,925,000 is budgeted in Year 2 - \$5,000,000 is budgeted to finalize the expansion of the PELICAN Keys To Quality to include Head Start, school based Pre-Kindergarten and licensed nursery schools in provider registration, assignment of unique ID, grants and awards, reporting, and data ad-hoc, \$25,000 to continue work on the Development of the Family Engagement Project, \$900,000 to link PELICAN to the Teacher Registry,

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\$4,000,000 to begin work on the 21st Century Reports, and \$3,000,000 to begin work on the home visiting scheduling component.

Year 3: A total amount of \$11,634,459 is budgeted in Year 3 - \$8,100,000 is budgeted to continue work on development of 21st Century Reports, \$25,000 to continue work on the Development of the Family Engagement Project, \$509,459 is budgeted to finalize work to link PELICAN to the Teacher Registry, and \$3,000,000 to continue work on the home visiting scheduling component.

Year 4: A total amount of \$4,451,888 is budgeted in Year 4 - \$4,164,388 is budgeted to continue work on development of 21st Century Reports, \$37,500 to finalize work on the Development of the Family Engagement Project, and \$250,000 is budgeted to develop online courses and training materials to assist providers in using the Teacher Registry.

Total Direct Costs: The total amount equals \$33,365,065 and allocated across the following grant years: Year 1 - \$4,124,743 Year 2 - \$12,999,098 Year 3 - \$11,710,762 Year 4 - \$4,530,461

Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations,

Participating Programs and other partners:

Funds will be allocated via Intermediate Units, Intermediary Organizations and other offices within the Department of Public Welfare (anticipated number = 8). The Deputy Secretary of OCDEL will be responsible for assuring that work identified through MOU's or interagency agreements is accomplished. Budget requests are based on high level estimates provided by DPW offices, Intermediary Organizations and Intermediate Units.

Year 1: A total amount of \$1,546,716 is budgeted for Year 1 - \$658,706 is budgeted for STAR Coaching and Family Child Care Home Mentoring (six month funding), \$470,000 for an Intermediate Unit to enhance current Teacher Registry to link to both PDE TIMS and PELICAN, \$100,000 to create resources and supports identified through the community assessment process; \$60,000 to develop GPS training sessions, \$45,000 to develop awareness strategies for GPS, and \$213,010 for additional staff to be hired at each Regional Key to certify and data enter career lattice levels of early childhood professionals.

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Year 2: A total amount of \$2,363,432 is budgeted for Year 2 - \$1,317,412 is budgeted for STAR Coaching and Family Child Care Home Mentoring, \$150,000 for an Intermediate Unit to begin work on the Infant/Toddler credential; \$220,000 for an Intermediate Unit to complete work to link current Teacher Registry to both PDE TIMS and PELICAN, \$100,000 for Intermediate Unit to develop the template to transfer data across Teacher Registry and TIMS, \$100,000 to create resources and supports identified through the community assessment process; \$50,000 to develop additional video content and resources to support GPS, and \$426,020 to maintain staff at each Regional Key to certify and data enter career lattice levels of early childhood professionals.

Year 3: A total amount of \$1,993,432 is budgeted for Year 3 - \$1,317,412 is budgeted for STAR Coaching and Family Child Care Home Mentoring, \$200,000 to develop a “Find Your Child Care Match” application; \$50,000 to hold public forums on GPS, and \$426,020 to maintain staff at each Regional Key to certify and data enter career lattice levels of early childhood professionals.

Year 4: A total amount of \$1,783,432 is budgeted for Year 4 - \$1,317,412 is budgeted for STAR Coaching and Family Child Care Home Mentoring, \$40,000 is budgeted to establish PTA-type groups for early learning, and \$426,020 for maintain staff at each Regional Key to certify and data enter career lattice levels of early childhood professionals.

Total Funds Requested: The total amount equals \$41,052,077 and allocated across the following grant years: Year 1 - \$5,671,459 Year 2 - \$15,362,530 Year 3 - \$13,704,194 Year 4 - \$6,313,893

Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan: The total amount of Pennsylvania investment that supports this plan directly and indirectly was previously provided in (A)(4)(a). A total of \$35,085,840 can be allocated to specific line items under the budget template. Annually \$5,554,610 from the Quality Set Aside will be split equally between expanding Keystone STARS and Workforce Effectiveness. These funds currently support and will continue to support Pennsylvania’s proven QRIS. Additionally, \$3,216,850 annually will be allocated to provider awards directed to Infant and Toddler expenditures.

TOTAL STATEWIDE BUDGET - \$106,240,823

BUDGET: INDIRECT COST INFORMATION

To request reimbursement for indirect costs, please answer the following questions:

Does the State have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government?

YES

NO

If yes to question 1, please provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (mm/dd/yyyy):

From: ___/___/_____ To: ___/___/_____

Approving Federal agency: ___ED ___HHS ___Other

(Please specify agency): _____

Directions for this form:

1. Indicate whether or not the State has an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement that was approved by the Federal government.
 2. If “No” is checked, the Departments generally will authorize grantees to use a temporary rate of 10 percent of budgeted salaries and wages subject to the following limitations:
 - (a) The grantee must submit an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency within 90 days after the grant award notification is issued, and
 - (b) If after the 90-day period, the grantee has not submitted an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency, the grantee may not charge its grant for indirect costs until it has negotiated an indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant agency.
- If “Yes” is checked, indicate the beginning and ending dates covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. In addition, indicate whether ED, HHS, or another Federal agency (Other) issued the approved agreement. If “Other” was checked, specify the name of the agency that issued the approved agreement.

Pennsylvania is not claiming an indirect cost rate for this proposal.