

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



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

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

Legal Name of Applicant (Office of the Governor): Office of the Governor of Puerto Rico	Applicant's Mailing Address: PO Box 9020082 San Juan, PR 00905-0082
Employer Identification Number: 660-43-3481	Organizational DUNS: 118162700
Lead Agency: Office of the Governor / Puerto Rico Early Childhood State Advisory Council Contact Name: Marta T. Sobrino-Bolen (<i>Single point of contact for communication</i>)	Lead Agency Contact Phone: 787-721-7000 extension 3107 - 3108 Lead Agency Contact Email Address: msobrino@fortaleza.gobierno.pr
Required Applicant Signatures (<i>Must include signatures from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. Insert additional signature blocks as needed below. To simplify the process, signatories may sign on separate Application Assurance forms.</i>): To the best of my knowledge and belief, all of the information and data in this application are true and correct. I further certify that I have read the application, am fully committed to it, and will support its implementation:	
Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name): Hon. Luis G. Fortuño Burset, Governor	Telephone: 787-721-7000
Signature of Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor:	Date:
Lead Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Marta T. Sobrino-Bolen, Executive Director	Agency Name: Puerto Rico Early Childhood State Advisory Council
Signature of Lead Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Henry Newmann Zayas, Secretary	Agency Name: Department Sports and Recreation
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Jesús M. Rivera Sánchez, Secretary	Agency Name: Department of Education

Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Lorenzo González Feliciano, Secretary	Agency Name: Department of Health
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Yanitzia Irizarry Méndez, Secretary	Agency Name: Department of the Family
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Ileana I. Inserni Cintrón, Administrator	Agency Name: Administration for Integral Child Care & Development
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:
Participating State Agency Authorized Representative (Printed Name): Luis A. Martínez Suárez, Administrator	Agency Name: Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration
Signature of Participating State Agency Authorized Representative:	Date:

State Attorney General Certification**State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney General Certification**

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

State Attorney General or Authorized Representative of the Attorney
General (Printed Name): Hon. Guillermo Somoza Colombani

Telephone:

787-721-7771

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

Date:

Accountability, Transparency, and Reporting Assurances

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

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

Governor or Authorized Representative of the Governor (Printed Name):	
Hon. Luis G. Fortuño Buset	
Signature:	Date:

V. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

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
Governor Office / PR Early Childhood State Advisory Council*	Appendix	ARRA Pr Stabilization Fund, ARRA Education Fund, ARRA Health Information Exchange (HIE), ARRA Broadband, Head Start Collaboration Office
Department of Sports and Recreation	Appendix	Establish Drug Prevention and Intervention Program in the Public Housing Development "Cancha Abierta Zone Press"
Department of Education	Appendix	Part B of IDEA, Title I of ESEA
Department of Health	Appendix	IDEA Part C, Title V,
Department of the Family	Appendix	Family Preservation A, C, D, Community Based Child Abuse Prevention
Administration for Integral Child Care & Development	Appendix	CCDF, EHS, HS, SAC-ARRA
Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration	Appendix	Mental Health Block Grant
Partner Entity – PR Council on Education	Appendix	N/A
Partner Entity – United Way Puerto Rico	Appendix	N/A

Partner Entity – The Office of the General Coordinator for Socioeconomic Financing and Self Management	Appendix	N/A
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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

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA

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

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

A. Successful State Systems

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

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

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

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

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

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

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).

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of ten pages)

There is no doubt that children are the greatest wealth of a country, because they are the promise of a better future. Eugenio María de Hostos, a distinguished puertorrican educator and writer, presented the true value of childhood, when he wrote in his book *Social Morals* that “children are the promise of man, man hope of mankind.” The Government of Puerto Rico recognizes the importance of providing our children the necessary experiences, protection and opportunities that will enable them to develop their maximum potential as individuals. Our vision for our children is that they will live and learn in safe and nurturing environments that prepare them for success

in school and life. In 2007, the Early Childhood Comprehensive Program, “*Unidos por la Niñez*” (United for our Children), celebrated a conference with all the important stakeholders of early learning and development in Puerto Rico. The main focus of this activity was to establish the necessary guidelines to elaborate a comprehensive public policy statement for our early childhood programs and services. Approximately 80 professionals, from various backgrounds, came together in collaboration with the Puerto Rico Senate to develop the first bill introducing a comprehensive public policy for Early Childhood in Puerto Rico. After eighteen months of arduous work, Public Law 93 was enacted on June 18, 2008, Law for the Implementation of Public Policies for Early Childhood (*Appendix 1*).

PR Public Law 93 establishes that the country’s investment in early childhood, besides guaranteeing the inalienable rights of children, is an investment in the human capital of society. Specifically, this investment benefits include higher levels of intellectual achievement, particularly in the verbal and math skills, greater school success, including a lower grade dropout and a higher graduation rate, employment levels and higher pay, better results in health, less dependency on social welfare system, and lower crime rates, among others. (Larry Schweinhart et al., High/Scope Perry Preschool Project, Ypsilanti, Michigan, 2005). Based on the results of this research and committed with the principle of investing in our early childhood, the following principles were established in our public policy: early childhood experiences are the foundation for learning and development throughout life; children should have access to optimal living conditions for the optimal development; relationships between children and their families are the foundation for development and learning; children and their families have needs, priorities and strengths; children’s development has several interrelated dimensions; children learn actively, through experiences and interactions with their environment; and adults that interact with children are facilitators in their development. In light of these principles, the following main areas are of focus in our Public Policy for Early Childhood: Birth Assurance, Health, Arts and Culture, Education, Security and Protection, Family and Sports and Recreation. These main areas will guarantee that our early childhood will have the necessary experiences for an integral growth and development in order to be ready for school and life. Guided by our Public Policy, Puerto Rico has been immersed in a process of constructing an adequate programmatic infrastructure to provide the best quality early learning and development services to our early

childhood for the last five years. Government efforts have been in place through the different government agencies that are directly and indirectly related to provide services to our early childhood and their families. Among these government agencies are: Department of Family, Department of Education, Administration of Integral and Child Care Services, Department of Health, Department of Sports and Recreation, and Administration of Mental Health Services. All these agencies have been developing and are committed with early childhood, specially aligning the appropriate service that will support our children's early learning and development.

Puerto Rico has a wide variety of Early Childhood Programs that provide services to children of high needs throughout the island. These programs are: Early Head Start, Head Start, Child Care and Development Program (CCDF) and the public preschool programs. Also, we have to acknowledge the active participation of the private sector in the provision of childcare and development services to families in Puerto Rico. Last year, the Puerto Rico State Early Childhood Advisory Council conducted a study about the number of children served by early learning programs in Puerto Rico, in relation to the number of children less than 5 years old in our population. This study was conducted as part of our responsibilities to identify the need of early learning and development centers throughout the Island. The study's results reflect the following amount of children were served by each of the following programs: Early Head Start 1,429; Head Start 35,740; CCDF 15,297; Private Child Care and Development Centers 10,796; Pre K/ Kindergarten (State Department of Education) 31,808 for a total of 95,070 children served in formal settings by early learning and development programs. The US 2010 Census reported that Puerto Rico has 233,691 children under the age of five. After analyzing these figures we can conclude that 138,621 children are not participating of a formal early learning program. These children could be receiving some sort of informal child care service through what we know as a family, friends or neighbors providers, not necessary regulated by the State. As a result of our analysis to identify our needs and priorities to guarantee that our children have the best opportunities and experiences in early learning and development settings, we identified and developed a State Plan and a variety of initiatives that have been in place for the last three years. This State Plan addresses the following major areas: greater accessibility of services for high needs children; development of improved quality infrastructure; professional development; and family engagement. The initiatives developed under this Plan have been geared to guarantee that

our children will be ready for school after having the opportunity to explore and interact with their environment no matter their setting, and to make families part of this process. We recognized the challenge we have, but understand that the best investment our Government could do is in our early childhood.

The Administration for the Integral Child Care and Development (ACUDEN, for its Spanish initials), is the lead agency in the State for early learning and development and it is the key agency in the implementation of the State Plan that has been conducted. ACUDEN is the grantee of the largest Head Start Program in Puerto Rico, serving 18,025 children and also the grantee for the Child Care and Development Funds. It is a specialized agency in early childhood and responsible for the implementation of the public policy related with early learning and development in early childhood. Having the experience and knowledge in this area, ACUDEN, has been aligning its human and economic resources to implement the following strategies: development of adequate programmatic infrastructure in order to increase the number of high quality early learning and development environments; the provision of learning experiences to our children in informal learning environments due to the increase of children being served in this type of settings; a revision of the licensing process; the provision of adequate professional development for our early learning workforce; and a strong family engagement component, among others.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) CCDF funds were utilized by ACUDEN for most of the programmatic infrastructure needed and for the provision of childcare and development services, with priority on high needs children. A total of \$33,417,556 of CCDF ARRA funds were utilized for the provision of childcare and development services for high needs children and for the development of quality activities that are enriching and strengthening our early learning and development system. In FY 2009-2010, a total of 20 million dollars were designated to provide access to childcare and development services through the CCDF Certificate Subsidy Program to 16,500 high needs children. In order to develop and implement the initiatives geared toward quality improvement, ACUDEN established coordination and collaboration with key partner agencies, such as the Department of Education, Department of Family, Administration of Socioeconomic Development, the University of Puerto Rico and other

stakeholders that contribute to our children's early learning and development process. The following initiatives were conducted as part of our State Plan to improve the quality of services and utilizing \$13,417,556 of ARRA CCDF funds.

Accessible Child Care and Development Services for High Needs Children –

- **Voucher/Subsidy Program** – Twenty million dollars were allocated of ARRA/CCDF funds to provide vouchers to eligible families, giving priority to high needs families. A total of 16,500 received were able to participate of activities in an early learning and development environment.
- **Respite Care and Family Support Centers** – Four respite care and family support centers were established in communities identified as high needs in Puerto Rico. The centers' main objective are to prevent child abuse and neglect, identification of family's needs in order to coordinate the appropriate services and the provision of training and orientation to the community about child abuse prevention, parenting skills, coordination of family services, among others. A mobile unit was acquired with ARRA/CCDF funds in order to provide services to families in other high-risk communities.

Development of a Quality Improvement Infrastructure

- **Early Learning Standards** - Since 2000, Puerto Rico has had in place Early Learning Standards. Our main goal has been to disseminate the information among all early childhood programs. In order to facilitate the dissemination process, training and implementation of these standards, funds were used for the development of an activities manual for centers and family day care providers. The activities included are aligned to the standards and will facilitate the required alignment to the providers' curricula.
- **QRIS Instrument-** ARRA funds were used for the construction of our QRIS instrument. It was completed on September 2010 in collaboration with faculty from the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus. All early learning programs in Puerto Rico participated of the construction process: Early Head Start, Head Start, CCDF, and Private sector, Pre K / Kindergarten, Licensing Division, among other professionals in the area. The Puerto Rico QRIS system has been denominated *Pasitos* (Little steps).
- **Providers Incentives to Improve Quality of Services-** Through an RFP process, incentives

were made available to CCDF providers to improve quality of services in their childcare and development centers. Funds were available to providers in order to comply with health and safety requirements, IDEA compliance, training, educational materials and equipment and workforce compensation. Approximately 125 providers benefit from these incentives.

- ***Child Care Management Application, CIMA*** - The CCDF information systems had been operating for approximately 17 years, and as a result of that, our application was outdated and did not satisfy our needs, or the requirements to manage adequately our childcare providers and participants' information. Funds were designated for the development of a new application. This application, CIMA, is a web-based application that is available to all personnel in Central and Regional Offices. CIMA was completed on September 2010 and the implantation has been in its place since then.
- ***Early Childhood Resource and Referral Centers, CENTRANA*** – As part of our family engagement strategies and quality improvement infrastructure, we established with ARRA funds 10 CENTRANA's. This effort was possible and it was a collaborative effort between counties and coops in Puerto Rico. CENTRANA provides training to parents and teachers, a lending library with over 2,000 educational materials, technical assistance on the selection of adequate materials, child care resource and referral services, written information of activities for each education material available in the center, a portfolio for the family, and a web site, Centrana.com, with training efforts, news, child care and family services directory, virtual library, among others.
- ***PAT: Developing Learning Environments*** – *PAT* is an informal family day care provider mentoring program created to guarantee that children receiving services in informal settings will have an appropriate early learning and development experiences to guarantee their school readiness. The increase of informal childcare and development providers, and providing our children adequate service, was the main reason for creating *PAT*. This mentoring program was designed to provide family day care providers with an individualized plan to improve the quality of their services. It is based on an evaluation using the Family Day Care Rating Scale, an individualized plan to provide mentoring to each participant on needed areas. Mentors visit twice a month to provide individualized

technical assistance in different areas, such as: health and safety, daily routine, nutrition, early learning activities, family engagement, etc. As mentors address each content area, educational materials are provided to each participant. After addressing the individualized work plan an evaluation is performed by the mentor to guarantee that the participant has reached the expected level of performance in all areas.

- **Professional Development** – Committed with our early childhood workforce, ACUDEN developed and aggressive professional development plan to improve and strengthen the knowledge of our workforce on early childhood, childcare and development administration, health and safety topics, among others. This plan was developed after conducting a professional development assessment among all of ACUDEN’s personnel and CCDF childcare and development providers.
 - **CDA Training** – CDA training is not accessible to many of Puerto Rico’s early learning and developing providers for various reasons; cost and accessibility. ARRA funds were designated to provide CDA training and credential cost to 100 providers thru the Island.
 - **Child Care and Development Directors’ Academy** – Aware of the importance of the role of directors or administrators of early learning and development centers and family day care networks, a three day academy was designed to provide administrators information about budget planning, family engagement, health and safety requirements, assessment and curriculum, professional development, criteria of workforce, among others topics. Approximately 188 administrators participated in this Academy.
 - **Computer Literacy** – As a result of our implementation of our Child Care Management Application, CIMA, computer literacy was identified as a training priority among ACUDEN’s personnel and childcare providers. In collaboration with the Government Office of Human Resources, a professional development plan was put into place to satisfy our need taking into consideration individuals training needs. A total of 180 childcare providers and ACUDEN’s Child Care and Development Program personnel participated.
 - **Three Day Training on New Tendencies in Early Learning and Development** – In collaboration with faculty from the University of Puerto Rico, School of Education, a

three day training was offered to all ACUDEN's personnel, child care and development center directors and teachers, as part of our CCDF efforts. This training provided the participants with up to date information about the early learning and development process for infant, toddlers and preschoolers, including screening, evaluation, curriculum, learning environment, among other topics.

- **Training** – a variety of training efforts were conducted during FY 2009-2010 that contributed to improve the quality of our workforce.
- **Family Engagement** – Committed with our families and recognizing the importance of families in children's early learning and development process a series of initiatives were developed and are being implemented in childcare and development centers.
- ***“Promesa de Hombre”*** (A Man's Promise) – A fatherhood initiative created to foster awareness about the need for self-evaluation, with the purpose of strengthening values, such as love, wisdom, integrity, respect, fidelity and honesty. This initiative works with children and fathers in childcare centers conducting activities and a traveling backpack that provides fathers and their children the opportunity to work activities together. Parents participate in training and orientation process about the importance of their role in their child's early learning process and family life. A total of CCDF 8,290 families and 10,817 children have participated.
- ***“Tus Valores Cuentan”*** (Character Counts) – In partnership with the Josephson Institute, a special preschool program has been initiated to promote character development as part of our socio-emotional development efforts. Character is the sum total of our dispositions, attitudes, and habits, and early learning is the perfect stage in life to start developing them. This special project started with workshops for childcare personnel and supervisors to understand the concept of Your Values Count, the Six Pillars of Character and the TEAM approach and the elaboration of protocols, procedures, activities for families and children (age appropriate) based on this philosophy. Through this pilot project we have created administration, family and educational processes based on the Six Pillars of Character. This pilot project includes 12 CCDF centers in high needs communities.
- ***Healthy, Happy and Successful Children Seminars*** – The parental education process included a series of seminars conducted in the early learning and development centers. This

seminars primary purpose was to provide parents information about the importance of preventive health practices. Thru these seminars in a fun way we provided parents information about healthy ways for our children and provided them with booklet, "My Child's Health Book" for future reference.

On December 2009, Governor Luis Fortuño approved *Executive Order 2009-46* Puerto Rico Early Childhood State Advisory Council, SAC. This organism is responsible for bringing together all early childhood programs and stakeholders with the main purpose of addressing our early childhood and family's needs, among other responsibilities. When ARRA funds were made available to all State Advisory Councils, our Council understood the importance of requesting these funds in order to start piloting some of the initiatives created with ARRA/CCDF funds and the opportunity to address other issues that will be necessary to continue building our early childhood early learning and developing system. The Council established the following objectives for the use of SAC/ARRA funds:

- Implementing the PAT: Developing Learning Environments Program, a technical assistance project (using a mentoring model) for informal day care providers to promote school readiness in young children and to increase the quality of service. A hundred informal family day care providers from the CCDF subsidy program are participating of this pilot project.
- Implement a quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) piloting project in a variety of early learning and development to promote higher-quality learning environments. A total of 100 early learning and development centers are participating of this piloting project. In order to distribute the 100 slots for the piloting project the number of children served by each program were identified and slots were distributed as follows: Early Head Start 2%, Head Start 38%, CCDF 16%, Private Child care providers 11% and Kindergarten and Pre K 33%. The QRIS Piloting Project main purpose is to validate the QRIS instrument and process. Up to this point, all early learning programs have conducted their evaluation using the instrument and with the technical assistance of a mentor. A data base application has been created to enable the evaluation process and improvement plan gather all information of all centers and to conduct the adequate analysis.

- Analyze, evaluate, and restructure the licensing process to promote and guarantee higher quality environments for young children. As a result of all the quality improvement infrastructure investment in the last two years, and the need of high quality early learning programs, the Council created a Committee to undertake the task of analyzing and evaluating the existing licensing process. This Committee has representatives from all early learning programs and has initiated the analysis and will align licensing processes and requirements to our QRIS system and early learning system.
- Promote the implementation of early learning standards of excellence in all early learning programs to promote school readiness in young children through a train the trainer initiative. In collaboration with the Department of Education, the Council has established training efforts to make available early learning standards to all early learning programs. In this training effort participants are trained on developmental stages, standards, curriculum and alignment and each participant receives a copy of the standards and an activities manual to facilitate the implementation.
- Develop a scholarship program as part of the professional development system for the participating centers in the QRIS piloting project. A Scholarship committee has been created thru the Council to elaborate the administrative procedures, selection criteria, coordination with universities and interview and selection process. Scholarships will be awarded for the following areas: CDA Credential, Special Education Certificate, Early Intervention Certificate and Early Childhood Certificate. We are expecting to award 50 scholarships FY 2011-2012.
- Develop a data system that will enable the state to obtain information about supply, demand, cost, financing, workforce, and quality of early child care providers. A questionnaire was distributed among all early childhood programs to obtain information about data collected, applications used by programs, type of data collected, and access to Internet, information systems available in their programs, etc. This study was concluded and provides the State with the necessary information to initiate the design for a data base application to maintain the above-mentioned information of all early learning programs.
- Development and implement a special project about socio-emotional development for parents participating of early childhood programs. Through the past five years Puerto

Rico has developed and implemented a socio-emotional training effort for teachers of all early childhood programs. Over 4,000 teachers and early learning environments personnel have been trained on this concept. Also, we have been developing a social emotional development system to benefit our children. Our vision in this system is that all early childhood childcare and child development service providers implement a system for the development and support of socio-emotional competencies in early childhood, in order to have healthy, happy, and successful children. Our mission is to establish an evidenced-based service-delivery system, in collaboration with public and private agencies, based on best practices promulgated by ACUDEN, that promote the development of socio-emotional competencies in early childhood, in order for children to be ready and be successful for school and for life. And most important of all, our mission which is to develop, maintain and support the System Building Effort in Puerto Rico (Proyecto de Colaboración de Puerto Rico): an early childhood service delivery system, committed to the development of socio-emotional competencies and the promotion of mental health. The system will support the collaboration among providers, families and communities.

The Puerto Rico Department of Health has played an active role in the provision of support services to children in the early learning and development system. Early learning and development programs in order to fulfill children's individuals' needs have established collaborative agreements with the Department of Health for the provision of services to high needs children. These collaborative agreements allow our high needs children to have access to health and early intervention services. Refer to Appendix 5 for Department of Health Funds Description.

The Department of Health through the Administration of Health Care provides access to quality health care to families that cannot afford medical insurance. "*Mi Salud*" (My Health) provides access to health services to 165,380 (0 through 5 years) high needs children in Puerto Rico with an allocation of \$20,159,822. Collaborative agreements are also in place with Medicaid for the administration of the medical insurance policy for Medicaid beneficiaries of the State Protective Service Agency, and with the Ryan White Program for medications for VIH patients. This effort provides our high needs children the opportunity to access health services and Early Head Start,

Head Start and CCDF early learning programs access and link families to the services of ‘Mi Salud’.

Puerto Rico’s Healthy Start Program directs its strategies to lower infant mortality rates and to improve health and life’s quality on pregnant women and their children. This Program has two components: home visiting and community outreach. The Home Visiting Program is based on case management; it is a service coordination model, which provides individual orientation, referral and follow-ups to families in order to fulfill the families’ health and social needs. Also, the Outreach Community Program conducts activities about important health topics for women, pregnant women, children, adolescents and their families. The outreach component identifies pregnant women and babies in the community that are not receiving or do not have access to health services and provides them with the information and referrals necessary to access these services. Approximately 43,000 children benefit of this program and the \$500,000 are allocated for this effort.

Newborn babies are a priority for the Department of Health. A variety of initiatives are in place to guarantee that these infants have adequate screenings and referrals process. An example of this is the Congenital Birth Defects Vigilance System. This system helps identify infants that are born with abnormalities, and guarantees them a rapid evaluation to identify the major areas of needs and the provision of services that might be needs. Also, the Department of Health has an education campaign to promote the use of folic acid in women from age 10, to prevent birth defects. Collaboration agreements are in place with March of Dimes, Medical Insurance Companies, the University of Puerto Rico, Head Start, health providers, and Department of Education, among others. During the fiscal year, \$175,000 was allocated for these initiatives and 166 children have been referred for services.

The identification through a screening process and referral processes are vital to guarantee that developmental delays are identified and a Service Family Intervention Plan elaborated for each high needs child. “*Avanzando Juntos*”, an early intervention program, is a multidisciplinary, coordinated and family centered system that provides services to children 0 to 36 months that have developmental delays. Services are provided in natural environments where the child grows and develops. A close coordination is kept in place with early learning programs to provide early

intervention services in the early learning and development settings. Collaborative agreements are signed and in place with the Department of Education, Early Head Start, Head Start, Family Department, among others for the provision of these services to high needs children. In this past year 5,224 children are receiving services and a total of \$4,483,906 federal funds and \$2,316,600 have been allocated for these services. The mission of the Division of Ambulatory Services for Children and Adolescents under the Administration of Auxiliary Treatment Services is to guarantee that the population of Children and Adolescents with Severe Emotional Disturbances has access to treatment services, using the network of public and private providers to improve quality of life, accessibility and continuity of services. The System developed is child, family centered and youth guided. These services are accessible, and address the physical, emotional, social, educational and spiritual needs of the children and adolescents. A special project has been developed in Fajardo, Vieques and Culebra, communities identified as high needs, to offer services to approximately 300 hundred children that severely emotional disturb.

The Department of Family through the Administration of Children and Families, ADFAN, is the agency responsible of protective services for our children. All children under protective services are considered high needs children and have been a priority in the provision of childcare and development services in CCDF, Early Head Start and Head Start Programs. In order to guarantee that children under protective services have access to high quality early learning and development centers the Division for Foster Care and Adoption Services, have established collaborative agreements for the provision of this type of service with ACUDEN, Head Start Programs and the Department of Education. These collaborative agreements facilitate and expedite the referral and placement of children in early learning settings. Also, ADFAN has in place a variety of family engagement strategies to stabilize families, prevent removal of children and the reunification of families, Schools for Family Life is an example of this effort. The Schools for Family Life offer Psycho-Educational instructional modules to parents that have their children places in foster care because of child abuse and/or neglect. Also, the Schools for Healthy Living and Parenting provides adults, adolescents and children training and workshops to promote a nonviolence environment by working with Family Peace, Family Peace Promoters and Youth Working for Peace.

The Sports and Recreation Department has been developing a series of initiatives for children ages 5-13 in high needs communities. These activities promote the physical wellbeing, positive self-esteem, weight control, crime prevention, and values, among other areas. “Open Court” and “Playing for your Health” are two of the initiatives that have been put in place to promote recreational and physical development in children. Approximately 7,000 children will be participating of this initiatives in high needs communities.

Legislation

A strong public policy regarding early childhood initiatives has been fundamental in the development of key service programs. Since 2007, the Puerto Rico Legislature actively embarked on strengthening our public policy to promote better education and services for the children of Puerto Rico. This focus resulted in the approval of three important bills: ACT 93, 2008, requiring the Implementation of Public Policies for Early Childhood; ACT 193, 2008, Law for the Integral Protection and Wellbeing of Children; and ACT 276, 2008, to increase the penalties when child abuse is not reported.

Continued legislative efforts gave way to the approval of various other bills to support existing policies and to further strengthen service provisions. ACT 114, 2009, is an excellent example of strengthening existing public policy by empowering municipalities to implement or make accessible childcare programs to children and families in their jurisdictions. It allows each municipality to establishing consortiums or collaborative agreements with state agencies to provide accessible childcare programs mandated by law when their fiscal resources are limited. In 2009, the Executive and Legislative branches joined efforts in a greatly needed reform of existing adoption legislation. ACT 186, 2009 established new standards in the Adoption System establishing the child’s wellbeing, not family union, as the core of the new law. Processes and qualifying standards were revised to consider the child’s well-being and facilitate legal procedures that were previously taking years to complete. Thanks to new Adoption Reform, hundreds of children have been properly placed with adoptive families, providing them with a new opportunity in life.

Other legislative efforts include updates to existing licensing and safety requirements. Examples

of these bills are: ACT 210, 2009, which requires the Family Department to publish in its web page a register of all licensed Childcare Centers in Puerto Rico; and ACT 194, 2010, which requires written operational emergency plans in all childcare centers. Together, these efforts contribute to promote greater stability and quality in the areas of service provision.

Conclusion There is a saying that states that “invest in our children is an investment in our future”. In Puerto Rico, that statement describes the philosophy that guided most of our initiatives along the years, as the information provided above demonstrates. Our government recognizes that in order to have a brighter future, we have to work in the development of integral human beings; educating them to be competitive in many aspects of the daily living. “Race to the Top”, gave us the opportunity to evaluate what we have in place, redesign what is necessary and line-up all our efforts in the area of early learning and development.

In the following pages we describe the plan to reform our current “Early Intervention System”. It is a well thought process, with many innovative projects, that implicates changes at different levels of the system - from the development of professionals in early education to the creation of recreational parks specifically designed to promote children development. We are very excited of this opportunity, and it is our sincere commitment to start working with our plan as soon as we receive the approval of our grant.

	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	34,174	81%
Toddlers ages 1 through 2	79,817	81%
Preschoolers ages 3 to kindergarten entry	115,386	82%
Total number of children, birth to kindergarten entry, from low-income families	229,377	82%

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

Table (A)(1)-1: Children from Low-Income¹ families, by age		
	Number of children from Low-Income families in the State	Children from Low-Income families as a percentage of all children in the State
<i>[Enter text here to indicate data source and clarify or explain any of these data if needed]</i>		

Table (A)(1)-2: Special populations of Children with High Needs		
<i>The State should use these data to guide its thinking about where specific activities may be required to address special populations' unique needs. The State will describe such activities throughout its application.</i>		
Special populations: Children who . . .	Number of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who...	Percentage of children (from birth to kindergarten entry) in the State who...
Have disabilities or developmental delays²	13,952	6%
Are English learners³	N/A	N/A
Reside on "Indian Lands"	N/A	N/A
Are migrant⁴	N/A	N/A
Are homeless⁵	168	5.3%
Are in foster care	586	9%
Other as identified by the State	N/A	N/A
Describe:		
<i>[Enter text here to indicate data source and clarify or explain any of these data if needed.] Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)</i>		

² For purposes of this application, children with disabilities or developmental delays are defined as children birth through kindergarten entry that have an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individual Education Plan (IEP).

³ For purposes of this application, children who are English learners are children birth through kindergarten entry who have home languages other than English.

⁴ For purposes of this application, children who are migrant are children birth through kindergarten entry who meet the definition of "migratory child" in ESEA section 1309(2).

⁵ The term "homeless children" has the meaning given the term "homeless children and youths" in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (425 U.S.C. 11434a(2)).

Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age				
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>				
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age			
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Centers of the Department of Education</i> <i>Data Source and Year: Centers of the Department of Education 2010</i>	20	50	1,077	1,147
Early Head Start and Head Start⁶ <i>Data Source and Year: PIR 2009-10</i>	386	1,190	35,593	37,169
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 <i>Data Source and Year: Child Count Part C IDEA 2010 / Title I of IDEA</i>	265	1,368	3,571 14,681	19,885
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA <i>Data Source and Year: Title I 2010</i>	N/A	N/A	29,318	29,318
Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program <i>Data Source and Year: ACF-801-2010</i>	*11,016		8,790	19,806
Other <i>Specify: Even Start</i> <i>Data Source and Year: Title IV 2010</i>	29	81	N/A	110
Other <i>Specify:</i> <i>Data Source and Year:</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

⁶ Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age					
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age				
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total	
<i>Add additional rows as needed. [Enter text here to clarify or explain any of these data if needed.]</i>					
<i>*CCDF data about children with High Needs is collected by the following age groups 1.11 and 2.11</i>					
Table (A)(1)-4: Historical data on funding for Early Learning and Development					
Type of investment	Funding for each of the Past 5 Fiscal Years				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start and Head Start⁷ In-Kind	30,127,740	29,688,508	29,230,739	31,302,256	30,850,411
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Human Resources and Early Childhood Program</i>	3,690,000	4,686,000	4,636,000	3,561,000	4,486,000
State contributions to IDEA Part C	2,570,176	2,570,176	2,571,500	2,316,600	2,316,600
State contributions for special education and related services for children with disabilities, ages 3 through kindergarten entry	233,851,868.87	297,047,276.50	303,131,866.07	227,101,988.29	277,564,127.18
Total State contributions to CCDF⁸	1,526,140	1,756,070	2,138,590	1,305,505	1,626,281

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

⁸ Total State contributions to CCDF must include Maintenance of Effort (MOE), State Match, and any State contributions exceeding State MOE or Match.

Table (A)(1)-3: Participation of Children with High Needs in different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, by age					
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program, by age				
	Infants under age 1	Toddlers ages 1 through 2	Preschoolers ages 3 until kindergarten entry	Total	
State match to CCDF <i>Exceeded/Met/Not Met (if exceeded, indicate amount by which match was exceeded)</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs⁹	7,156,250	14,312,500	14,312,500	14,312,500	14,000,000
Other State contributions <i>Specify: Newborn Screening</i>	198,000	198,000	180,000	180,000	N/A
Other State contributions <i>Specify: Government Health Insurance Plan-Mi Salud</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,209,322	N/A
Total State contributions:	279,120,174	350,258,530	356,201,195	330,289,171	330,843,419

Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State					
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years¹⁰				
	2007	2008	2009¹¹	2010¹⁷	2011¹⁷
State-funded preschool	394	420	366	270	866

⁹ Include TANF transfers to CCDF as well as direct TANF spending on Early Learning and Development Programs.

¹⁰ Include all Children with High Needs served with both Federal dollars and State supplemental dollars.

¹¹ Note to Reviewers: The number of children served reflects a mix of Federal, State, and local spending. Head Start, IDEA, and CCDF all received additional Federal funding under the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which may be reflected in increased numbers of children served in 2009-2011.

Table (A)(1)-5: Historical data on the participation of Children with High Needs in Early Learning and Development Programs in the State					
<i>Note: A grand total is not included in this table since some children participate in multiple Early Learning and Development programs.</i>					
Type of Early Learning and Development Program	Total number of Children with High Needs participating in each type of Early Learning and Development Program for each of the past 5 years¹⁰				
	2007	2008	2009¹¹	2010¹⁷	2011¹⁷
<i>(annual census count; e.g., October 1 count) Specify: PreK</i>					
Early Head Start and Head Start¹² <i>(funded enrollment)</i>	18,014 40,237	18,014 39,798	18,014 38,074	18,014 37,248	18,110 38,414
Programs and services funded by IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 <i>(annual December 1 count)</i>	4,762	4,838	4,940	5,204	N/A
	9,644	8,185	14,081	13,952	*12,362
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA <i>(total number of children who receive Title I services annually, as reported in the Consolidated State Performance Report)</i>	499,974	475,332	477,997	487,996	445,856
Programs receiving CCDF funds <i>(average monthly served)</i>	7,293	7,137	20,523	23,007	19,642
Other <i>Describe:</i>					
<i>Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration (ASSMCA)</i>	23	125	50	34	N/A
<i>Health Services Administration (ASES)</i>	169,709	169,874	171,270	172,477	165,380
<i>Healthy Start</i>	910	854	784	1,180	900
<i>Newborn Screening</i>	46,736	45,675	45,112	43,663	43,000
<i>[Enter text here to indicate data source and clarify or explain any of these data if needed. Include 2011 if data are available. The final column of data should match that reported in Table (A)(1)-3.]</i>					
<i>*Data from Part B Section 619 from 2011 is a preliminary number of August 30th, 2011</i>					

¹² Including children participating in Migrant Head Start Programs and Tribal Head Start Programs.

Table (A)(1)-6 : Current status of the State's Early Learning and Development Standards			
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the State's Early Learning and Development Standards address the different age groups by Essential Domain of School Readiness</i>			
Essential Domains of School Readiness	Age Groups		
	Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers
Language and literacy development	X	X	X
Cognition and general knowledge (including early math and early scientific development)	X	X	X
Approaches toward learning	X	X	X
Physical well-being and motor development	X	X	X
Social and emotional development	X	X	X
<i>[Enter text to explain or clarify information as needed]</i>			

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.</i>					
Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
State-funded preschool <i>Specify: Observation Scaled for Prek & K</i>	X	X	N/A	N/A	
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹³	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/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	X	X			

¹³ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Table (A)(1)-7: Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where an element of a Comprehensive Assessment System is currently required.</i>					
Types of programs or systems	Elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System				
	Screening Measures	Formative Assessments	Measures of Environmental Quality	Measures of the Quality of Adult-Child Interactions	Other
Programs receiving CCDF funds	X	X	X	X	
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Specify by tier (add rows if needed):</i>	X	X	X	X	
State licensing requirements	X	X	X	X	
Other <i>Describe:</i>					
<i>[Edit the labels on the above rows as needed, and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i>					

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
State-funded preschool <i>Specify PAV-3 Vaccination</i>	X	X	X	X	

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
Early Head Start and Head Start	X	X	X	X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part C	X	X		X	
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619	X				
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	X				
Programs receiving CCDF funds	X	X	X	X	
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Specify by tier (add rows if needed):</i> PASITO Promotions -PASITO 1-5 (different levels complexity) -PASITO 4 -PASITO 1-5 (different levels of complexity) -PASITO 4-5	X	X X		X X X	

Table (A)(1)-8: Elements of high-quality health promotion practices currently required within the State					
<i>Please place an "X" in the boxes to indicate where the elements of high-quality health promotion practices are currently required.</i>					
Types of Programs or Systems	Elements of high-quality health promotion practices				
	Health and safety requirements	Developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up	Health promotion, including physical activity and healthy eating habits	Health literacy	Other
State licensing requirements			X		
Other <i>Describe: Title V – Children with Special Health Care Needs</i>	X	X	X	X	
<i>[Edit the labels on the above rows as needed, and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i>					

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
State-funded preschool <i>Specify:</i>	One of the strategies developed by the DE to strengthen family engagement to schools is the initiative paid for with federal Title I funding, CREMPE. This resource center's main objective is to collaborate with the public policy of the agency to stimulate the participation of parents in school related programs geared to improve students and specifically their children academic achievement. The DE, thru a circular letter has established as a requisite that each school has to develop an action plan to get parents more involved, through a diversity of activities. During this school year, CREMPE has a Project Manager, Auxiliary Administrator and a Secretary at the central level of the agency; and 66 auxiliaries for general services (Parent

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
	Coordinators) in all school districts. These personnel will be trained in different subjects who will then be communicated to all parents of these assigned schools thru special activities. The final activity will be a Parent's Congress to share their experiences. In addition to these strategies there are School Councils in which parents are represented and are able to make decisions on everything concerning their children's education. They are working in conjunction with the school principals, teachers and a community member. They have the responsibility to make decisions that will benefit their children's education and familiarize themselves with their academic achievements. Early childhood and Pre K programs have as a part of their group a parents committee that works in conjunction with the teachers in all aspects related to the curriculum, environment and decision making in the area of academic achievement. They assist in the classroom, in extracurricular activities and administration. Parents are very important for the optimal development of their children. In conjunction with the Department of Family Affairs, we began an initiative called Promesa del Hombre so as to strengthen male parents role in his/her child raising, values, and respect towards the mother figure. Parents interact and participate in activities developed by the teacher to provide follow up to daily activities at school and home.
Early Head Start and Head Start	Early Head Start and HS Programs are exempt of licensing requirements in Puerto Rico. Therefore, there are not State requirements for family engagement applicable for this Program.
Programs funded under IDEA Part C	Early Intervention Services are family centered. Family members are active participants in all parts of the Early Intervention process, from the initial intake interview to the determination of eligibility, to the preparation and implementation of the Individual Family Service Plan, to the transition to services under Part B 99.8% of Early Intervention services are provided in the child's natural environment including the home and the results/outcomes of the Individual Family Service Plan are integrated into the family's daily routines. When family members are not able to participate in service sessions, the child's care provider acts as substitute.

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
Programs funded under IDEA Part B, section 619	<p>One of the strategies developed by the DE to strengthen family engagement to schools is the initiative paid for with federal Title I funding, CREMPE. This resource center's main objective is to collaborate with the public policy of the agency to stimulate the participation of parents in school related programs geared to improve students and specifically their children academic achievement. The DE, thru a circular letter has established as a requisite that each school has to develop an action plan to get parents more involved, through a diversity of activities. During this school year, CREMPE has a Project Manager, Auxiliary Administrator and a Secretary at the central level of the agency; and 66 auxiliaries for general services (Parent Coordinators) in all school districts. These personnel will be trained in different subjects who will then be communicated to all parents of these assigned schools thru special activities. The final activity will be a Parent's Congress to share their experiences. In addition to these strategies there are School Councils in which parents are represented and are able to make decisions on everything concerning their children's education. They are working in conjunction with the school principals, teachers and a community member. They have the responsibility to make decisions that will benefit their children's education and familiarize themselves with their academic achievements. Early childhood and Pre K programs have as a part of their group a parents committee that works in conjunction with the teachers in all aspects related to the curriculum, environment and decision making in the area of academic achievement. They assist in the classroom, in extracurricular activities and administration. Parents are very important for the optimal development of their children. In conjunction with the Department of Family Affairs, we began an initiative called Promesa del Hombre so as to strengthen male parents role in his/her child raising, values, and respect towards the mother figure. Parents interact and participate in activities developed by the teacher to provide follow up to daily activities at school and home.</p>

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	<p>One of the strategies developed by the DE to strengthen family engagement to schools is the initiative paid for with federal Title I funding, CREMPE. This resource center's main objective is to collaborate with the public policy of the agency to stimulate the participation of parents in school related programs geared to improve students and specifically their children academic achievement. The DE, thru a circular letter has established as a requisite that each school has to develop an action plan to get parents more involved, through a diversity of activities. During this school year, CREMPE has a Project Manager, Auxiliary Administrator and a Secretary at the central level of the agency; and 66 auxiliaries for general services (Parent Coordinators) in all school districts. These personnel will be trained in different subjects who will then be communicated to all parents of these assigned schools thru special activities. The final activity will be a Parent's Congress to share their experiences. In addition to these strategies there are School Councils in which parents are represented and are able to make decisions on everything concerning their children's education. They are working in conjunction with the school principals, teachers and a community member. They have the responsibility to make decisions that will benefit their children's education and familiarize themselves with their academic achievements. Early childhood and Pre K programs have as a part of their group a parents committee that works in conjunction with the teachers in all aspects related to the curriculum, environment and decision making in the area of academic achievement. They assist in the classroom, in extracurricular activities and administration. Parents are very important for the optimal development of their children. In conjunction with the Department of Family Affairs, we began an initiative called Promesa del Hombre so as to strengthen male parents role in his/her child raising, values, and respect towards the mother figure. Parents interact and participate in activities developed by the teacher to provide follow up to daily activities at school and home.</p>

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
Programs receiving CCDF funds	The states requires that the owner of the child care center submit a bylaw in which norms, selection criteria, children ages and the child care center operations are established. The center is expected to evidence: two way communication with parents and children; group and individual activities to be developed in which parents participate; meetings in which the Individualized Plan for each child, progress and achievement evaluation are discussed with parents; educational, cultural and social activities in which family members participate; as a requirement the center must have an activities schedule directed towards the integral development of the child.
Current Quality Rating and Improvement System requirements <i>Specify by tier (add rows if needed):</i>	<p>Section: 7.1 Knowing and taking into consideration the childrens' families</p> <p>Pasito 1: The center's staff uses formal strategies to understand the children's family structure (Family members, race, culture, gender, religion, native language, socioeconomic status, and home location.</p> <p>Pasito 2: The center's staff maintains communication with the families for the well being of the children.</p> <p>Pasito 3: The center's staff communicates with the families daily regarding: activities, child development, and matters of mutual interest for teachers and families.</p> <p>Pasito 4: The center's staff use formal and informal communication with families and have them participate in centers: vision, mission, educational philosophy, early childhood development and learning, curriculum objectives, strategies, educational goals, planning activities.</p> <p>Pasito 5: The center's staff uses the information on the families to have a well suited: Environment, curriculum, teaching methods.</p> <p>7.2 Shares information with staff and family that fosters childhood development</p> <p>Pasito 1: The center's staff maintains communication with the families for the childrens well being: policies, procedures, transitions to other centers and schools, basic information regarding registration and options for other centers and schools.</p>

Table (A)(1)-9: Elements of a high-quality family engagement strategy currently required within the State	
<i>Please describe the types of high-quality family engagement strategies required in the State. Types of strategies may, for example, include parent access to the program, ongoing two-way communication with families, parent education in child development, outreach to fathers and other family members, training and support for families as children move to preschool and kindergarten, social networks of support, intergenerational activities, linkages with community supports and family literacy programs, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.</i>	
Types of Programs or Systems	Describe Family Engagement Strategies Required Today
	<p>Pasito 2: The center's staff informs families by formal and informal means of the center's system for the evaluation of children's progress regarding: the purpose of evaluation, the procedure involved in the evaluation, the results of the evaluation, when to share the evaluation with the family, how to use the information, procedures for gathering family contributions</p> <p>Pasito 3: The center's staff shares observations regarding a child's developmental aspects with the families in order to : show sensitivity and empathy, respect the confidentiality of such observations, provide necessary documentation and explanation, suggest steps to be taken, support families in their decisions to obtain required services , effectively manage a child's transition to programs in special education, makes referrals to professionals if necessary</p> <p>Pasito 4: the center's staff promotes dialogue with the families and uses techniques to talk through difficulties that could arise from social interactions, and to talk about the child's performance in the activities: communicates daily/weekly, family meetings, by telephone or email, house visits</p> <p>Pasito 5: the center staff works with the families to find solutions that could be included in the classroom: Decisions, goals, plans.</p>
State licensing requirements	The states requires that the owner of the child care center submit a bylaw in which norms, selection criteria, children ages and the child care center operations are established. The center is expected to evidence: two way communication with parents and children; group and individual activities to be developed in which parents participate; meetings in which the Individualized Plan for each child, progress and achievement evaluation are discussed with parents; educational, cultural and social activities in which family members participate; as a requirement the center must have an activities schedule directed towards the integral development of the child.
Other <i>Describe: Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration (ASSMCA)</i>	The focus of ASSMCA's family based services is to reduce risk factors to mental illness and substance abuse among individuals, families and communities. At the family level, ASSMCA works to raise awareness among parents of their role in prevention. Positive Parenting Skills Workshop help parents identify risk factors in order to increase their children's resiliency against these factors. Educational workshops are provided in both the school and the community settings on topics such as parenting skills and conflict

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
	management. The target population for these interventions is the parents of children who receive education services for substance prevention and health promotion through ASSMCA's school based curriculum and services plan. Parenting skills workshops are provided to parents of children who are in treatment for mental health disorders.
<i>[Edit the labels on the above rows as needed, and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i>	

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials¹⁴ currently available in the State				
List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
EHS/HS Teachers - Baccalaureate Degree in ECE	NO	1,150	74	
EHS/HS Teachers - CDA	NO	140	7	
EHS/HS Assistant Teachers - Baccalaureate Degree in ECE	NO	1,972	6	
EHS/HS Assistant Teachers - CDA	NO	478	24	

¹⁴ Includes both credentials awarded and degrees attained.

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials¹⁴ currently available in the State				
List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
CCDF Contracted Providers and ACUDEN's Child Care Centers Teachers - Baccalaureate Degree in ECE	NO	198	45	
CCDF Contracted Providers and ACUDEN's Child Care Centers Assistant Teachers - CDA	NO	16	12	
Department of Education Teachers - Baccalaureate Degree in ECE -PreK	NO	35	85	
<i>[Add additional rows as needed and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</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				
List postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in the State that issue credentials or degrees to Early Childhood Educators	Number of Early Childhood Educators that received an early learning credential or degree from this entity in the previous year	Does the entity align its programs with the State's current Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>		
Universidad Central de Bayamón	9	NO		
Pontificia Universidad Católica en PR-Arecibo	7	NO		
Universidad Metropolitana	63	NO		
Universidad Interamericana de PR-San Germán	8	NO		
Universidad Interamericana de PR-	3	NO		

Table (A)(1)-10: Status of all early learning and development workforce credentials¹⁴ currently available in the State				
List the early learning and development workforce credentials in the State	If State has a workforce knowledge and competency framework, is the credential aligned to it? <i>(Yes/No/Not Available)</i>	Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have the credential		Notes (if needed)
		#	%	
Aguadilla				
Universidad Interamericana de PR-Arecibo	7			NO
Universidad Interamericana de PR-Barranquitas	3			NO
Universidad Interamericana de PR-Metro	7			NO
Universidad Interamericana de PR-Ponce	9			NO
Universidad Interamericana de PR-Fajardo	4			NO
Universidad Interamericana de PR-Guayama	8			NO
John Dewey College-División Universitarian	16			NO
National University College-Bayamón	5			NO
National University College - Arecibo	4			NO
EDIC College*	0			

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)
Atlantic College*	0	NO
Universidad de Puerto Rico*	0	NO
Universidad del Sagrado Corazón*	0	NO
Universidad Metropolitana – Cayey*	0	NO
University of Phoenix*	0	NO
University of Phoenix - Puerto Rico*	0	NO
<i>This data was provided by the Puerto Rico Council on Education. These institutions offer the degree but show no graduation numbers. (See attachment 54)</i>		

Table (A)(1)-12: Current status of the State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment					
State's Kindergarten Entry Assessment	Essential Domains of School Readiness				
	Language and literacy	Cognition and general knowledge (including early mathematics and early scientific development)	Approaches toward learning	Physical well-being and motor development	Social and emotional development
Domain covered? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Domain aligned to Early Learning and Development Standards? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Instrument(s) used? (Specify)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evidence of validity and reliability? (Y/N)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Evidence of validity for English learners? (Y/N)	N	N	N	N	N
Evidence of validity for children with disabilities? (Y/N)	N	N	N	N	N

How broadly administered? <i>(If not administered statewide, include date for reaching statewide administration)</i>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Results included in Statewide Longitudinal Data System? <i>(Y/N)</i>	N	N	N	N	N

Table (A)(1)-13: Profile of all early learning and development data systems currently used in the State							
List each data system currently in use in the State that includes early learning and development data	Essential Data Elements						
	<i>Place an "X" for each Essential Data Element (refer to the definition) included in each of the State's data systems</i>						
	Unique child identifier	Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier	Unique program site identifier	Child and family demographic information	Early Childhood Educator demographic information	Data on program structure and quality	Child-level program participation and attendance
Program Resources and Outcomes Management Information System (PROMIS)			X	X	X	X	X
Child Care Integrated Management Application (CIMA)						X	X
Department of Education - Student Information System (SIE)	X	X	X	X			X
<i>[Add additional rows as needed and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i>							
<p><i>This is the student id given automatically by the SIE. The system has students from PK and kindergarten that comply with the definition given. Is a unique number for registered teachers in the SIE that provides services to early childhood students. It is a unique code at the school level that is given by the planning office when kindergarten students are serviced. The SIE saves a historic register of the student that monitors attendance.</i></p>							

(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.

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of ten pages)

Puerto Rico has been committed with early learning and development for many years. We realized many years ago the importance of this early years and the importance to invest in our children. During the last five years we have dedicated our resources and made a priority the development of adequate programmatic infrastructure in order to establish a statewide Tiered Quality Improvement.

The process established to write this State Plan has permitted us to identify our strengths and our weakness regarding the early learning and development system. It has been a learning process to all Participating Agencies the elaboration of this Plan specifically the development of a systematic way for the Tiered Quality Improvement Systems. When analyzing the components of this tiered system: Early Learning and Development Standards; A comprehensive assessment system; Early Childhood Educator qualifications; Family Engagement strategies; Health promotion practices and effective data practices, we had the opportunity to really look into our structure and establish our priorities for the State High Quality Plan.

Puerto Rico has Early Learning and Development Standards in place since year 2000. The latest revision was conducted in year 2010. These standards have been utilized by EHS, HS, and CCDF programs in Puerto Rico. The State Advisory Council has been disseminating and training about the standards to early learning programs. In the process of analysis for Race to the Top, we identified that even though we had done many training efforts on standards, much needed to be done to really have this standards align with curricula, and the evaluation process.

Many of our early learning programs have been performing screening and evaluation process according to their program policies but necessarily because the State had established an uniform approach for aligning and integrating assessment and sharing assessment results, to avoid duplication and to be able to coordinate services for children of High Needs. In 2008 the Department of Health develop Guidelines for Preventive Health Services an recommended the ASQ Questionnaire as the appropriate instrument to be used by early learning programs. Still many of our early learning and development programs need to improve the process of assessment including the administration, interpretation and use of assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs and services.

During the last five years Puerto Rico designated funds from different sources to improve the quality of the early childhood workforce. Universities joined in with State Agencies to develop

trainings with the most recent tendencies in early childhood education. Approximately 4,880 teachers, teachers' assistants and director participated of the many efforts ACUDEN put into place. But again, when analyzing our professional development efforts we lack the most important thing: core knowledge.

The Participating Agencies have in place a variety of strategies for family engagement. These strategies include training on various parenting skills, traveling backpacks, Early Childhood Resource and Referral Centers (CENTRANA), parent/teacher communication among others. All this strategies have been very effective and parents have enjoyed and improve their commitment with their families and children. CENTRANA has been one of the most popular initiatives among parents, specifically their educational materials lending libraries, training and workshops. Family engagement standards have not been established by the State and as we develop this early learning system recognize the importance of these standards for all early learning and development standards. Health promotion practices have been a priority for the Department of Health during the last five years. Their efforts have been geared to prenatal care and newborn babies, specifically the identification of developmental delays in an early stage. Also, the Guidelines for Preventive Health Care published on 2008 has provided early learning programs adequate information to establish policies regarding many health promotion practices. All Participating Agencies in one way or another have been addressing health promotion practices, including good eating habits, nutrition, physical activities among others. In the analysis process conducted to prepare our State Plan we identified that we did not have appropriate outdoor areas (parks) for our early childhood that will promote physical activity, recreation, social skills, problem solving skills, physical development, among other areas. In addition, we recognize that the Early Childhood Workforce lacked adequate training in movement, recreation and physical activities for preschoolers. All agencies in their analysis coincided in one thing we lack and adequate early childhood data system. Many of our agencies collect information in data base systems, partially or still are collecting data manually. Efforts of developing data systems have been in place but most of them stay at the drawing table. This situation occurs for lack of an adequate organizational structure that will have the vision to design in collaboration with all agencies a system that could improve our early learning process and also because of lack of resources.

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

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

- (C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.
- (C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems.

- (C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.
- (C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In scoring the selection criterion, peer reviewers will determine, based on the evidence the State submits, whether each element of the selection criterion is implemented or planned; the quality

of the implementation or plan (see the definition of a High-Quality Plan for the components reviewers will be judging); the extent to which the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs in the State are included and addressed; and the extent to which the unique needs of the State's special populations of Children with High Needs are considered and addressed. The State is responsible for providing clear and detailed information to assist the peer reviewers in making these determinations.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of five pages)

Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State Created by Governor Luis Fortuño in 2009 with the approval of an executive order, the PR Early Childhood State Advisory Council (PRSAC) provides the necessary structure to promote and guarantee active participation and commitment from all governmental and non-governmental components. It has already proven to be an effective tool in bringing executive agencies to the table in order to coordinate programs and services. The PRSAC has a fulltime staff and support personnel dedicated to establishing the necessary coordination to maintain each participant's commitment and responsibility with the State Plan. The proposed plan would allow further participation through the incorporation of private and non-governmental institutions already working with children. Each State Agency committing to the proposed State Plan is formally agreeing to partner in this initiative through a Memorandum-of-Understanding (MOU), *(see Appendix 3-12)*. This binding agreement formalizes each participant's responsibility and promotes continued collaboration. Communication with State Agencies will flow through three different channels: regular State Cabinet meetings with the Governor; PRSAC meetings; and monthly reporting. The PRSAC will establish monthly meetings to delineate strategies geared towards compliance and ongoing verification of all agreements. These meetings will allow each State Agency to establish monthly goals in their work plan, in collaboration with partner agencies that play a key role in each initiative. The PRSAC will expand its structure to include various advisors, providing expertise in early childhood areas and legal support, and a group of coordinators that will guide the compliance process. The PRSAC team will have the direct responsibility of ensuring active participation and collaboration throughout the duration of the implementation plan.

Key stakeholders will be actively incorporated to the worktable, formally committing their support and participation. PRSAC has already identified these additional partners: Presidents of legislative standing committees on Education and Family Affairs; a representative of the Judicial System with knowledge in family court matters; Parents of Children with Disabilities Association (APNI); Consulting Committee on Special Education (CCEE); Down-Syndrome Association of PR; Autism Alliance of PR; and early-childhood faculty members from the University of Puerto Rico, and other private universities. PRSAC will conduct a formal process

of invitation and further extend their voluntary participation as an official parent and educational council responsible for advising PRSAC members. Upon acceptance, these representatives will be formally included in regular meetings and will be asked to submit recommendations periodically. The PRSAC have been active in promoting the participation of other important stakeholders and state agencies through a series of discussions and meetings. Three focus groups were convened and divided as follow: CCDF and Head Start, the private child care and development providers and the Association of Families of Children with Special Needs. The focus groups addressed the licensing process, family engagement, professional development and QIRS. The results of these discussions are incorporated in this proposal. The lead agencies were brought to the table as well, during a two day meeting with all the agencies represented discussions worked around how the State should pronounce itself in this reform and the role each one of them should have in order to achieve the goal of closing the gap for our high need children. Another set of meeting took place between the PRSAC and each agency Secretary. Those meeting proved to be extremely helpful for the secretaries as they understood clearly their responsibility and made evident the commitment they have with reform that the State is proposing. The PRSAC will design a formal process to delineate communication, promote orderly participation and to solve arising controversies. A subcommittee will be responsible for ensuring active and consistent participation, and a second subcommittee will be responsible for solving controversies or disputes among participating agencies and representatives through mediation. Success of the State Plan will depend on establishing and maintaining adequate communication and partnering efforts between government agencies and interested stakeholders. The PRSAC, as lead agency, has the proper governance to manage these important elements. See Organizational Chart included – *(See Attachment 14)*

Table (A)(3)-1: Governance-related roles and responsibilities	
Participating State Agency	Governance-related roles and responsibilities
Governor's Office	Lead Agency – Promotion of the Early Learning System among early learning programs. Integrated EHS and HS in all the reform agenda. Liason between all sectors. Provision of TA to all Participating Agencies on the implementation of the State Plan. Monitoring the implementation of the propose agenda, designing the early learning data system.
Administrator - Administration for Integral Child Care & Development	Expansion of the QRIS system, dissemination of early learning standards, implementation of the incentive for providers, promote family engagement thru CENTRANA, promoting the use of early learning standard in family day care, early childhood workforce development, promoting the early reader program, establishing the QRIS Unit .
Department of Family	Licensing Restructuring, Family engagement standards, automation of the licensing process.
Department of Health	Trainings and technical assistance of Guidelines for Health Preventive Care, and assessment process.
Department of Sports and Recreation	Improving the physical activity on preschoolers, providing adequate recreational and physical activities spaces, early childhood workforce development
Department of Education	Completing the kindergarten entry process by expanding their data system, improving the quality of Kindergarten and promotion of early learning standards.
Other Entities	
State advisory council on early childhood education and care	
State Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA	
Other	
<i>Specify:</i>	
Other	
<i>Specify:</i>	

Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable)	
List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State	Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix (Y/N)?
Cámara de Representantes / “House of Representatives”	Y
Senado de Puerto Rico / “Senate of Puerto Rico”	Y
Oficina Comunitaria y Base de Fé / “Office of Community and Faith-Based Initiatives”	Y
Universidad de Puerto Rico / “University of Puerto Rico”	Y
Corporación de Puerto Rico Para la Difusión Pública- “Puerto Rico Corporation for Public Broadcasting.”	Y
Fondos Unidos de Puerto Rico / “United Way”	Y
Cámara de Comercio de Puerto Rico / “Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce”	Y
San Jorge Children’s Hospital	Y
Apni, Inc	Y
Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico / “Museum of Art’s Puerto Rico”	Y
Centros Sor Isolina Ferré - “Centres Sor Isolina Ferré”	Y
Fundación Angel Ramos - “Angel Ramos Foundation”	Y
Sistema Universitario Ana G. Méndez / “Ana G. Méndez University System	Y
La Casa Cuna de San Juan - “The Birthplace House of San Juan”	Y

Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable)	
List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State	Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix (Y/N)?
Asociación Directores de Head Star Puerto Rico, Inc - “Association Directors Head Start Puerto Rico, Inc.”	Y
Casa De Niños Manuel Fernández Juncos – “House Manuel Fernández Juncos –Boys Foster House”	Y
Fundación Hogar Niñito Jesús - “Foundation Home Little Jesus”	Y
Politécnico Amigó, Inc. - “Polytechnic Amigó, Inc”	Y
ESCAPE	Y
VIDAS, Servicio, Sociales Episcopales, Inc. - “LIVES, Episcopal Social Services, Inc.”	Y
P.E.C.E.S, Educación y Desarrollo Empresarial Comunitario – “P.E.C.E.S Educational and Community Business Development Institution”	Y
Forjando un Nuevo Comienzo “Shapping a New Beginning”	Y
YMCA of San Juan	Y
Josephson Institute	Y
Subway PR	Y
RICOH	Y
AMGEN	Y
TELEMUNDO	Y
Empresas Fonalledas	Y

Table (A)(3)-2: Early Learning Intermediary Organizations and local early learning councils (if applicable)	
List every Intermediary Organization and local early learning council (if applicable) in the State	Did this entity provide a letter of intent or support which is included in the Appendix (Y/N)?
<i>[Add additional rows as needed and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i>	

(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).

(Enter narrative here, in particular to address (A)(4)(a) & (A)(4)(c) – recommended maximum of eight pages)

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
Child Care (State Funds) 1666	\$1,779,935	\$1,779,935	\$ 1,779,935	\$1,779,935	\$ 7,119,740
Child Care (State Funds) 1966	\$779,935	\$779,935	\$779,935	\$779,935	\$3,119,740
Child Care and Development Funds (Federal)	7,922,831	7,922,831	7,922,831	7,922,831	31,691,324
State Advisory Council (SAC) ARRA	\$829,726 Federal and \$1,936,046 non-federal	\$679,726 Federal and \$1,586,028 non-federal	-	-	\$1,509,452 Federal and \$3,522,074
Head Start Program (Federal)	\$143,926	\$143,926	\$143,926	\$143,926	\$575,704
Federal Funds from Child Care	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$2,400,000

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
State Funds for Licensing	\$2,447,000	\$2,447,000	\$2,447,000	\$2,447,000	\$7,341,000
State matching fund for Schools for Family Life and School for Healthy Living and Parenting	\$1,939,000	\$2,447,000	\$2,447,000	\$2,447,000	\$7,756,000
Head Start Collaboration	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$400,000
Department of Sports & Recreation	\$135,000	\$70,000	\$115,000	\$90,000	\$410,000
Department of Health					
-Maternal Health & Child Services Component	\$5,546,106	\$5,546,106	\$5,546,106	\$5,546,106	\$22,184,424
-Infant – Toddler with Disabilities	\$2,316,600	\$2,316,600	\$2,316,600	\$2,316,600	\$9,266,400
-Healthy Start	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$200,000
-State Fund	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$180,000	\$720,000
-ECCS	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$140,000	\$560,000
-PCANU	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$600,000
-Mi Salud	\$20,159	\$20,159	\$20,159	\$20,159	\$80,636
<i>[Add additional rows as needed and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i>					

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

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

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

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

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

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards¹⁵ 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

¹⁵ See such nationally recognized standards as:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evidence for (B)(1):

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

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of five pages)

In 2008 Puerto Rico, adopted Law 93, entitled "Law for the Development and Implementation of Early Childhood Public Policy", in order to establish a government action that would address the issues and needs of early childhood in Puerto Rico.

PUERTO RICO EARLY LEARNING ADVISORY COUNCIL

In 2009, Governor Luis Fortuño, passed an Executive Order 2009-046, creating the Consejo Asesor para el Aprendizaje y Cuido de la Niñez Temprana or better known as Consejo de la Niñez (Puerto Rico Early Childhood Advisory Council), which deals with issues of children at an early age and provides a vehicle for the development and implementation of a comprehensive and integrated effort aimed to meet the needs of early childhood (*see Appendix 45*). Thus, the State Advisory Council has worked with ACUDEN and other agencies in designing a High-

Quality Plan to develop and adopt a Quality Rating and Improvement System, based on statewide set of Program Standards and linked to Puerto Rico licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs. During the past two years, efforts of the State Advisory Council has made possible the completion of two of the Program Standards Elements (See Table (B) (1)-(1) required to have high-quality accountable programs. The two program standards accomplished are the publication and dissemination of: (a) Puerto Rico Department of Education Early Childhood Programs Content Standards and Grade Expectations (from birth to 4 years/11 months children), revised on 2010; and (b) the Guías de Servicios Preventivos Pediátricos (Guidelines for Pediatric Preventive Services), published in 2008 by Puerto Rico Department of Health. **EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS: Puerto Rico Department of Education Early Childhood Programs Content Standards and Grade Expectations (from birth to 4 years/11 months children)**

In 2010, Puerto Rico Department of Education revised Content Standards and Grade Expectations for the Early Learning – (from birth to 4 years and 11 months) (*see Appendix 46*). These standards and expectations are based on NAEYC Developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood programs and other recent research and curriculum projects. Standards are grouped under three categories, representing the three early childhood age levels: (a) infants (from birth to the moment when babies give their first steps), (b) toddlers (walking babies until 3 years of age), and (3) preschoolers (from 3 to four years and 11 months). Each level has different and fundamental characteristics that have been taken in consideration when elaborating the standards and expectations. Thus, standards and expectations are categorized under each of the growth and development areas: social and emotional, physical and motor, cognitive, linguistic and creative development. Standards were designed to be measurable, to meaningfully differentiate each level of growth and development, and to reflect high expectations in order to assure parents and teachers that children will be prepared to enter and succeed in kindergarten, school, and life. Since the last revision of the Early Learning Standards, the Department of Education has vigorously disseminated them to Early Head Start, Head Start Programs, IDEA (Part C and B, section 619) Programs, and Programs funded under Title I, and receiving CCDF funds. The dissemination of this document was a collaborative initiative between the State Advisory Council, ACUDEN, and the Department of Education of Puerto Rico. Up to this

moment, a total of 220 persons have been trained, including 44 Licensing Officials, 84 Early Head Start and Head Start personnel, 70 Child Care personnel, and 22 Private Centers.

In order to enhance the Department of Education efforts ACUDEN, has developed a manual of early learning activities for educators center based and for family day care providers, based on the Content Standards and Grade Expectations for the Early Learning. The effort of both the Department of Education and ACUDEN demonstrate Puerto Rico government commitment to establish and develop a High-Quality Plan geared to adopt a common, statewide Quality and Improvement system. In order to continue the efforts of building a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement system of excellence Puerto Rico will invest funds from its annual budget and this proposal in the development of a Comprehensive Assessment System, develop a core knowledge to enhance Early Childhood Educator Qualifications, design standards and strategies for Family Engagement, and develop Effective data practices.

HEALTH PROMOTION: (Guidelines for Pediatric Preventive Services),

In 2008, The Puerto Rico Department of Health convened a panel of experts to review local epidemiological data and the revised Bright Futures in order to update the “Guías de Servicios Preventivos Pediátricos” (Guidelines for Pediatric Preventive Services *(see Appendix 47)*). Among the experts convened for the meetings were specialists in early childhood growth and development and children with special health care needs (Idea part C Director and the University of Puerto Rico, Medical Science Campus Professors). The Department of Health goal was to establish a series of screenings, medical evaluations and interventions required for all children in the pediatric age range to facilitate the early detection and management of conditions that can interfere with the child’s growth, development and ability to achieve their full potential. Among the routine of the required universal screenings are the hereditary and metabolic newborn screening and the hearing screening, both of which are required by law. In addition, they include immunization, routine laboratories and a number of pediatric visits required. The entire content of the guidelines is geared towards detecting situations that might interfere with the child’s ability to be prepared for school readiness. The “Guías de Servicios Preventivos Pediátricos” establishes an “Ages and Stages Questionnaire” which is a universally tool to screen for developmental delays.

These guidelines have been widely disseminated in the Department of Health website and shared

with representatives from Head Start, Early Head Start, and CCDF centers. The Puerto Rico Department of Health Home Visiting Program staff regularly monitor compliance with these guidelines when they visit their families. The recently funded Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program will also follow these guidelines and monitor compliance with them.

To insure the integration of these guidelines in Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs in Puerto Rico, the government proposes to develop a medical evaluation form that documents compliance with the guidelines as one of the documents parent would need to present to the early learning program, which would be providing services to their children.

In order to promote participation in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System we propose the establishment of a support system. This support system will be one of the major tasks in our State Plan. This support system would be developed by one of the participating agencies, ACUDEN, which would use the instrument to identify areas in need of improvement and provide them with the technical assistance and training. Furthermore, ACUDEN will create a QRIS Unit to provide the following services and support for all early learning programs: dissemination of the QRIS system; Orientation to early learning programs; training and follow up about the QRIS system; technical assistance, monitoring, among others. Also, ACUDEN will provide financial incentives to the centers to improve in the specific areas that would help the center move forward and elevate their quality status and the State Advisory Council will be expanding its Scholarship Program to promote professional development. We recognize privately run centers would have the greatest need for these support services.

Table (B) (1)-1: Status of all Program Standards currently used in the State shows the programs impacted by these two initiatives.

Table (B)(1)-1: Status of all Program Standards currently used in the State							
List each set of existing Program Standards currently used in the State; specify which programs in the State use the standards	Program Standards Elements¹⁶ <i>If the Program Standards address the element, place an "X" in that box</i>						
	Early Learning and Development Standards	Comprehensive Assessment Systems	Qualified workforce	Family engagement	Health promotion	Effective data practices	Other
Early Head Start & Head Start	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Program Funded by IDEA Part B Section 619	X				X		
Program Funded Title I of ESEA	X				X		
Program receiving form CCDF Funds	X				X		
State Funded Preschool	X	X	X				
<p><i>[Add additional rows as needed and enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data, if necessary.]</i></p> <p>This proposal should provide funding to continue the already started efforts and develop the other three high-quality program standards: comprehensive assessment system, family engagement strategies standards, and effective data practices. The Department of Education of Puerto Rico has developed since the year 2000 the standards for education from childbirth to 4 years and eleven months age, to fulfill the commitment to offer a quality education based on appropriate practices and to achieve optimal level development in children. Standards communicate relevant information on every field of study and offer conceptual components</p>							

¹⁶ Please refer to the definition of Program Standards for more information on the elements.

Fundamental to the development of the curriculum of the different programs. This important age covers the ages from child birth to 8 years old, which is recognized by the National Association for the Educators of Young Children and the affiliates in Puerto Rico, National Association for the Early Childhood. This period is divided into the following levels: infant, toddler and preschool. From an integrated and holistic focus, the vision of the early childhood education establishes a continuation between all levels, to insure the optimal development of children. It pretends to provide children with the necessary experiences to stimulate the construction of knowledge and the development of values and positive attitudes.

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

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

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

(1) State-funded preschool programs;

(2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;

(3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;

(4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and

(5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

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

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

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

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

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

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

*(Enter **narrative** here – recommended maximum of five pages)-*

The QRIS started as a pilot study in 2010 with 100 centers participating voluntarily from different early childhood programs: Early Head Start, Head Start, programs receiving CCDF funds, Kindergarten and Licensed Private Centers. The numbers and distribution of the programs are displayed in Table (B)(2)(c), increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. The propose State Plan will designate funds to progressively increase the number of programs participating by a 50% of the number participating in the pilot study, every year of the Plan. We have identify in coordination with the with the Office of the General Coordinator for Socioeconomic Financing and Self Management (OFSA), government office that works directly with high needs communities, 25 towns that are considered of higher needs. This has enabled us to identify were the highest population of high needs children reside. Early childhood programs that served in these towns will be encourage to participate first of our expansion plan for QIRS, this will guarantee that our most needy children will have access to high quality early learning programs. Collaboration will exist between the following agencies to promote participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating Improvement System. This effort will be led by the State Advisory Council in collaboration with Department of Family, Department of Health, ACUDEN, OFSA, Head Start Collaboration Office and the Association of Head Start Directors. Table (B) (2) (c) shows how the number of programs will be increasing by this percentage. To pursue our expansion of this system in a continuing but progressively achievable way, will permit us to

develop the necessary infrastructure to establish our QRIS system for all publicly funded early learning programs. The State Lead Agency on early learning and development services, ACUDEN, and at the end of the reform agenda, will undertake the task of continuing progressively adding additional programs to participate in the Tiered Rating and Improvement System. As a result of all the efforts in the reform agenda ACUDEN will be restructure and strengthen in order to support and continue implementing the reform agenda. The early learning programs that are participating of the QRIS pilot project has been eligible to receive incentives that benefit their classrooms and other incentives for improving the academic preparation of their teachers and other personnel. It is the aim of the State Plan to increase the incentives and educational opportunities for the personnel of the participating programs helping them to pursue a CDA certification or a B.A. degree. Funds will be allocated the increase the number of incentives and to offer scholarships to the participating educators or related personnel that will be participating of the expansion of QRIS system (*see Appendix 48*).

The system will also promote policies with the objective to strengthen the participation of other sectors such as the Licensing system and families. The Licensing Division will be restructuring and aligned to the proposed QRIS system. This restructuring of the Licensing Division will include a revision of the existing laws, protocols, regulations and organizational structure and qualifications for Licensing Officials. The State proposes to allocate Race to the Top funds to support this restructuring, hiring of new Licensing Officials, training and professional development for personnel under this Division, the design and implementation of an automated Licensing System, equipment to facilitate the licensing process and support system for providers, among others. This restructuring based on the QRIS system will require legislation and coordination with sister agencies.

Among the biggest challenges that the State has is the licensing of all EHS and HS programs in Puerto Rico. For many years, EHS and HS programs have been exempt of licensing. In order to have a uniform statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System EHS and HS Programs will be required to be licensed by year 2014-2015.

Families will be involved through workshops aimed to increase their knowledge about consumer awareness of quality and their participation in their children's education. The State Advisory

Council will put into place an educational campaign about the Quality Improvement System for early learning programs. This educational campaign will provide information to parents, early learning program directors, teachers and child care and development personnel. This will supplement the educational campaign that the State Advisory Council has put into place, entitled “Invest in Us”. The campaign started with a media effort primarily in the local press and billboards across the island. The emphasis of the first part of this campaign has been to create awareness of the importance of the early years in the children’s live. The billboards and the print messages highlights scientific information such as: Early Experiences Shape the Brain and positive high quality environments enhance the possibility of children to be successful in school and in life. The campaign has been design as a buildup, this means that each new phase will give parents more information of what is a high quality environment and will provide them with the necessary knowledge for to make an informed decision on the type of child care services they want for their children.

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

Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of programs in the State	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2012		Target - end of calendar year 2013		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool <i>Specify:</i>	128										
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹⁷	1,872	42	2.2	63	3.4	84	4.5	105	5.6	126	6.7
Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	0	0	0								

¹⁷ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

Performance Measures for (B)(2)(c): Increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System											
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of programs in the State	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2012		Target - end of calendar year 2013		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	0	0	0								
Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	0	0	0								
Programs receiving from CCDF funds	995	16	1.6	24	2.4	32	3.2	4.	4.0	48	4.8
<i>Other Describe:</i>											
<i>Kindergarten</i>	1,133	15	1.3	23	2.0	31	2.7	39	3.4	47	4.1
<i>Licensed Private Centers</i>	728	27	3.7	40	5.5	53	7.3	66	9.1	79	10.9
<p>Baseline Today are the child care centers participating in "Pasitos". To determine the percentage we divided the total number of centers participating in "Pasitos" between the universe of centers in the island and then multiply it by 100. Eg: $42/1872 \times 100 = 2.2\%$. To determine the target for the following years we use 50% of the child care centers already participating and added the same amount for each following year. Eg: $42/2 = 21$ and then added that amount for each year $42 + 21 = 63$ (2012) + 21 = 84 (2013) + 21 = 105 (2014).</p>											

(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.

*(Enter **narrative** here – recommended maximum of five pages)-*

Puerto Rico's QRIS system works with mentors, who provided counseling during the first year participating in the pilot study. These starting centers will be monitored 3 times per year. The mentors were selected taking in consideration their preparation qualifications; experience working with early childhood population; and geographical proximity to the centers assigned to be evaluated. All mentors will be required to be trained before each visit. The monitoring will focus on the implementation of their improvement plan. At the end of the year of monitoring the mentors will be able to evaluate one more time the center, recommend center personnel to compete for educational scholarships available through the State Advisory Council.

We propose in our State Plan to continue with the mentoring model on our QRIS system. For the next three years, we will increase of the number of early learning programs participating and programs will continue to be visited 3 times in order to receive the necessary guidance to be a high quality center, a five "Pasitos" center. As part of the reorganization of ACUDEN, a QRIS Unit will be developed to provide the necessary orientation, dissemination, technical assistance,

mentoring and monitoring of early childhood programs. ACUDEN will use the Pilot Study mentoring system in their QRIS Unit. The Division of Licensing will establish the First “Pasito” of the QRIS system to be in compliance with this Division. All licensed early learning and development programs will be required to receive orientation on the QRIS system and to develop an improvement plan. Once centers are licensed they will be referred to ACUDEN for the proper assistance in the elaboration of an improvement plan, incentives, professional development, etc. All licensed early learning centers at the end of the reform agenda will start and will be required to display quality rating information in their centers.

In addition, families will be educated through various means about the QRIS and how to identify a high quality learning center. The following strategies will be put into place to provide information to parents about high quality center: an educational media campaign, participating agencies web sites, group orientations, brochures, incorporated in the CCDF consumer education process; a State Advisory Board newsletter will provide information to parents and early childhood programs, among others.

(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).

*(Enter **narrative** here – recommended maximum of five pages)-*

In 2009 ACUDEN, through the State Advisory Council, requested the University of Puerto Rico to collaborate, as part of the Quality Rating and Improvement System, in the development of an instrument that will measure quality. The Educational Research Center acknowledged the importance of this effort and agreed to help in developing the instrument to evaluate the quality of Early Childhood Programs in Puerto Rico. It developed a rigorous process to design and validate the instrument during a period of two years, divided into four phases. During the first phase a series of documents and instruments were studied, and the first draft of the instrument was developed. In the second phase, experts in early childhood educators evaluated and validated the content of the instrument. During the third phase of the process a pilot study was conducted in 100 early childhood classrooms. The fourth and final phase consisted of designing an electronic data bank and website to provide information to diverse audiences (eg, program administrators, schools, families, among others) about the QRIS and quality of centers. Each of these phases is explained in detail in the following paragraphs:

Phase 1: Development of the Instrument - During this phase, project staff dedicated the time

to conceptualize the instrument, identify the different areas to be examined and evaluated in the programs, and the steps or protocol to follow during the implementation period. After studying different QRIS instruments and documents, team members decided to align the content of the instrument to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) quality standards, Puerto Rico Licensing Requirements, Head Start Program Standards, among others (see reference list below). After studying and discussing different Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) it was agreed to name the instrument "Pasitos" (Baby steps) and use a scale of five "small steps". The instrument was divided in ten Standard, and for each standard a series of criteria was organized in ascending steps (1 to 5). Each standard begins in scale 1 and progressively adds criteria in order to reach the highest level, which is 5. The first step (Pasitos 1) represents the basic quality criteria that a center must have, for example those criteria required by the licensing division. The other steps have indicators related to the attributes that constitute the highest levels of quality / complexity, such as family involvement and community participation (Pasito 5). This gradual progression allows to see were the strengths and needs of each classroom is. This information can later be used to develop action plans and to establish activities, which will foster the development of the services offered by the center.

References used to create the instrument:

- American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care. (2002). *Caring for Our Children: National health and safety performance standards: Guidelines for out-of-home child care programs* (2nd ed.). Elk Grove Village, IL: Authors.
- Barnett, W. S. & Hustedt, J. T. (2003). Preschool: The most important grade. *Educational Leadership*, 60 (7), 54-57.
- Bernett, J. & Neuman, M. J. (2004). Early childhood, major challenges: Review of early childhood education. *Prospects*, 34 (4), 423-433.
- Harms, T., Cryer, D. & Clifford, R. M. (2006). *Infant / toddler environment rating scale*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Harms, T., Clifford, R. M. & Cryer, D. (2005). *Early childhood environment rating scale*. NY: Teachers College Press.
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- National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2000). *A call for excellence in early childhood education*. Retrieved from <http://www.naeyc.org/policy/excellence>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2008). *Overview of the NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards*. Retrieved from <http://www.naeyc.org>

Phase 2: Validating the instrument by experts - The instrument validation process consisted of asking early childhood specialists, working in various higher education institutions, to serve as evaluators and validate the content. To do so, they were asked to study the standards and criteria and submit their comments. Later these experts were given the task of applying the instrument to a center and write a report on their experience. The report required experts to comment and give recommendations to improve the instrument in areas or issues that comprise it, criteria, progression of steps, criteria by age, and clarity of vocabulary. They could also provide remarks on the benefits of the instrument for the programs being evaluated, the families, and others. The recommendations were classified according to the specific issue to which it referred, analyzed and used to refine and modify the instrument. Focus groups with the experts were also used in order to delve deeper into their recommendations and understand better the strengths and problems of the instrument. Those experts who were unable to attend the focus group were interviewed individually.

In addition, two additional focus groups were held with several early childhood program directors and educators, representing different sectors (Early Head Start, Head Start, Child Care, Special Education Organizations, and Private early learning and development centers). During these meetings participants were provided with information about the QRIS, the standards, criteria and the development of the instrument. Attendees had the opportunity to speak about the content of the instrument, the implementation process, their concerns and recommendations. All views were tape-recorded for consideration when reviewing the instrument. Finally, participants were given the opportunity to send, via email, any recommendations they deemed important.

Phase 3: Pilot study - During the pilot study, 100 centers were invited to participate voluntarily. The group of participants was selected representing various early learning programs (Early Head Start, Head Start, Child Care, Kindergarten, and private centers) and located throughout various towns of Puerto Rico. All 100 participating teachers and program directors were oriented in terms of the standards, age level criteria, the scale 1 to 5, and the process of documenting their response with a portfolio of evidences. Participants were given approximately three months (may to the end of august, 2010) to self-evaluate the program, in their classroom, and prepare the evidence portfolio. They were assigned a mentor, who visited a minimum of three times, and

was responsible in orienting, coaching, and validating the self-evaluation. A total of 40 mentors were trained on the understanding of quality criteria and the use of the instrument “Pasitos”. Each mentor was assigned from two to four classrooms. They had to make a minimum of three visits in order to orient, coach, observe, interview, and validate the data provided by the teacher.

The role of the mentor required:

- providing guidance about the assessment process
- validating the self-assessment report through observation, interviewing, and data examination provided in the evidence portfolio
- analyzing data results
- discussing the evaluation results, pointing out strengths and possible areas for development
- assisting in the design of the development plan aimed at improving the quality of the services offered by the program

From April to the first week of September, 2010 the 100 centers were evaluated. Results are being analyzed in order to modify and better the instrument and implementation protocol process. **Table (B)(4)(c)(1): Performance Measure for Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System**, shows the number and percent of Programs that are in each of the tiers (1 to 5 Pasitos). It can be observed that 77 of the centers evaluated fall under tier four (4) and one (1) falls under tier five. Base line data is recent, based on 99 centers, because one center is still being evaluated and there is no data for it. It is recommended that efforts be made to monitor and provide incentives to all participating programs. The next steps with in this pilot project will be to monitor all programs, provide mentoring and technical assistance, provide scholarships to improve the professional development and provide educational opportunities for program staff.

Table (B)(4)(c)(2) Performance Measures for Increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, shows the number of children with high needs enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers (4 and 5 Pasitos). Puerto Rico Government officials reported the numbers of children

with high needs served by state programs. Numbers of children reported in the baseline were reported by the center director and verified by the mentor. These represent actual numbers, but we cannot discard the possibility of human error in the calculation of these numbers. In our State Plan we have established to work with 25 high needs communities, as our priority to make high quality services available to high needs children. *(See Appendix 49 Puerto Rico's Highest Need Towns / Communities)*. **Phase 4: Development of electronic database and website** - The Educational Research Center also developed from December to September 2010 a database and a website aimed at informing families about the QRIS for assessing and measuring the quality of programs that address early childhood. The website, which is not yet available to the public, provides a description Pasitos system, the categories to be evaluated and criteria. It also contains information about the development of the project and the research process has been carried out. It also includes a directory of those participating early childhood centers. It will allow placing links, news and documents that are relevant to understanding what is a QRIS and measuring quality. The purpose of the information provided to parents in this electronic website is to orient them about quality in early childhood programs. It also provides families with the opportunity to choose the center that best meets their needs. Thus, the importance of developing a system and the incentives to provide access to families to high-quality programs, specially those parents of children with high needs. ACUDEN'S propose QRIS Unit will develop and incentive program and a follow up schedule in order to provide technical assistance to programs and monitor their development plan. The University of Puerto Rico, ACUDEN and the State Advisory Council will work in collaboration to guarantee the completion of the Pilot Study and the development of the new QRIS Unit.

Performance Measure for (B)(4)(c)(1): Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.					
	Baseline (Today)	Target- end of calendar year 2012	Target- end of calendar year 2013	Target- end of calendar year 2014	Target- end of calendar year 2015
Total number of programs covered by the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	100*				
Number of programs in Tier 1	1 (1%)				
Number of programs in Tier 2	7 (7.1%)	1 (1%)			
Number of programs in Tier 3	13 (13.1%)	7 (7.1 %)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	
Number of programs in Tier 4	77 (77.8%)	13 (13.1%)	7 (7.1 %)		
Number of programs in Tier 5	1 (1%)	78 (78.8%)	91 (91.9%)	98 (98.9%)	1 (1%)
<i>*There is missing data from one center, because it is still in the process of evaluation.</i>					

Performance Measures for (B)(4)(c)(2): Increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.											
Type of Early Learning and Development Program in the State	Number of Children with High Needs served by programs in the State	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percent of Children with High Needs Participating in Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</i>									
		Baseline (Today)		Target-end of calendar year 2012		Target -end of calendar year 2013		Target-end of calendar year 2014		Target-end of calendar year 2015	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
State-funded preschool <i>Specify:</i>	1,077	0	0								
Early Head Start and Head Start ¹⁸	38,608	842	2.2	1260	3.3	1680	4.4	2100	5.4	2520	6.5
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part C	5,204	0	0								
Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA, Part B, section 619	14,681	0	0								
Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of ESEA	9,318	0	0								
Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program	19,806	520	2.6	768	3.9	1024	5.2	1280	6.5	1536	7.8
Other Describe: <i>Kindergarten & Pre K Licensed Private Centers</i>	31,808	508	1.6	759	2.4	1023	3.2	1287	4.0	1551	4.9
	10,796	764	7.1	1120	10.4	1484	13.7	1848	17.1	2212	20.5

¹⁸ Including Migrant and Tribal Head Start located in the State.

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

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

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

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

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

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

*(Enter **narrative** here – recommended maximum of five pages)-*

The validating process for the system has collected evidence of content validity first aligning the instrument to the NAEYC standards, the Department of Education of Puerto Rico standards, Health and Safety standards, Head Start documents and Licensing documents. The research based evidence that was used to provide information with respect to the content validity was based on the evaluation of experts and different focus groups. Participants in the focus groups were directors of different agencies participating, coordinators and preschool teachers. Moreover, a pilot study with 100 classrooms was conducted to gather information about the

response process of the instrument. The pilot study provided information to make improvements in both, the instrument and the electronic database that was developed, with Internet access.

Funds will be allocated in our State Plan to contract an external evaluator to assess the system functioning and the progress of the 100 classrooms participating in the pilot study. In addition, funding will allow compile validity evidence to establish the relation between the system implanted and the children's progress in their development aspects and his/her school readiness. Priority should be given to the assessment of children's school readiness. A random sample of students from the 100 classrooms participating early childhood programs will be selected for an evaluation of their development progress.

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

The State must address in its application--

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

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

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*(Enter **narrative** here – recommended maximum of three pages)*

Since 2000, the Puerto Rico Department of Education has developed learning standards for young children up to four years and 11 months of age. The goal of these standards is to offer a quality education that is geared towards the optimal development of children during this critically important life stage. The learning standards establish the conceptual components that are fundamental to the development of curricula for early learning that is both integrated and holistic. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (and its Puerto Rico affiliate, the Puerto Rican Association for the Education of Young Children), defines early childhood as the period from birth to age eight. Early childhood is divided into the following stages: infants (birth to 18 months), maternal (18 months to three years), preschool (3 years to four years and 11 months), and primary school. The learning standards establish a clear continuity between these stages, and promote learning experiences that stimulate the development of knowledge, values and positive attitudes that lead to success in school. In 2010,

the Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs of the Department of Education revised and updated the learning standards and learning objectives for all academic programs, including at the preschool level. The purpose of this revision was to ensure that the standards of excellence and the learning objectives are aligned with the new requirements of the Puerto Rican Academic Achievement Tests (Pruebas Puertorriqueñas de Aprovechamiento Académico). Puerto Rico Organic Law #149, which establishes the responsibilities of the Puerto Rico Department of Education, states that education in Puerto Rico, should be oriented towards the student's physical, social, mental, socio-emotional and moral/ethical development. The No Child Left Behind Act, signed into law on January 8, 2002, made steps to guarantee high quality education for all children in the public education system. In compliance with these and other local and federal laws, the learning standards establish a uniform teaching process in the academic programs within Puerto Rico's educational system. The standards are used to evaluate students' competencies through participation in diverse learning experiences in the process of his or her cognitive, affective and psychomotor development. The standards specify expectations by grade for each one of the eight content areas. The vision of the standards is for students to achieve academic excellence through the promotion of the child's holistic development, according to his or her particularities, interests and talents. The mission of the standards is to foster all components of the child's holistic growth and development during early childhood. This includes linguistic, cognitive, physical, social, emotional, creative and moral development. This mission is achieved via a multidisciplinary curriculum that is both integrated and interactive and works to develop the child's cognitive and affective abilities. The curriculum should also integrate allied services and supports in close collaboration with other organizations and agencies that serve young children and their families (*see Appendix 46 for Early Learning Standards and Expectations*). The standards are designed to be used as a guide for educational practices in the school environment. The standards and expectations are developed starting at the preschool level through twelfth grade for all academic programs. The eight areas of standards are aligned with the academic programs which are geared towards promoting the child's academic achievement; (*see Appendix 50 Standards and Expectations by Subject*). Most early childhood education providers—such as Early Head Start, Head Start, prekindergarten, and CCDF providers, among others —use curricula that are aligned with the standards. The State Early Childhood Advisory

Council in collaboration with ACUDEN and the Department of Education have been disseminating and training early childhood directors and educators on early learning standards for the past year. However, to increase the number directors and educators trained on the Early Learning Standards, the State proposes as part of our High Quality Plan to expand this effort by contracting a team of trainers. This team of trainers will fully be dedicated to the training of early learning providers in Puerto Rico. In order to facilitate the training coordination the following entities will come together in this effort Department of Education, Licensing Division, ACUDEN, United Way, State Council of Education, Head Start Collaboration Office, and the Head Start Directors Association. Workshops and professional activities for early childhood education providers are directed towards interpreting the standards and aligning activities in the curricula to the learning expectations. All participants of this effort will receive a copy of the early learning standards and an activity manual aligned to the standards in order to facilitate the implementation. The goal of these professional workshops is to standardize the integration of the standards in curricula of all early childhood education providers in Puerto Rico. As stated in our Professional Development Area, Puerto Rico has included as part of our Plan the elaboration of the Core Knowledge for early childhood educators. Early Learning Standards will be included as part of that Core Knowledge. Furthermore, we recognized that in Puerto Rico there are a significant amount family day care settings and informal providers that provide services to children ages 0-5 throughout the island. Committed with our goal that all children should be ready for school no matter in what type of setting they are receiving services, we develop and it is being implemented the Project TAP: Developing Learning Environment. The main goal of this project is to provide family day care providers and informal providers with the necessary tools to develop a learning environment in their setting. Using a mentoring model, providers and settings are assessed, an individualized action plan is developed and technical assistance and mentoring is provided. A key component of this project is the provision of information about Early Learning Standards and how to align their daily activities to the guidelines. To facilitate this process, an activities manual has been develop and integrated as part of the mentoring program. As part of the High Quality Plan, we propose to increase the number of Family Day Care Providers being trained on Early Learning Standards by training Licensing Division Officials on the Standards and incorporating them as part of the Licensing requirements for Family Day Care Providers.

This effort will be in collaboration with the Department of Health, ACUDEN and the State Advisory Council. Also, legislation will be elaborated in order to require all early learning programs in Puerto Rico to apply the early learning standards in their early learning and development settings and programs.

(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

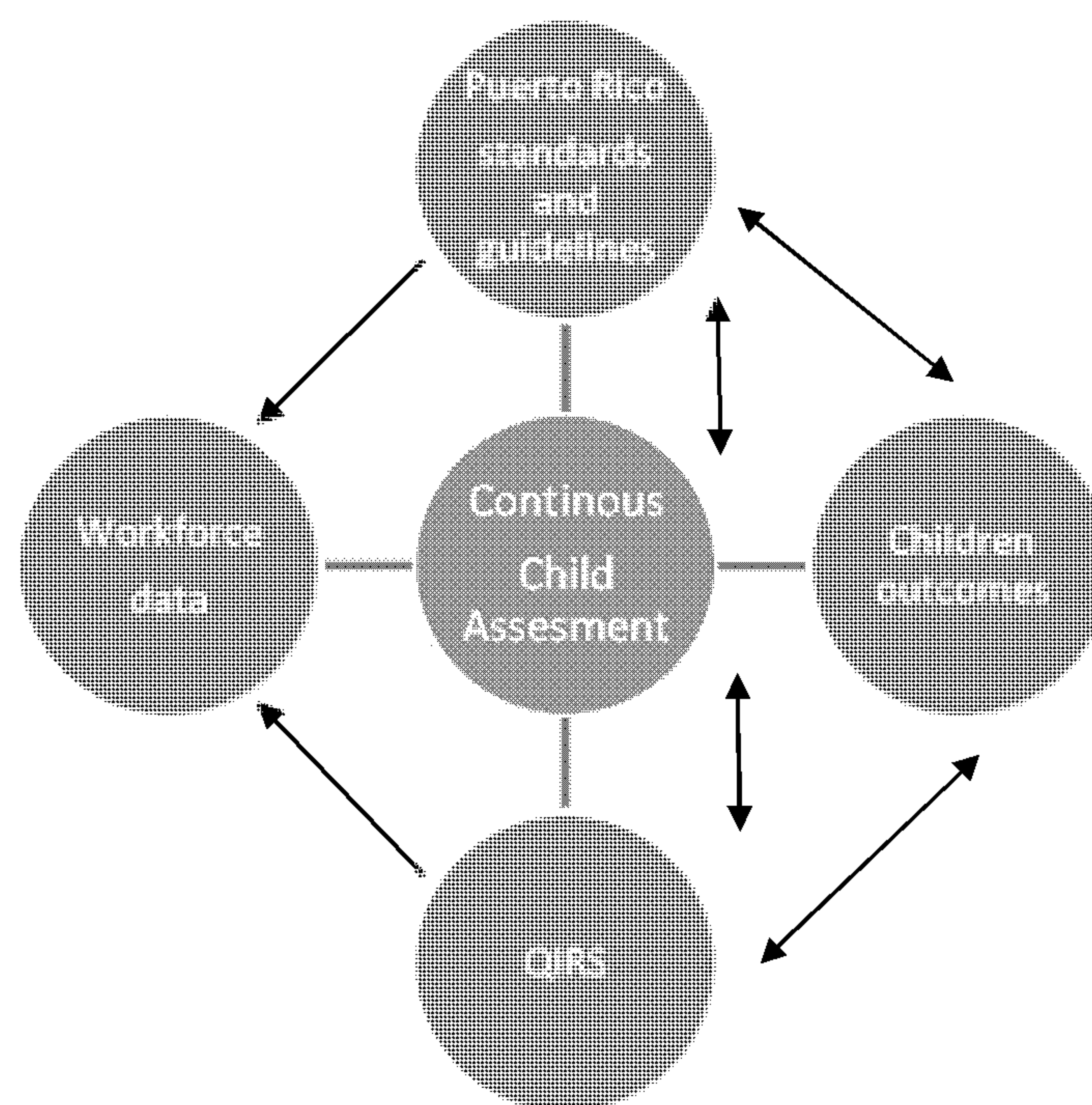
(d) Training Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs, and services.

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.

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of three pages)

Children assessment is a continuous commitment of service providers in Puerto Rico that in 2008 resulted in its inclusion in the Guidelines for Pediatric Services developed by the Department of Health in Puerto Rico, following what it is stated in the Puerto Rico Act 93, 2008, Law for the Implementation of Public Policies for Early Childhood. Several years' earlier training in assessment activities for children 0-5 was already going on in various early learning and development settings such as: Early Head Start, Head Start, Visiting Nursing Program and CCDF. Although Puerto Rico has been screening children in the early learning programs above mentioned various programs, we lack an island wide Comprehensive Assessment System. Race to the Top Funds will align to articulate an assessment and evaluation system that will link children outcomes and school readiness with data from Early Childhood Standards, QIRS "Pasitos", Early Childhood Education Workforce. The diagram below represents the System as we envision it.



The screening instrument selected for the State comprehensive system will be Ages and Stages Questionnaire. The reason for selecting ASQ was the huge amount of data regarding its validity since its first publication in 1995. ASQ is also strongly recommended by experts and by the US

Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families. Among other benefits of using ASQ is that represent an excellence tool to obtain the knowledge of care giver about child development information and to engage them in the screening process. ASQ is an excellent child development screening instrument but also a great monitoring system. In 2010 the Department of Education revised the Early Learning Standards. This document will be a tool to assess children learning and monitor their outcomes. It is a well-known that the use of standards is an important component of an early childhood reform and accountability as was expressed by the NYAEC and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialist in State Department of Education in 2002. In terms of practices and evidence based intervention “Pasitos” in PR as a QIRS system, offers a practical way to develop, analyze and evaluate the whole component of the assessment system including children outcomes. The Comprehensive Assessment System should be a core part of the Early Childhood Educators knowledge and continuous personnel enhancement plans. The output of the system will guide the early childhood educators to plan instructions and communication with parents and caregivers. Also, assessment should be based in principles that help the practitioner guide their interactions with the child and those in its natural environment with an outcome approach. That vision and its meaningfulness was established by the NAEYC Guidelines for planning and communicating with parents 1992 and represent a core reference in the field. The NAEYC strength several important aspects such as curriculum and instruction adjustment based in assessment data. An important part of the uses of the assessment data is the acknowledgement and recognition of the diversity of learning style and the role of the learner cultural background in the learning process. At this time, the Government of Puerto Rico does not have a standardized test or a uniform assessment for all service providers that work with young children. Most programs use the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), as we have stated before, to assess children in different stages of their development and to coordinate the services necessary for the child to achieve his or her maximum physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. The results obtained from this assessment are shared with other agencies and organizations according to the parents’ wishes. Often, follow up services are not well-coordinated and are not offered in a timely manner. We recognize that this is an area where we need to improve. Our first commitment is to establish ASQ as our uniform assessment tool for all programs. This will facilitate the process of coordination and services for children. To have a uniform assessment tool for all programs will be the first step in

order to align and integrate assessments and sharing information among all public funded early childhood programs. An assessment report will be required when children will transfer from one early childhood program to another or when services will be coordinated for high needs children. The State recognizes the need to develop an adequate data system in order to facilitate this assessment, monitoring, integration and coordination of services. We recognize that even though Puerto Rico has established many appropriate practices in our early learning comprehensive system the lack of a data system is our main weakness. For this reason the State proposes to allocate Race to the Top funds for the development of a web based data system that will provide us the adequate tools. This data system will provide a uniform way to collect and manage children's information and therefore will provide early learning and development programs the adequate tools to interpret, coordinate and monitor the progress of our high needs children. To undertake this task we are proposing that the Governor's Office, specifically the Chief Information Officer Office, CIO, will be in charge of the development of any data system under this agenda reform. This Office was created by the Executive Order 2009-009. Among the responsibilities of this Office is to unify technology systems among agencies, in order to maximize resources, avoid duplicity, cost efficient systems, among others responsibilities. An example of the work of this Office is the government web page www.pr.gov. This web page brings together multiple agencies in order to provide accessible services to our communities. We are aware that the development of this system is not an easy task and that it will take approximately two years in our reform agenda to start seeing some results. A detailed work plan for the development of our data system is Section E-2 of the State High Quality Plan- Building and Enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices and policies. Meanwhile, to guarantee that an align approach the State Advisory Council in collaboration with the Participating Agencies will put in place policies that will align and integrate assessments and sharing of information. Training Early Childhood educators to administer interpret and use assessment data about Child assessment is based in the assumption that this is a continuous process. The proposed PR data system will provide the early childhood educator with information to organize the Curriculum and improve instruction, program and services. This process and the early childhood educator responsibilities in it (information gather, analyze and how to use this results in their practices) should be a core component of the work force training and development to afford the expected children outcomes in important areas of school readiness such as: positive social-emotional skills, acquisition and

uses of knowledge and skills (including early language development and early literacy), and the use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs. The Race to the Top funds will allow Puerto Rico to organized a core group of trainers that will train practitioners in early childhood education in ASQ and its relation with the standards and children outcomes. The Department of Health and ACUDEN will play an important part in this process of training and Early Childhood Educators to appropriately administer assessment and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform and improve instruction, programs and service. As we have stated in section D – A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce ACUDEN will be establish the PR Early Childhood Workforce Institute to specifically work with the professional development needs of the above mentioned workforce. The Institute will engage at the end of the first year as priority training on Early Learning Standards and in collaboration with Department of Health ASQ training. The foundation of our comprehensive systems relies on the ASQ and the Early Learning Standards. To be able to train the Early Childhood on the administration of assessment and the interpretation process will be vital to be able to initiate our approach. The State Advisory Council will be responsible to disseminate among all early childhood programs the comprehensive Assessment Systems in order to promote the integration of the systems in their policies and protocols. Also, the State Advisory Council will oversee the state level articulation (implementation and evaluation) of this system in different private and public funded program. For this reason, we have included in all of our Participating Agencies a Project Manager that among the responsibilities and duties of these Managers will be the constant communication and uniformity of process of our reform agenda.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- To the extent the State has established a progression of health standards across the levels of Program Standards that meet the elements in criterion (C)(3)(a), submit--
 - The progression of health standards used in the Program Standards and the State's plans for improvement over time, including documentation demonstrating that this progression of standards appropriately addresses health and safety standards; developmental, behavioral, and sensory screening, referral, and follow-up; health promotion including healthy eating habits, improved nutrition, and increased physical activity; oral health; and social and emotional development; and health literacy among parents and children;

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

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

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

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

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of three pages)

The Department of Education has a standardized test for the students that enter kindergarten which is called “Escala de Observación para Kindergarten”. This test administer during the enrollment period or during the first week of the school year, covers cognitive knowledge, linguistics, emotional and physical aspects of the student and has been validated thru the years. However, this test does not constitute a entry exam to kindergarten, but a screening to assess skills, strengths and weaknesses of the student. There is a follow up test in the first grade during the month of May at end of the school year. This testing process continues until the third grade. *(see attachments 52)*. Another document that the Department of Education uses is the Formative Assessment Report for Kindergarten and Pre – Kinder. This report includes cognitive, linguistic, mathematical logic, physical and social aspects *(see attachments 53)*. Our goal, which we would like to achieve before 2015, is that the results of both tests could be entered in the Student Information System (SIE). At this moment, the information cannot be entered, because the system cannot accept letters. The Department of Education participated in the QIRS Pilot Project, from the State Advisory Council. We propose the use of the established document to monitor the quality of the services offered to this specific population. For that purpose we need to upgrade the existing system to better service the students and to share relevant data with all concerned agencies.

Performance Measures for (C)(3)(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual statewide targets.					
	<i>Baseline and annual targets</i>				
	Baseline (Today, if known) <i>If unknown please use narrative to explain plan for defining baseline and setting and meeting annual targets</i>	Target for end of calendar year 2012	Target for end of calendar year 2013	Target for end of calendar year 2014	Target for end of calendar year 2015
Number of Children with High Needs screened	33,028	15%	28%	28%	28%
Number of Children with High Needs referred for services who received follow-up/treatment	9,217	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%
Number of Children with High Needs who participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well child care	29,051	17%	27%	27%	27%
Of these participating children, the number or percentage of children who are up-to-date in a schedule of well child care	Data not available	15%	28%	28%	28%
<i>[Please indicate if baseline data are actual or estimated; describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information; and please include any definitions you used that are not defined in the notice.]</i>					

(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of three pages)

Government, private and non-profit organizations in Puerto Rico are committed to the welfare of children and families through different programs that engage families in supporting their children's development and learning. Family engagement is a family-centered and strengths-based approach to partnering with families in making decisions, setting goals, and achieving desired outcomes. Engagement involves motivating and empowering families to recognize their own needs, strengths, and resources in order to support the children's development and education. Although Puerto Rico does not have culturally and linguistically appropriate family engagement standards, there have been many strategies put into place to support the children's development and to promote school readiness through our government agencies and nonprofit organizations. To achieve school readiness in high needs children a variety of resources involving families has been put into place. The Department of the Family is organized in four (4) Administrations: Administration for Child Care and Integral Development (ACUDEN), Administration for Families and Children (ADFAN), Administration for Socio-Economic Development of the Family (ADSEF), and Administration for Child Support (ASUME).

ACUDEN consists of two main programs: Head Start- Early Head Start, and Child Care and Development Program. ACUDEN's mission is to guarantee the provision and access of needed children to an integrated care and development in the early formative stages, through the Federal Programs Head Start and Child Care; stimulating the participation of parents, families and tutors in the educational and formative process, promoting ongoing two-way communication, parent involvement in decision making, and parent leadership development.

ACUDEN is the major provider for Head Start and Early Head Start of Puerto Rico and the fourth in the United States. At the moment ACUDEN delegates Head Start federal funds to 21 agencies. These agencies administrate more than 800 Centers Island wide, with an enrollment of 18,014 children. Since August 2010, ninety six (96) children of the Early Head Start Program of the municipalities of Aguadilla, Manatí, Fajardo and Peñuelas are being served. The Child Care and Development Program, CCDF, has the objective of increasing the accessibility, availability and quality of the care services to infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age children in after school programs. Children with high needs are a priority for this Program. These services are offered through: The administration of twelve (12) Child Care and Development Centers: 102 contracted providers; a Voucher System; Four (4) Respite and Family Support Centers; And ten (10) Early Childhood Resource and Referrals Centers, CENTRANA, that provides parents, early education professionals and community access to specialized information and resources on early childhood to help improve their knowledge about early learning. Regarding family engagement both of these Early Childhood Development Programs work with areas related to family engagement. The programs are based on a series of regulations that stimulate the family's participation. They offer families the opportunities and support for their development so that they can identify their strengths and needs, identify solutions; learn about early child development and how to support their early formation. These norms drive the ACUDEN programs to: Provide training to families about appropriate practices, health and safety, development, social-emotional development and others; Get involved in activities of development and home environment; Strengthen parents as main educators of their children; Leadership development. Please refer to *attachment 51 Table Puerto Rico's Significant Family Engagement Strategies* for detailed description of each initiative.

ADFAN's mission is to promote and support individuals, families and communities' efforts, so that they contribute to their society and self-development. To these means, it facilitates social, educational, and preventive services, towards achieving a better and effective participation, equity and social justice. To achieve this mission ADFAN offers services through the following programs: Social Emergency Program; Integral Services for the Community; Social Services for the Elders and Adults with Incapacities; Family and Children Services; Regulation and Supervision of Residential Facilities for Children. In order to address important elements that

must be part of the family engagement standards, ADFAN has developed various initiatives to provide parent education in child development, parent leadership development, adult and family literacy programs, and outreach to fathers and other family members. These initiatives are: Schools for Family Life and School for Healthy Living and Parenting. The Puerto Rico Department of Health promotes family engagement among parents of children under 5 years of age using several strategies: Participants Committees are a major asset for the Healthy Start Program. These Committees are comprised of women who are enrolled in the Home Visiting program and their relatives (fathers, boyfriends, sisters, grandmothers, and mothers). As of June 2010, there were 23 local Participants Committees. They held a total of 68 meetings in which 751 participants were present; The Early Childhood Comprehensive System Project is reorganizing and updating the Early Childhood Information Centers in thirteen municipal's community libraries. These centers provide a series of workshops to families of children aged 0-5 with the goal of increasing their awareness of their children's growth and development in the initial five years of life. Information regarding other support services available in the community is also made available in these centers; Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) Family Advocate develops links between families and Title V, inform them of their rights, educate families and serve as a facilitator to families to participate in decision making.

In the Mental Health and Anti-Addiction Services Administration (ASSMCA), Family-focused services are a priority, as they have greater impact in reducing risk factors among individuals, families, and communities. The main purpose is to raise awareness in parents of their roles in prevention. Therefore, through our Positive Parenting Skills Workshops, we intensify family protective factors to increase resiliency in their children. These educational workshops provided in both, the school and community settings, include among others: parenting skills, conflict management, and a specific curricula to discuss underage drinking within the family. Target population is mainly the parents of children and youths who receive education services for substance prevention and healthy lifestyles encouragement throughout our school-based comprehensive services plan. The parenting skills workshops continue serving parents attending the agency's methadone clinics, parents in residential programs (both men and women's Residential Facilities), parents of children in treatment for mental health disorders, and parents

attending the DWI (Driving While Intoxicated) programs.

The initiatives created by the Department of Sports and Recreations are in future plans of being directed to children between 0 and 5 years of age and their families. The programs will engage parents and children in activities that are beneficial for their development and health as it encourages family interaction. The Department of Sports and Recreation is engaging in modifying the following programs in order to make them available for preschool children as part of our High Quality Plan : **Playing for Your Health Program (Liga de los Gorditos)** – This program currently attends children between 7 and 13 years of age emerges from the high necessity of recreation and sport programs for adolescents with obesity and poor eating habits and physical activity, as well as other emotional factors and lacking alternatives for a recreational and sport participation among peers. The initiative projects a participation of 7,000 children; **Sports Development Institute** – The institute certifies professionals or trainers in different sports and recreational activities in order to ensure high quality standards. It will be also implemented for professionals working with children 0-5 years of age; **Integrate Born Learning Campaign** to parks owned by the Department of Sports and Recreation – The campaign rescues spaces for learning, playing and family interaction encouraging parents, caregivers and communities to create quality early learning opportunities for preschool children.

United Way of Puerto Rico is a private non-profit organization that dedicates to strengthen social and health services in Puerto Rico supports economically 144 participating institutions and partner institutions. United Way's mission is to maximize resources to transform people lives. The vision is to identify necessities, generate changes, evaluate services and provide human and financial resources. United Way offers services to the family, homes for children, shelter, special and supplementary education services, recreational and character forming programs, mental and physical health services, drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, basic individual needs, homes and day care centers for the elders, guidance and counseling.

In June 18, 2008 Puerto Rico Legislature passed Public Law 93 for the Development and Implementation of Public Policy for Early Childhood. Act 93 of 2008 in its statement of purpose establishes the importance of family engagement in the development and well-being of its members. It also states that in order for each family to become a facilitator in their children's

development, their needs in education in raising their children through health and well –being promotion of the family with the objective of enhancing their quality of life, shall be addressed.

Therefore, Puerto Rico will develop, as part of State High Quality Plan for Race to the Top family engagement standards, in order to ensure that children and families' needs are addressed, and that children are well prepared for school success. Standards will be developed by a multidisciplinary team composed by representatives of the Department of the Family, Department of Education, Department of Health, CDDF providers, Head Start/ Early Head Start grantees, non- profit organizations serving children from 0-5. As a commitment of our government to ensure school readiness for our children, these strategies will be achieved by legislation and will be required to all early learning programs in Puerto Rico. Once these standards are finally approved by both PR House of Representatives and the Senate, the Department of the Family in coordination with Puerto Rico Early Childhood State Advisory Council will be responsible for disseminating family engagement standards by media, web page updates, bill boards, and training professionals, community leaders, and governmental agencies' staff. The Department of the Family will also be responsible for the dissemination of these standards so early learning programs will develop their strategies accordingly. ADFAN will address standards and incorporate this in the existing parent education process for adoptive parents, foster care parents as well as, to families with high needs. Workshops will be provided to the families in coordination with CENTRANA and the Office for the Socioeconomic Finance and Empowerment (OFSA) through the Schools for Family Life and School for Healthy Living and Parenting. In order to ensure the implementation of family engagement standards, existing Family Engagement Specialists will be trained by the Department of the Family (ADFAN and ACUDEN), Department of Health, and other family engagement specialist in early learning and development programs. This effort will guarantee that existing and new initiatives will be develop according to the Family Engagement Standards. Race to the Top funds will be used to strengthen the existing family engagement components in the government agencies and the recruitment of family engagement personnel for the Sports and Recreation Department. These specialists will ensure that family engagement standards are in place in all regions assigned to each department and existing programs. Also family members, parents and community partners will receive training through CENTRANA. CENTRANA will develop a family profile report to

collect information which will serve to design trainings addressing families' situation and satisfy other family's needs.

The Office for the General Coordinator for Socioeconomic Financing and Self Management (OFSA), government office that works directly with communities identified as high needs, will partner with ACUDEN to provide physical facilities to place four (4) additional CENTRANA's in the following communities with high needs according to statistics provided by OFSA: El Jobo in Salinas, Cambalache in Canóvanas, Utuado and Vieques. Among other collaborations OFSA will refer families with high needs to CENTRANA, so the particular family's engagement process will be initiated. In addition, OFSA will join United Way in the transformation of their recreational areas into a Born to Learn Park.

D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Evidence for (D)(1):

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

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

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of five pages)

Puerto Rico has recognized the importance of developing a strong workforce to serve early childhood population and their families. This commitment was an important element in the approval of the state Early Childhood Law PR-PL 93, 2008 a grass root initiative that created the Puerto Rico public policy to address the needs of early childhood, establish the central and municipalities' government responsibilities and facilitate the coordination between public and private organizations that serve early childhood. The public policy core principles expressed the importance of a holistic approach in addressing the early childhood development and the importance of "focus the early childhood educator professional training in how to recognize, understand, and promote the integral child development in natural environments, with richness in learning opportunities". The PR Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework will also address the PR Early Childhood Public Policy Law (PR-PL 93, 2008), reason for investment in early childhood education, among others:

- Early childhood represent a window of opportunities to assure optimum development and is a great social investment;
- There is scientific evidence that shows the school failure consequences can be devastating when we do not address the signs in early development and learning.

Although Puerto Rico have recognized the importance of early childhood educator professional development and have developed early childhood higher education academic programs and continuing education courses do not have a unified Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials. This reality in Puerto Rico was found to be similar in states of USA mainland where "the field lacks consistent standards and requirements for professional preparation, and as a result low levels of education and a minimum of specialized training in early childhood education are the norm", Zaslow, et.al. 2010. Puerto Rico has decided that an important part of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge funding is to create an early childhood workforce development system, "to give every child the best possible change at

an education, from the day they born until the last job they take...” (President Obama, Sate of the Union Address, January 25, 2011).

Historically education was conceived as the most important social and economic change strategy in Puerto Rico history. Through education PR changed from a mostly agricultural economics model to an industrial model. The first faculty of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) was Education established more than 100 years ago in 1903. Now days the UPR has eleven (11) campuses and three of them offer early childhood and preschool teacher training, there are an array of other disciplines to assure service providers that support early learning inclusive environments, such as: psychologists, social workers, nutritionist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech and language pathologist, administrators and early interventionist, and visiting nurses among others, graduates of the UPR system. The Graduate School of Public Health offers a Graduate Certification in Developmental Disabilities- Early Intervention (DDIT) created in 1992 at the beginning of IDEA Part C implementation (previously Part H) to provide qualifies workforce for the Early Intervention Program. This academic program was developed by the PR-University Center of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UAP at that moment). The DDIT have graduate 165 providers, 30% of them from education. Also, Puerto Rico has several academic programs in early childhood education in private institutions of higher education from a bachelor to master degree. All this infrastructure in the higher education system assure that Puerto Rico have the capacity to design, develop and evaluate a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progressive credentialing system. This capacity was demonstrated also in several special projects initiated and funded by the Puerto Rico Governor’s Early Childhood State Advisory Council. All of these projects targeted to improve the quality of early childhood services and assure that all children are ready for the school, school readiness. In it guiding principles express that the of the most important already mentioned is the design and implementation of a QIRS pilot project (“Pasitos”) and the Early Learning Standards for Early Childhood Education developed by the Department of Education.

With Race to the Top funding Puerto Rico will have resources to alienate all this quality services systems with strong competencies based workforce development in Early Childhood. In developing the “Pasitos” QIRS Puerto Rico adopted the best practices standards of the NAEYC for Early Childhood (2005) and core belief that “children are the ultimate beneficiaries of high-

quality of early childhood education” and develops a progressive system to measure development. “Pasitos” represent the guide for the workforce competencies development of early childhood educators to assure a real impact in children optimum development and learning. The competencies will be frame in the following areas: child development, positive relations and socio emotional development and wellness; health promotion and safety environment, curriculum development, implementation and evaluation, family engagement, community relations, observation and assessment, ethics.

The PR Early Childhood Workforce Development is based in the National Professional Development Center on Inclusion assumption guides for professional development (2008). The six assumptions are: **1.** The term professional development encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities, for example, those that result in college credit or degrees as well as those that generally are less intensive and do not yield credits or degrees; those that occur largely through formal coursework and those that are more informal and situated in practice. **2.** The early childhood workforce constitutes a group of professionals who are widely diverse with respect to their roles (e.g., teachers, teaching assistants, care providers, related services providers (psychologist, social workers, OT, PT,SLP, nutritionist) consultants, technical assistance providers, family support providers, administrators); organizational affiliations (e.g., Head Start, Child Care, pre-kindergarten, preschool, and public school programs); qualifications, education, and experience; and racial, ethnic, socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic characteristics. They serve diverse young children who vary widely in terms of their abilities, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, culture, and language. **3.** Families of young children are essential partners in all aspects of early education and intervention, including professional development. Families can play key roles as both recipients and providers to enrich professional development for all learners. The role of families should be acknowledged in planning, delivering, and evaluating professional development, even though the term *professional* is used in the definition. **4.** The role of *learners* in professional development is to *actively engage* in learning experiences that lead to the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions and the application of this knowledge in practice.

5. The roles of *providers* in professional development are to *organize and facilitate* learning experiences that respond directly to problems in practice. **6.** Conceptualizing professional

development as three intersecting components (the “who,” the “what,” and the “how”) can be used as an organizing framework for planning and evaluating professional development. Although a comprehensive system of professional development must take into account a variety of other factors such as access to learning opportunities and incentives to participate, the “who,” the “what,” and the “how” may be viewed as the core of a professional development framework aimed at promoting highly effective teaching and intervening.

Figure I, represent the propose workforce model based in an organized professional development system and a strong data base for accountability and dissemination strategies to engage possible candidates for assure an adequate supply of train providers. The system will provide data to assess appropriate practices and evidence base materials that promote a continue reflexion for future goals and in early childhood practices and children readiness in Puerto Rico.

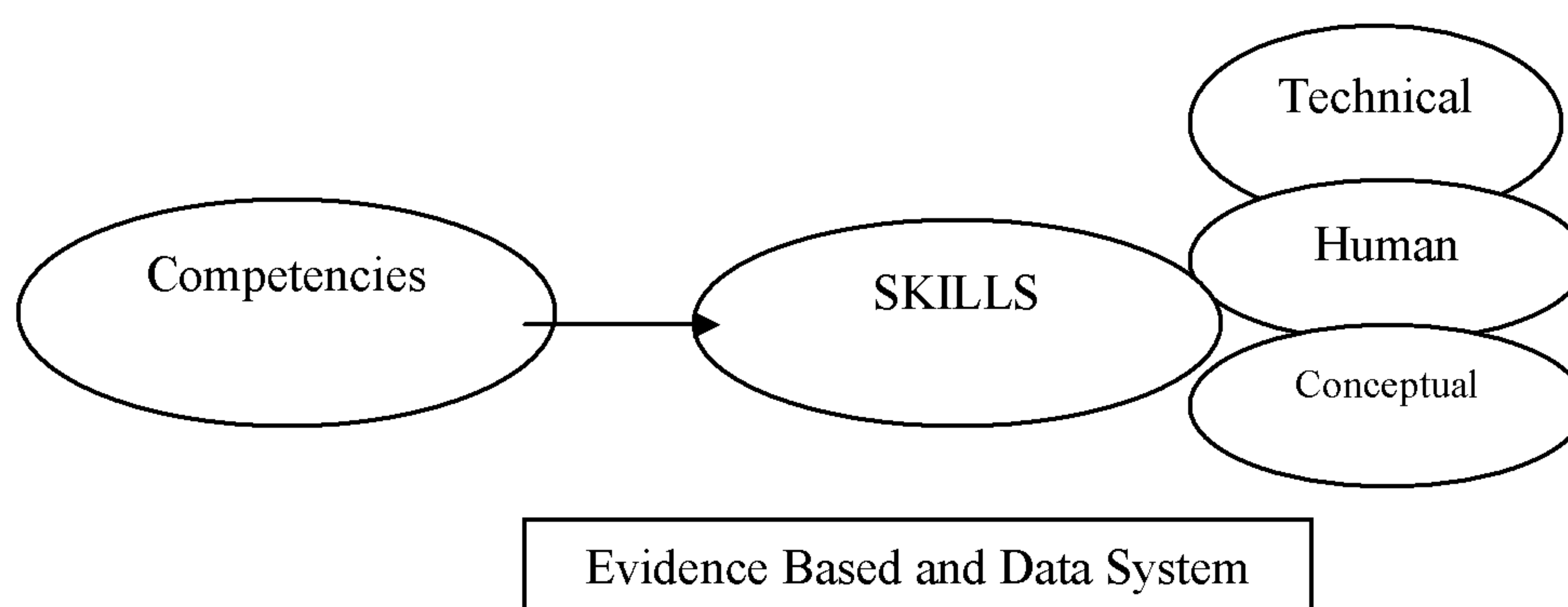
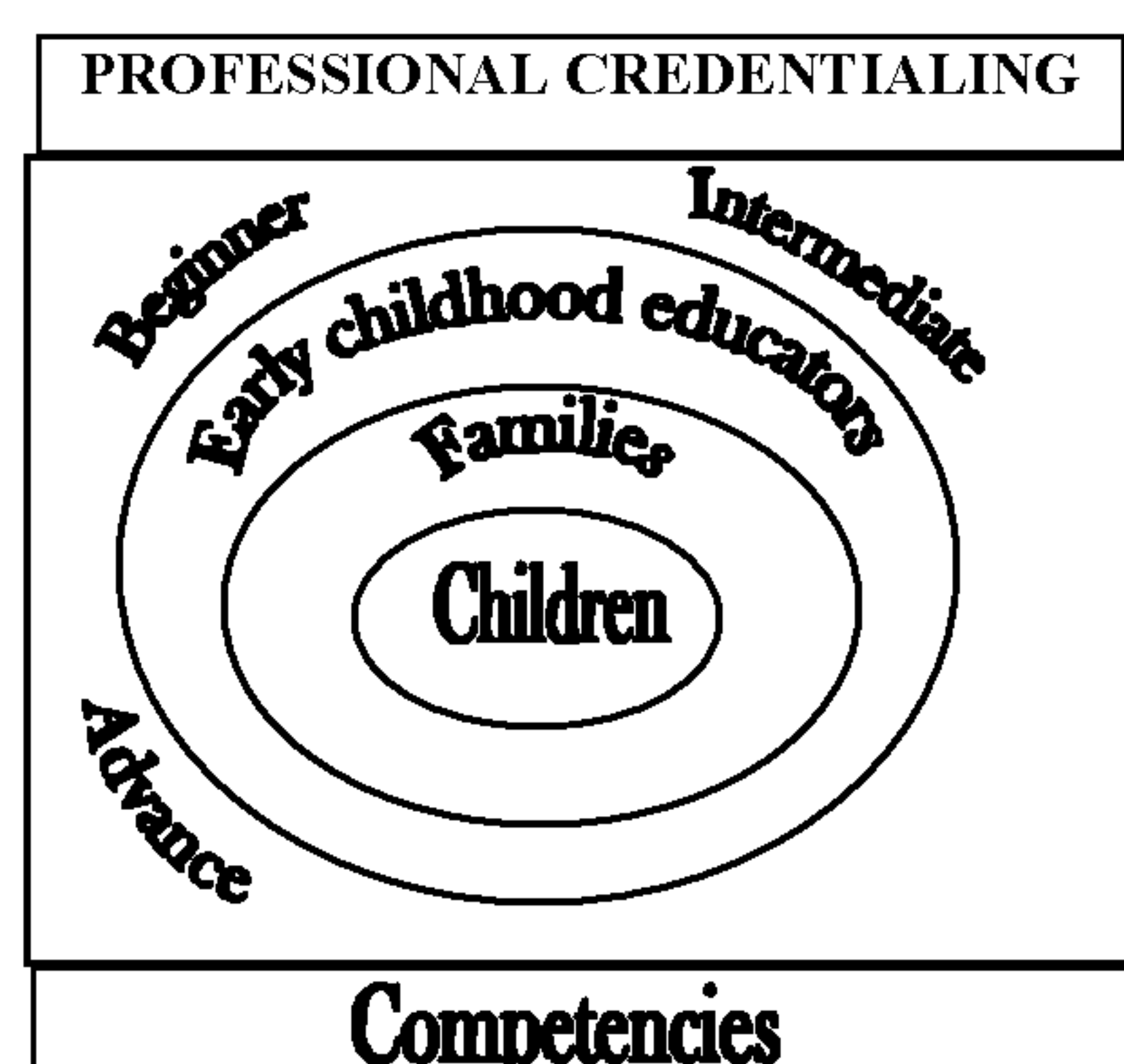


Figure I

A strong work force development in early education require a credentialing system base in levels, with this approach a the service provider will be prepare to satisfied the children needs of development and early learning in their environment. Puerto Rico has considered three levels beginners, intermediate and advance. The early childhood educator level will depend in its certified professional knowledge and experience in early childhood. Already the sub-committee of Work-force development of the Puerto Rico Early Childhood State Advisory Council have expressed that a basic credential like a CDA should be part of the evaluation for the beginners levels. The credentialing system will provide the ladder for pre service and in service trainees to develop knowledge and skills that foster early learning. Early Childhood Educator will have and individualized evaluation for credentialing based also in its role with the children and their families in promoting development and learning in an inclusive environment. In figure II we

present the different components of the professional credentialing system. This which means that the system will offer credentials for teachers, child care providers, visiting nurses, social workers and others offering related services to support children outcomes for school success, depend in those define as early childhood educator workforce system developed Puerto Rico.



These efforts in personnel development will be led by the Puerto Rico Early Childhood Workforce Institute (ECWI), which will be established by ACUDEN. This Institute will work in coordination with the Council in the design, development and evaluation of the system. The ECWI also will created a definition of early childhood educator for Puerto Rico and a reference document with professional competencies for early childhood personnel preparation (pre service and in-service) by levels with observable criteria and technical, human and conceptual skills needed to be develop by the by the early childhood educator. These tasks will be in collaboration with Participating Agencies, Head Start Collaboration Office, universities, among others. ECWI members will be experts in their fields that will guide their work with a evidence based approach in personnel preparation in early childhood, the work of distinguish organization in personnel preparation as the NAEYC (2009), Council on Exceptional Children, different ethic codes other important documents like “*Pasitos*” and the *Standards for Early Childhood Education developed by the Department of Education in Puerto Rico*.

Each level of professional development will be attached with the implementation and production of appropriated practices as part of the evaluation of the quality and progress of these service providers. Process and results of this system will be data driven with information about how is the supply of early childhood educator in Puerto Rico, zones of needs (geographic areas and type services) children profiles and outcomes, family satisfaction and educators needs and methods

and resources to satisfied those needs. The ECWI will partner with higher education institutions and professional boards and will work in the development of the local credentialing ladder in coordination with Early Childhood State Advisory Council and the Council of Education. Although we have some components that are described a system is not in place, the Race to the Top funding will allow Puerto Rico to create it with two fundamental goals:

- Support early childhood development and school readiness outcomes through the empowerment of early childhood educators with *professional standards and competencies* that enhance the services they provide.
- Implement a data *driven early childhood workforce system* to promote and support the children outcomes that assure adequate development and school successes in an inclusive environment.

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

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

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

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

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

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

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

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

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

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

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

*(Enter **narrative** here – recommended maximum of five pages)*

Other essential procedure to assure a State High –Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Education workforce and to improve children outcomes is a data system that includes an adequate personnel supply and demand. Components of that data system should offer information about the amount of early childhood educators in different processes such as: enrolled in higher education institutions and other trainings programs, employed, number of vacancies and the recruitment and retention system. The Puerto Rico Early Childhood State Advisory Council has already started the process to create a data system to collect the basic information of all early learning and development programs. Basically, this system will collect data related to offer and demand of services, cost, funds, number of children served, workforce information and quality requirements. Puerto Rico has many institution of Higher Education, as it has been stated before, that have been developing programs for early childhood teachers with many of them focus primarily in preschool and several of them are already offering training and courses to address the development and early learning needs of children 0-3 and their families. The Education Council of Puerto Rico is a government organism

created to manage the public policy of education standards in Puerto Rico within the normative frame for the licensing of the education institutions, including technical colleges. To assure life learning and professional actualizations of service providers the Government of Puerto Rico also has Boards for disciplines licensing. The Boards licenses professionals and other providers at the disciplines entry level and periodically continuing education credits are requiring renewing professional credentials. According with the Education Council actually in PR we have about 14 programs in private institutions certified with different programs courses and certifications in early childhood and preschool mostly are bachelor degrees with some masters and post graduate certifications. Other programs are in the process to be certified. (Table A-1-11 provides a summary of PR current postsecondary institutions). Data provided by the Educational Council states that in 2008-2009 that 189 individuals graduate from these institutions. With an appropriated data system as it is being designed and will be strengthen Race to the Top Funds we will be able not only to have updated data, we will have more providers in places where they are needed. In the UPR, the state public university, service provider preparation in early childhood education is actually going on in three of its 11 campuses. Programs are mostly in preschool education with courses and certifications in early childhood. In San Juan de Rio Piedras Campus (one of the three, the biggest and oldest) the program have been accredited by the *National Council Education for Teachers Education*.

Another academic program in the UPR (19 years old) with an interdisciplinary approach to early childhood is the Graduate Certification in Developmental Disabilities –Early Intervention. The program was develop by the Institute on Developmental Disability, PR University Center of Excellence on Developmental Disabilities and is hosted in the Human Development Department in the Graduate School of Public Health at the Medical Sciences Campus. This program prepares trainees to address the needs of children from 0-5 with developmental disabilities and their families. Up to date the DD-EI has graduate 289 professionals from various disciplines such as; nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, social work, psychology, and speech and language pathology, pediatric, administration and education (a third of the graduates are from educations, special education, preschool, regular education and adapted physical education). The program was developed in after IDEA Part H (now Part C) early intervention program was established in PR, in 1991. The DD-IT program one year 26 credits curriculum is based in Tran

disciplinary competencies addressing inclusive care and interventions within family centered and family engagement practices with an ecological approach. Courses reflex this approach: typical and atypical child development, family interventions and engagement, disciplinary and interdisciplinary assessment from 0-5, services and practices in early childhood, services planning and evaluation, service coordination, public policy in early intervention, among others.

In the UPR and other privates higher education institutions those academic initiative are enriched with real life experiences in several laboratories of practices and research. Some of those laboratories centers are totally or partially funded by the Administration for Children Care and Integral Services, ACUDEN, to serve as quality programs for training of CCDF childcare and Early Head start staff. The UPR in Rio Piedras, has developed three (3) laboratories; the first one was first Maternal School Laboratory 69 years ago and is still a practicum center for the faculty of education. For 0-3 Rio Piedras Campus also have the “Proyecto Modelo Innovador” a Laboratory with a strong emphasis in teaching language arts to infants and families for school readiness in various creative cultural sensitive approaches. Also the Rio Piedras Campus has a Preschool Center accredited by the NYAEC. The Graduate DD-EI Certificate in the Graduate School of Public Health a practicum center also was developed to train pre-service and in service trainees. In services training activities are develop to offer technical assistance to child care providers. Other in service training activities, mostly as Continuing Education are offer by private higher education institutions and by the UPR. Last year the UPR education faculty develops a three days course on Appropriated Practices and another training project “In action with the infants and toddlers “also a three days institute. The Graduate Certificate DD-EI faculty also offers a 54 hours continuing education institute to Head Start, Early Head Start and Child Care service providers, as part of the activities six special projects were develop by the trainees. The DDEI faculty offers technical assistance in the development and implementation of the project. The projects target different centers interest such as: child development activities for families, development of intervention with children with autism, family of children with developmental disabilities empowerment through, nutrition and obesity prevention program, among others. Other organization offering in service training is Special Quest Consulting Group in PR (to Head Start staff). With the system in place we can implement policies and incentive to

promote professional improvement and career advancement in a systemic ways. Actually, the Puerto Rico Early Childhood State Advisory Council is establishing a scholarship program for service providers in order for them to acquire one of the following certificates or credentials: CDA (infant and preschool early educators), special education certification, early education certification and early intervention certification. Scholarships candidates will be evaluate by the professional workforce development subcommittee of the Council and will be base in the needs evidenced by the “Pasitos”, the QRIS system improvement plan. In our High Quality Plan the Scholarship Program will be strengthen to provide access to early childhood workforce to professional development. In addition to “ Pasitos” , which at this time is Pilot Study, Puerto Rico do not have all its resources and components in a system that can allow us to report aggregate data on Early Childhood Educator advancement and retention . However if we can have access to the Race to the Top funds we can work to increase the number of early childhood educators receiving credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. We do not have a baseline with aligned institution since we will be developing the framework. The first year of funding we will be developing the competencies frame work with the higher education institutions and technical colleges to promote that at the same time they will be reflecting and aligning their courses as the competencies develops. Also, we will address the needs of train staff based in the evaluation of centers through the QRIS data. The following table presents the target by years after developing the baseline the first year. At the present the Puerto Rico Early Childhood State Advisory Council Governor will work in a ladder for Early Childhood Educators credentialing process of three steps beginner, intermediate and advance level, until the ECWI is established and the work will be coordinated among both organisms. Those levels will be aligned with the developed Workforce Knowledge and Competency Workforce. We expected to finish this structure development in 2013 since at the end of 2012 the competencies will be developed.

Performance Measures for (D)(2)(d)(1): Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators receiving credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework					
	Baseline (Today)	Target - end of calendar year 2012	Target - end of calendar year 2013	Target - end of calendar year 2014	Target – end of calendar year 2015
Total number of “aligned” institutions and providers	0		30%	60%	100%
Total number of Early Childhood Educators credentialed by an “aligned” institution or provider	0	N/A	284	350	400
<p><i>[Please indicate whether baseline data are actual or estimated and describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information; and please include any definitions you used that are not defined in the notice. If baseline data are not currently available please describe in your High-Quality Plan in your narrative how and when you will have baseline data available.]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During this year the Workforce Knowledge Competencies Framework will be develop with private and public Higher Education Institution. Families of children 0-5 will be invited to participate in the team. • Graduates actual number is 189 (2008-2009) and 21 more form the DD-EI Program 2008-2009 ; 2009-210 					

Performance Measures for (D)(2)(d)(2): Increasing number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.										
Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have moved up the progression of credentials, aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, in the prior year</i>									
	Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target- end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Credential Type 1 <i>Specify: CDA</i>	634	16	684	17	734	18	784	19	834	20
Credential Type 2 <i>Specify:</i>										
Credential Type 3 <i>Specify:</i>										
Credential Type 4 <i>Specify:</i>										

Performance Measures for (D)(2)(d)(2): Increasing number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.										
Progression of credentials (Aligned to Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework)	<i>Baseline and Annual Targets -- Number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who have moved up the progression of credentials, aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, in the prior year</i>									
	Baseline (Today)		Target- end of calendar year 2012		Target- end of calendar year 2013		Target- end of calendar year 2014		Target- end of calendar year 2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<p><i>Include a row for each credential in the State's proposed progression of credentials, customize the labeling of the credentials, and indicate the highest and lowest credential.</i></p> <p><i>[Please indicate if baseline data are actual or estimated; describe the methodology used to collect the data, including any error or data quality information.]</i></p>										

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

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

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

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

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

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

(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;

(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;

(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and

(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

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

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

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of eight pages)

Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) has a strong Kindergarten Entry Assessment. With a screening approach, PRDE has consistently measured during the past ten years early childhood school readiness through the assessment tool “Teacher Observation Scale”. The student’s skills are screened right before the initiation of each school year, through the enrollment but not later than the first two weeks of the current school year. The teacher, on a one-to-one basis approach, ensures that an appropriate classroom setting and learning environment is provided to the student during the screening process. The observation scale, which has been used by PRDE teachers for a decade, provides a comprehensive assessment approach in the following areas: 1) Social and Emotional Development, 2) Physical well-being and Motor Development, 3) Cognitive Development and 4) General knowledge. Each of these areas were developed with a holistic and integrated approach by ensuring that all aspects in the early development stages are considered.

Essential Domains of School Readiness are included as part of the interviewing process whereby the student is screened through a set of strategies ensuring that all necessary skills, knowledge and dispositions needed to be successful are addressed. Each observation area in the *Teacher Observation Scale* is aligned with expectations established in *PRDE’s Learning Standards and Grade Level Expectations* for children from birth to 4 years 11 months of age.

The future success for children is measured through core concepts of learning development in each of the areas. The Social Development standards expects social maturity, independence and self control while the assessment process screens students disposition to behave independently amongst peers and teachers and enjoyment of a kindergarten experience.

Physical well-being and Motor Development assessment is two-fold: Fine Motor and Gross Motor. The future student is exposed to physical challenges to evaluate learned sequence of movements in both, Fine and Motor skills, towards the execution of a particular task. As part of the Cognitive Development, Literacy and Language assessment process ensures that students meet Oral and Written language that will support the children to meet the expected ability to communicate ideas, needs, emotions and preferences to express and interact with others.

Through this relationship experiences is then expected that the student will likely be willing to explore and appreciate written language and increased awareness and understanding of how sounds and letters relate to one another which then can have reciprocal effects on a child's articulation skills. The final stage of the assessment process screens Cognitive and General knowledge through the use of object identification and recognition. Problem solving, critical thinking and establishment of quantitative relationships amongst space, objects and individuals around them are expected as they develop in their learning experience.

During the past ten years, since year 2000, PRDE school districts have been steadily using its *Teacher Observation Scale* to assess children readiness across the Island. Close to 1400 teachers district-wide are trained annually in the use of the assessment tool, methods, and strategies and how results will be reported. One teacher in each of Puerto Rico's 78 municipalities serves as liaison and critical observer of the assessment tool, process and strategies used as part of the academic assessment. At the end of the first month of each new school year reported results are collected in each of PRDEs twenty eight (28) districts, who in turn report results to the State Educational Agency. Data reported by school districts is then analyzed by the Early Childhood Program to ensure that needs are addressed in low performing districts and ensure teachers are provided with appropriate resources to close the gap in student school readiness. Delivery of Professional Development is planned based on results per area; Social and Emotional Development, Physical well-being and Motor Development, Cognitive Development and General Knowledge. National Association of Education for Young Children recommended practices are reinforced to teachers along with strategies to improve results in low performing areas assessed. However, it must be noted that the Kindergarten Entry Assessment process is not intended to prevent children entry into kindergarten.

Validation of the tool, its appropriateness and reliability, is a result of a thorough discussion of experiences and outcomes amongst peers, social worker and parents. English and Special Education Teachers are included in the process to ensure that the tool is appropriate for English Learners and children with disabilities. Observational measures are used by teachers through the year. During year 2000, PRDE implemented its Learning Grade Standards. A multi-sector group of Early Childhood Educators, including University Professors, Pre-school and

Kindergarten Teachers reviewed the *PRDE's Learning Grade Standards in 2010*. These standards are used as reference to assess progress and ensure student readiness for transition and promotion to first grade. In addition, a *Conceptual Framework for Kindergarten Program* was developed during 2003. The conceptual curricular framework in such Kindergarten Program provides relevance to educational activities. It provides the appropriate strategies to promote integrated development and recommended practices to ensure effective learning and development for the kindergarten student. Theoretical Early Learning philosophies such as Piaget, Vigostki and Ericksson are introduced and discussed in said Conceptual Framework available to the Early Childhood Workforce. These set of activities, practices, strategies and theories are an integral part of the instruction process provided by the teacher during the year. Right before the end of each school year, teachers then measure the students on a one-on-one basis using several tools: *Teacher Observation Scale for Kindergarten Entry*, *Teacher Observation on Learning Standards*, *Teacher Observation Scale for First Grade Transition* and *Formative Assessment Progress Report*. These set of assessment questions and processes are designed to monitor children's progress in meeting the Early Learning and Development Standards which results are then used to improve teacher instructional practices. Comparison of pre-assessment and post-assessments results is analyzed by the State Education Agency to validate effectiveness of the assessment to tools as well as Professional Development Plan.

This coordinated assessment system is supported by statewide efforts, such as:

- Communication with families
- Collaboration with Head Start transition process
- Collaboration with IDEA Part C transition process
- Collaboration with IDEA Part B services
- Coordination of professional development activities for early educators by local school districts
- Collaboration with Public Building Administration and School Infrastructure Improvement Office assessment efforts.

The outcomes have shown through the years that literacy and early mathematics are concepts in which children need reinforcement to ensure that expected standards are met. PRDE collects, organizes and understands children’s progress across a range of domains to assure that early learning and development programs adapt to children’s needs. Data management and collection is still gathered manually increasing the burden of timely analysis of results, processes, and professional development planning and school environment readiness.

For 2009 School Year, *Teacher Observation Scale for Kindergarten Entry* showed that over 90% of children were lacking basic development skills in Literacy and Language and Mathematic Concepts. See Table 1 below, *2009-2010 Teacher Observation Scale for Kindergarten Entry*. Data gathering for Formative Assessment Progress Report during November 2010 showed that over 80% of 2009 kindergarten students met learning standards and expectations in all Assessment areas. See Table 2 below, *2009-2010 Formative Assessment Progress Report Results*.

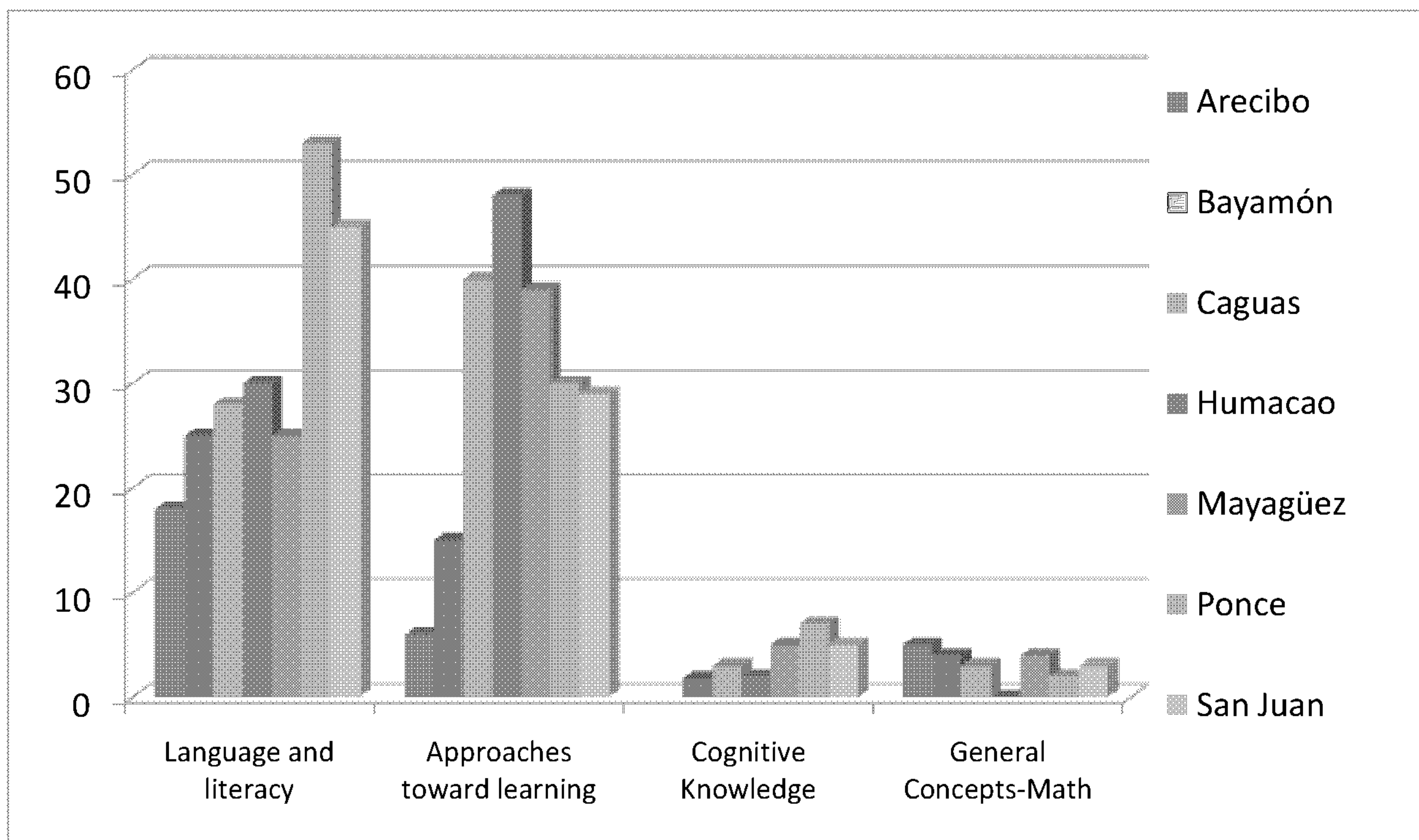


Table 1 – 2009-2010 Teacher Observation Scale for Kindergarten Entry

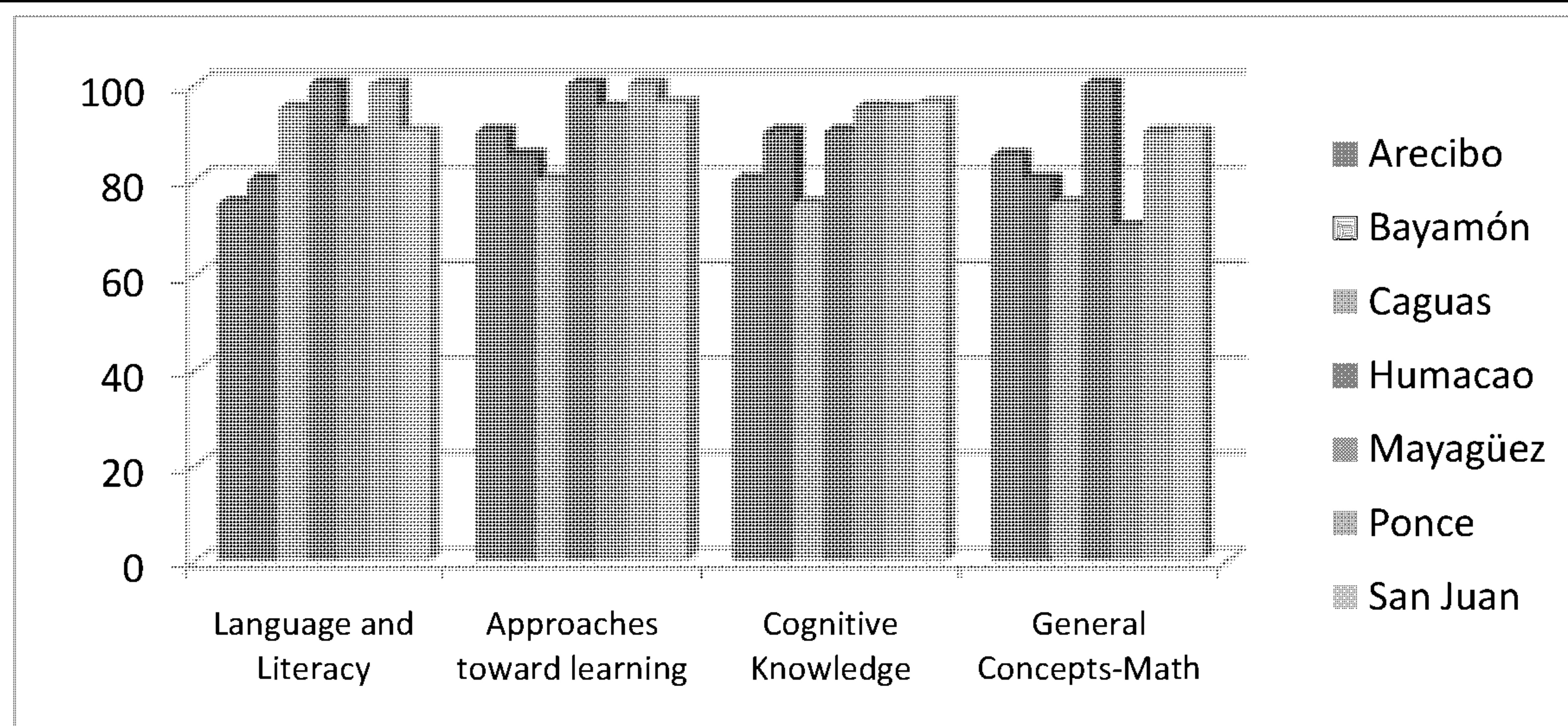


Table 2 – 2009-2010 Formative Assessment Progress Report Results

PRDE aims to support that children entering kindergarten have the skills they need to succeed and focus in improvement activities and strategies for academic preparedness in Literacy and Mathematics. The same is true for English learners and children with disabilities. Although English and Special Education as well as Social Workers participate in the assessment process, for this group within the early childhood population, data collection and management overwhelms even more the current manual data gathering process. Strengthening the data systems to ensure that collection of all stakeholders involved in the kindergarten assessment entry process is collected, organized and analyzed in a timely manner, will support state efforts to identify root cause for barriers, design strategies for opportunities, establishes appropriate practices and implements activities in the right direction to dramatically improve the Early Learning and Development Program at an earlier stage.

Availability and timeliness of data gathering to analyze current results will level up instruction strategies, practices and services during early developing stages rather than during transition process, therefore, closing school readiness gap. Readiness for reading and writing skills will provide our early learners a much more enhanced learning experience for critical thinking and understanding of printed materials and text. Early Childhood needs will be timely assessed resulting in a student ready to succeed in full language Literacy and challenging Mathematics environment through elementary grades.

(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.

*(Enter **narrative** here – recommended maximum of eight pages)*

It is the intention of this administration, to build an early learning data system to improve educational practices, services and policies in accordance with the requirements defined in the

Early Learning and Development Program – Early Learning Challenge Application. By doing so, we recognize the need to work closely with the process that will soon be initiated, to develop a statewide longitudinal data system for Puerto Rico. Both of these initiatives are major endeavors not to be taken lightly. We must initiate the process of identifying the information requirements, sources of such information, users, roles, responsibilities, accessibility, data characteristics and many other requirements that will serve as roadmap to the development effort. This data design effort must be developed in parallel with the initial phase of the development of the statewide longitudinal data system, where the governance structure will establish the set of rules that will serve as the primary guides in this effort.

To ensure that we tackle this initiative in an orderly fashion driven by deliverables, we have structured a project to develop a system that will allow us to successfully meet the following overall objectives:

- a. **Existence of all the essential data elements**—Data design is a complex and time consuming task. Data element identification goes beyond the mere recognition of identifiers, modifiers or naming conventions. Data structures, linkages, relationships, definitions and many other qualifiers play a key role in this effort, as it is the information users who define the elements required for capturing, reporting or controlling.

We recognize though, that at a minimum, the following data elements must be some of the essential data elements:

1. Unique child identifier
2. Unique Early Childhood Educator identifier
3. Unique program site identifier
4. Child and family demographic information
5. Early Childhood Educator demographic information
6. Data on program structure and quality
7. Child-level program participation and attendance

Adding to this already complex environment, data elements must correspond to the definition and uses of the statewide longitudinal data system of which our project will be an integral part. It is our intention though, not to begin the process with a white

sheet of paper. Intelligence gained by other states will serve as starting points on this effort in order to ensure thorough understanding on the part of our developers and obtain knowledge from those that have already initiated this effort.

- b. **Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs**—One of the most significant challenges of this overall effort will be the proper identification of data collection points, types of data to be collected, method of collecting such data and the needed collaboration among all entities concerned. This process will be shared with the project for the development of the statewide longitudinal data system (SLDS), as both efforts share a common goal in this aspect. The SLDS effort will focus, on the initial phase, in the establishment of a governance structure that will define the ground rules and collaboration aspects of all entities involved.
- 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**—By having the Puerto Rico Department of Education as a key participant on the SLDS initiative, we will benefit from the already implemented Student Information System. The SIS will provide a starting point of convergence for common information that already is being captured and maintained for all students enrolled in the public system. In addition, we will pay special attention to data Exchange standards such as the National Information Exchange Model (NIEM). Other national standards will also be adhered to as determined by the Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) of electronic health information and standards developed and in use by other states agencies and jurisdictions of the United States of America.
- 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**—Even though the SLDS initiative extends from early childhood through integration to the workforce, our efforts in this area will be to identify, design, develop, manage and control the information that will be pertinent to Early Learning. It is this subset of the project where, while complying with

the governance structure defined by the SLDS, we will implement those systems that correspond to our specific needs. Note though, that our strategy once again will be to gather the intelligence gained by other states in implementing similar systems and, if at all possible, transfer such knowledge to our project environment either by acquiring software already developed or transport policies, procedures and development tools that have proven successful. We will focus on achieving automatic, online, real time or asynchronous data exchange to ensure that correct, timely and relevant information elements are available for producing intelligence that is well founded on complete data. In addition, business intelligence and analytics tools will also be employed to facilitate the delivery of standardized, normalized and easy to manipulate and understand analyses for public policy formulation.

- e. **Meet the Data System Oversight Requirements and comply with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws**—The above discussed issues are among the requirements that have been stated and the discussion included defines the way by which we plan to comply with such requirements. Additionally, since the system will be recording, managing and reporting data that may be sensitive either in terms of privacy and/or confidentiality, the initial phase of the project will identify all laws, regulations, pronouncements and enactments that may deal with the data being collected and shared among participating entities. This also will be a shared activity between our project and the development of the SLDS.

APPROACH TO THE PROJECT

As previously stated, we plan to engage in a project that will parallel the development of the SLDS. In order to make the best use of both fiscal and human resources, we have divided our initiative into four distinct, manageable and quality controlled phases. These phases follow the standards defined the Project Management Institute's "*Project Management Body of Knowledge Guide*". These phases are:

Requirements Definition Phase

This phase includes the process of defining and documenting stakeholders' needs to meet the project objectives. These requirements need to be elicited, analyzed and recorded in order to

ensure proper understanding by all parties involved. Nonetheless, our starting point on this process already includes a set of requirements that the system must meet. These are:

- a. Description of goals and benchmarks that the state will establish to lead to a greater number and percentage of disadvantaged children participating in higher quality early learning programs to improve school readiness outcomes, including an established baseline of the number of disadvantaged children in high-quality early learning programs. Description and definition of functionality of Early Childhood systems, from data capture, validation and integration, to business rules and process flows, analytics, report production, messaging needs, and human interface design. For this endeavor we shall consult stakeholders from the CNT, various participating agencies and councils, researchers who will access data to produce findings regarding Early Childhood education and development efforts and their effects on K-20 performance and workforce success."
- b. Description of how the state will implement a governance structure and a system of early learning programs (Early Learning System) that includes:
 1. Not later than 12 months after receiving award notice – complete state early learning and development standards that include social and emotional, cognitive and physical development domains and approaches to learning that are developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate for all children;
 2. A process to ensure that State early learning and development standards are integrated into the instructional and programmatic practices of early learning programs and services, including services provided to children with disabilities;
 3. A program rating system that builds on licensing requirements and other State regulatory standards and that:
 - a. Is designed to improve quality and effectiveness across different early learning settings;
 - b. Integrates evidence-based program quality standards that reflect standard and progressively higher levels of quality;
 - c. Integrates the state's early learning and development standards for the purpose of improving instructional and programmatic practices;

- d. Addresses quality and effective inclusion of children with disabilities or developmental delays across different types of early learning settings;
- e. Addresses staff qualifications and professional development;
- f. Provides financial incentives and other supports to help programs meet and sustain higher levels of quality;
- g. Includes mechanisms for evaluating how programs are meeting those standards and progressively higher levels of quality;
- h. Includes a mechanism for public awareness of program levels

Although most of these requirements are programmatic in their very nature, the system to be implemented needs to support compliance with them and must become an integral part of the development effort. Even though these requirements are not unique to early childhood, they are an important part of the effort of the SLDS. Hence, while working on our specific needs, the SLDS project will assist in guiding the process, providing standards and inputs and documenting results common to both efforts.

As noted, during this phase, we would also gather intelligence from other states that have undertaken similar projects in order to gain from their experiences. This starting point for information gathering will reduce the overall time needed for this phase as well as provide proven results that will serve as input to our process.

The net result of this initial phase will be a framework for the establishment of a coordinated data infrastructure that will facilitate uniform data collection on programs, quality, provider qualifications and children's characteristics, as well as alignment and interoperability with elementary and secondary education data with currently resides on today's Puerto Rico Department of Education Student Information System.

Once the data gathering phase is completed, we would have developed, together with the SLDS project, a comprehensive data design where, at a minimum, the following would have been initiated:

- a. Key data elements definition and structure
- b. Data description

- c. Sources of input
- d. Uses of data
- e. Roles and responsibilities
- f. Commonality of uses among concerned entities
- g. Process flows
- h. Entity relationships
- i. Data sensitivity
- j. Retention and reporting

In addition, the governance structure, defined by the SLDS project, would provide the framework upon which the development effort would be supported.

Another deliverable of this initial phase would be the information needed to further define the timeframe for implantation of the system being designed. This would result in the development of a comprehensive work program that would assist in managing the project through completion. This phase is expected to be completed in a period of four to six months.

Project Implementation Phase

Upon completion of the Requirements Definition Phase for both this project and the SLDS project that will be executed in parallel, we will be ready to initiate the implementation of those aspects that do pertain to the Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators. It is our going-in position though, that we will be able to identify a system that will be readily available in the software market; therefore, the initial effort within this phase would be the preparation of a Request for Proposal for the implementation of the systems needs identified.

This RFP process would include:

- a. Development of Request for Proposal
- b. Identification of Potential Vendors
- c. RFP distribution and clarifications
- d. Proposals evaluation
- e. Potential vendor selection
- f. Contract negotiations

g. Contracting

Once the contract has been signed and the funding has been secured, contract management will be one of the functions within this phase. Additionally, the following activities will be performed:

- a. Definition of business process re-engineering to comply with data capturing, recording and reporting needs.
- b. Procedures development in accordance with new designed processes
- c. Development of a test model to verify software compliance with functional and user requirements
- d. Conversion planning including:
 - a. Systems testing
 - b. Training material preparation
 - c. User training
 - d. Development of conversion controls
- e. Conversion execution
- f. System support and maintenance

The other two phases of the project, namely; project control and termination, are managerial in nature and assist in assuring that the project complies with the stated objectives and is managed in an orderly fashion.

It should be noted, as stated throughout this write-up, that continuous coordination and compliance must be maintained with the SLDS project. It is the Longitudinal Data Base project the will remain the primary focus, since our development must meet the design criteria that will be established for all entities that, in anyway, must interact.

Early Childhood is a key participant in this overall effort since it establishes the point of entry upon which all other design activity must work from. In our case, the vision K-12 has been initiated with the implementation of the Student Information System which already gathers and reports a significant amount of information but for the most part, associated with school related matters. Other entities throughout the government will become active participants in the design effort and must integrate their developments of systems that are either installed or in process, to

the requirements that will result from this effort. Entities such as Demographic Registry (managed by Puerto Rico Department of Health), social programs directed to families in need (managed by the Puerto Rico Department of Family Affairs), educational activities (managed by the Puerto Rico Department of Education K-12) and many others, are key stakeholders in this effort. Our biggest challenge will be to integrate all concerned and establish the rules of engagement in order to make this a successful project. In this aspect, we are relying on the leadership and management that will be provided by the SLDS project which will establish the framework for all concern to comply.

With such comprehensive data systems, we will be able to monitor reforms and make specific changes to advance them. Our development will provide for the needed information to initiate the capturing of data at birth and throughout its early childhood included in the framework of the SLDS that will assist in maintain information on students from one grade to the next, measuring whether they are on track to graduate and telling K-12 schools whether they are preparing their students to succeed in college and the workforce.

Full implementation of the system described should be completed in a period not to exceed 36 months.

VII. COMPETITION PRIORITIES

Note about the Absolute Priority: *The absolute priority describes items that a State must address in its application in order to receive a grant. Applicants do not write a separate response to this priority. Rather, they address this priority throughout their responses to the selection criteria. Applications must meet the absolute priority to be considered for funding. A State meets the absolute priority if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the absolute priority*

Priority 1: Absolute Priority – Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

Note about Competitive Preference Priorities: *Competitive preference priorities can earn the applicant extra or "competitive preference" points.*

Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority – Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. (10 points)

Competitive Preference Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State's licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will receive points for this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30, 2015--

(a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will score this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and

(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

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

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

*(Enter **narrative** here – recommended maximum of eight pages)*

The Licensing Division in Puerto Rico is under the Department of Family. It is responsible to license all establishments that provide early learning and development services to children less than five years of age. In our regulations it is stated that an establishment that provides services to 2-6 children is considered a family day care and over 6 children is considered a center. Many years ago, the Licensing Division exempt EHS and HS program from the Puerto Rico's licensing requirements. This decision was made based on the rationale that EHS and HS programs standards were above the licensing requirements.

Puerto Rico is committed with a real reform agenda in our early learning and development programs and services. To achieve this goal it is necessary to conduct a restructuring of the licensing process, organizational structure and regulations. Since back in the 1990 when the CCDF funds became available the State has been designating funds and close collaboration between the CCDF lead agency and the Licensing Division has been in place. Throughout all these year's many changes have been incorporated to our regulations to ensure that our early learning and development programs will provide quality services. Among these changes in the last 20 years have been that all licensed centers need to have in place a curriculum age and developmentally appropriate, CDA credential has been incorporated as one of the options in the teachers requirements, family engagement activities, screening process and many other changes that have definitely improve the quality of services. Training efforts have been put into place to provide Licensing Officials with the latest information regarding early learning and development

but still there are many things to improve.

As things continue to evolve in the early learning and development programs and new research continues to come out indicated the importance of these early years it is necessary to continue to improve our licensing process in order to guarantee that our children will have learning environments that will get them ready for school. Our reform agenda in this area will start by requiring that all establishments that provide services for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting to be licensed and inspected by the Family Department's Licensing Division, including EHS and HS Programs. The State Advisory Council has already initiated some of the process of analyzing and revising the licensing process. A subcommittee was created with representatives of different early learning programs and is immerse in the process of analyzing the actual regulations and requirements. The analysis is being conducted by aligning the actual requirements to the QRIS (Pasitos) instrument, the Early Learning Standards and the Guidelines for Health Preventive Services. In order to obtain more information about providers' suggestions to improve this system, the State Advisory Council has been conducting a series of focus groups with different early learning and development programs: EHS, HS, CCDF, private centers, and Pre K. In these focus groups representatives from the State Advisory Council lead the discussion about, requirements, coordination with other agencies involved in the process, professional development, staff qualifications, monitoring quality, among other. Once the State Advisory concludes the focus groups a report will be submitted with recommendations to be incorporated in the restructuring of the licensing process.

The State has already identified various areas that need to be strengthen in the Licensing Division and will be part of our restructuring process. The actual organizational structure of this Division is not compatible with the changes that we are bringing aboard in this reform agenda. The State proposes to strengthen this organizational structure based on a multidisciplinary model, included as part of the Central Office personnel that could provide technical assistance and guidance to supervisor and licensing officials in the regional offices. We are exploring and considering a multidisciplinary team that will include specialists in the following areas; early childhood, behavior and conduct, health and nutrition, special education, among others. Also, the revision of licensing officials' qualifications and academic requirements has to be considered. To

strengthen the professional development of the Licensing Officials in that the Division, the Department of Family proposes to designate Race to the Top funds for this purpose. Also, we have identified a need of increasing the number of Licensing Officials in order to establish an inspection system that will comply with the reform agenda. In addition, we foresee that technical assistance will have to be provided to early learning centers on Early Learning Standards, Guidelines for Preventive Health Services and Screening and Assessment. For this we propose that the Participating Agencies will assist in this process and the propose Early Childhood Workforce Institute will address the provider's needs. A structure collaboration effort will have to be establish in order to satisfy the provider's needs.

Regarding the licensing process we have already started the alignment process of our QRIS (Pasitos) system to licensing requirements. All centers that are licensed will be in compliance with the First Step of our Pasitos. We will require that all centers that are licensed will receive an orientation about the QRIS (Pasitos) system. Also, center will be requiring to conduct an evaluation of their centers based on the quality instrument and to elaborate an improvement plan. This requirement will provide centers the opportunity to establish a work plan to improve the quality of services and most important of all to establish as a goal to become a HIGH QUALITY CENTER (Five Pasitos Center). During the Race to the Top grant period the State Advisory Council will promote this system among providers and will initiate and educational process to guarantee that providers understand the importance of the system. Furthermore, we have proposed to provide incentives to providers that join this effort. These incentives could be utilized to improve any area identified as a need in the evaluation process and it is part of the improvement plan. ACUDEN will be responsible of expanding the existing QRIS Project and of providing the incentives.

The first two years the QRIS system will be one voluntary, until we conclude the Licensing Division restructuring and legislation is passed. Meanwhile, we will be promoting the effort among early learning process and will continue to increase the numbers of high quality centers available for High Needs Children.

Family day care providers will be also included in this effort of a Tiered Quality Rating Improvement System. The number of family day care providers has been increasing in Puerto

Rico and we have interest in also working and providing adequate early learning experiences in this type of setting. Even though our QRIS has been designed for center based settings, we anticipate that once our instrument is validated, a family day care instrument will be created. For the last five years we have been developing with a group of partners the Family, Friends and Neighbors Strategic Plan. One of the priorities of this plan is to develop a technical assistance mentoring system that will enable the providers to transform their setting into an enriched early learning setting. For this reason we created PAT: Developing Early Learning Environments a mentoring model technical assistance system. This initiates with an assessment process using the Family Rating Scale and developing an improvement plan. Mentors provide technical assistance and mentoring in different areas such as: health prevention, safety requirements, nutrition, and daily routine, family engagement, activities to promote literacy, physical development, socioemotional development, and provider/child interactions, among others. In each visit the mentor provides the provider with written information that could be study by the provider in later occasion. Educational materials are provided to enrich the environment for developmental area. After a year period, an evaluation is conducted to see the improvement the provider. When the process is completed successfully the family day care is considered a high quality setting. We propose to expand this project to other family day care and increase the number of high quality this settings.

The Governor's Office has been establishing a work plan for a Social Transformation in Puerto Rico. The model that was created incorporate four major areas of work: 1) Strengning the Systems, 2) Prevention, 3) Early intervention and 4) Law and Order. The first area implicates the reformulation of the government systems and public policies, In prevention we work with the implementation of iniciatives that promote the community understanding. Early intervention includes a wide variety of practices and projects directed to stop any sign of further social problems; while in Law and Order the initiatives are those link with the Police and Justice system. Eventhough early intervention is used in our model in a wider meaning, the reality is that the first 2 areas there is an emphasis in our children.

As stated by the Governor this transformation has to start with our preschoolers in order to make a real difference in our society. For the past year we have been implementing the Character

Counts concept in collaboration with the Josephson Institute of California in CCDF centers. This concept is based on the Six Pillars of Character as the foundation of their approach. These pillars are: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. The Six Pillars of Character are ethical values to guide our choices. The standards of conduct that arise out of those values constitute the ground rules of ethics, and therefore of ethical decision-making.

This special project we have been developing has already enriched the lives of our families, children and workforce. Basically the project consists of a transformation of an organization into an ethics culture organization. The approach has been to include this concept on our administrative procedures (job description, public policy, supervision process), family engagement activities and in our early learning experiences for children to promote their socioemotional development and development of character. We are convinced and committed with the transformation of our society and it has to be started with our children. We propose to include in all areas the Character Counts concept to enrich and strengthen the system. Josephson Institute will guide our process of revising and incorporating this concept into our activities to promote socioemotional development in children, as part of the workforce core knowledge and part of our QRIS system. We believe in commitment and we value the real transformation of our early learning process. Puerto Rico has a clear and define reform agenda that will strengthen our already in place system, will expand opportunities to early childhood providers, will create a data system that will support and facilitate our processes, will engage families in the early learning process with the only goal of providing high quality services to High Needs Children consequently they will be successful in school and life. All early learning programs have to be part of this reform agenda in order to provide and guarantee an increase of high quality early learning settings in Puerto Rico. Participating Agencies are committed and will integrate their work plan to achieve our goal.

Priority 3: Competitive Preference Priority – Understanding the Status of Children’s Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry. (10 points)

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

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

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

For Competitive Preference Priority 3, a State will earn all ten (10) competitive preference priority points if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the competitive preference priority. A State earns zero points if a majority of reviewers determines that the applicant has not met the competitive preference priority.

Applicants do not write a separate response to this priority. Rather, applicants address Competitive Preference Priority 3 either in Table (A)(1)-12 or by writing to selection criterion (E)(1).

Under option (a) below, an applicant does not earn competitive preference points if the reviewers determine that the State has not implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1); under option (b) below, an applicant does not earn competitive preference points if the State earns a score of less than 70 percent of the maximum points available for selection criterion (E)(1).

Specify which option the State is taking:

- (a) Applicant has indicated in Table (A)(1)-12 that all of selection criterion (E)(1) elements are met.
- (b) Applicant has written to selection criterion (E)(1).

Note about Invitational Priorities: Invitational priorities signal areas the Departments are particularly interested in; however addressing these priorities will not earn applicants any additional points.

Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades.

The Departments are particularly interested in applications that describe the State’s High-Quality Plan to sustain and build upon improved early learning outcomes throughout the early elementary school years, including by--

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

(b) Ensuring that transition planning occurs for children moving from Early Learning and Development Programs to elementary schools;

- (c) Promoting health and family engagement, including in the early grades;
- (d) Increasing the percentage of children who are able to read and do mathematics at grade level by the end of the third grade; and
- (e) Leveraging existing Federal, State, and local resources, including but not limited to funds received under Title I and Title II of ESEA, as amended, and IDEA.

(Enter narrative here)

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.

(Enter narrative here)

The Government of Puerto Rico is committed to work with all sectors in order to outline effective strategies that promote social transformation. This is evident in several social initiatives that benefit: children with special needs, non-profit organizations, women's health, children's health, youth in rehabilitation program, among others. For instance, the Office of the First Lady of Puerto Rico has led an effort to promote autism awareness in the general community and improve services provided to these children. Casa Rosa (the Pink House) is a historical building next to the Governor's Mansion; this house became an early intervention center for children with autism. The Office of the First Lady integrated all sectors in this innovative effort. The private sector helped with the rehabilitation of the historical building, the Department of education provided the budget for the staff and educational materials, the University of Puerto Rico integrated graduate students in the areas of speech pathology and physical therapy to conduct research. Furthermore, children of the local school were invited to receive speech therapies free

of cost in the afternoon. This effort became the model for the creation of Puerto Rico's Center for Autism. This Center will benefit more children around the Island and will focus its services in early diagnosis, establishment of best practices and investigation.

This Center will provide another opportunity for all sectors to continue making the difference in our children's lives. In a series of discussions with representative of the private sector we have identify solid partners that will be part of the State's efforts in the Race to The Top- Early Learning Challenge. One initiative that already has the endorsement of the private sector is the Born Learning Trails. Banks and private companies are already part of this effort. The Department of Sports and Recreation and United Way will engage in an outreach campaign to promote more participation of those companies already committed as well as new companies that are municipally based and have a real interest in the community where they stand.

The private sector also adopted our program Character Counts as part of their social commitment. Non-for profits, and national companies had become part of this movement which placed special emphasis in educating our children on how to be good citizens. There are many new initiatives that we are planning to develop with our partners from the private sector. For example, Subway will help us in our campaign "Invest in Us" by using their restaurants to provide flyers and other relevant information about the importance to invest in early development. Another huge partner in this process is San Jorge Children Hospital, which, thru their foundation, will help us to provide a better quality of life to those children with cleft palate and other physical disabilities. We are very clear that in order to really reform our system, all the members of our society needs to be on board. Our Governor has stated many times the each sector needs to accept their responsibility in order to make true our dream of a new society. That's the message that we have been transmitting since day one to engage the private sector, with very good results.

VIII. BUDGET

AWARD INFORMATION

Budget Requirements: To support States in planning their budgets, the Departments have developed the following budget caps for each State. The Secretaries will not consider for funding an application from a State that proposes a budget that exceeds the applicable cap set for that State. The Departments developed the following categories by ranking every State according to its share of the national population of children ages birth through five years old from Low-Income families and identifying the natural breaks in the rank order. Then, based on population, budget caps were developed for each category¹⁹.

Category 1--Up to \$100 million--California, Florida, New York, Texas.

Category 2--Up to \$70 million--Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania.

Category 3--Up to \$60 million--Alabama, Colorado, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin.

Category 4--Up to \$50 million--Alaska, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, Wyoming.

In addition to considering other relevant factors (see 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3)), the selection of grantees may consider the need to ensure that early learning and development systems are developed in States with large, high-poverty, rural communities (including States with high percentages of high-poverty populations in rural areas and States with high absolute numbers of high-poverty individuals in rural areas). Awards may be granted to high-quality applications out of rank order to meet this need.

Grant Period: The grant period for this award is December 31, 2011 through December 31, 2015.

¹⁹ Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, 2009. American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data.

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

In the following budget section, the State is responding to selection criterion (A)(4)(b). The State should use its budgets and budget narratives to provide a detailed description of how it plans to use Federal RTT-ELC grant funds and funds from other sources (Federal, State, private, and local) to support projects under the State Plan. States' budget tables and narratives, when taken together, should also address the specific elements of selection criterion (A)(4)(b), including by describing how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan and do so in a manner that

- (1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;
- (2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and
- (3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan

The budget narratives should be of sufficient scope and detail for the Departments to determine if the costs are necessary, reasonable, and allowable. For further guidance on Federal cost principles, an applicant may wish to consult OMB Circular A-87. (See www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars).

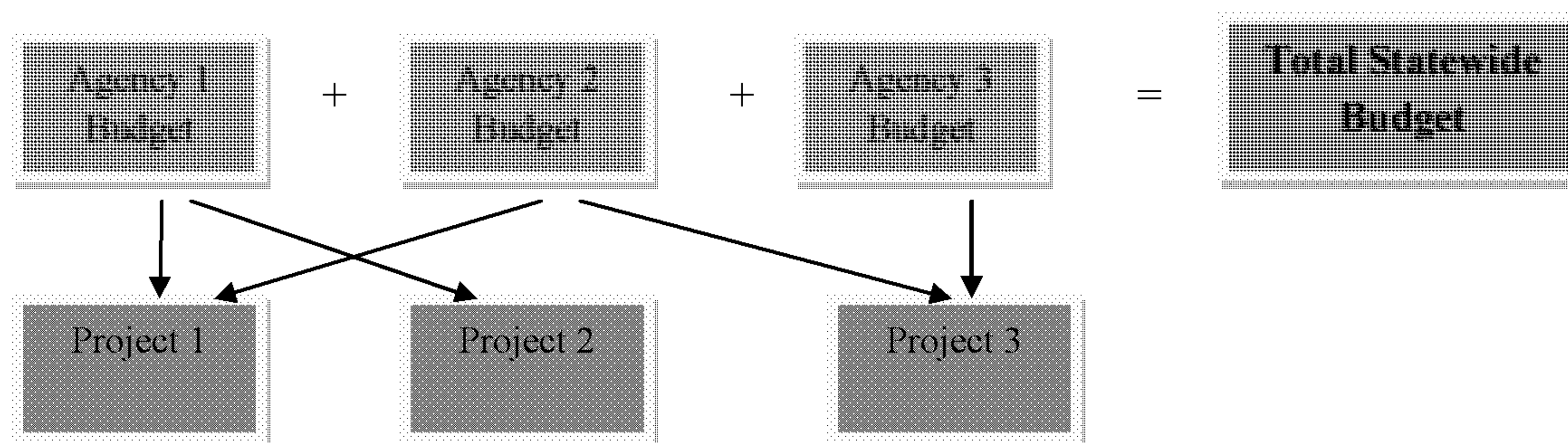
We expect the State to provide a detailed budget by category for each Participating State Agency that rolls up into the total statewide budget. We further expect that the budgets of each Participating State Agency reflect the work associated with fully implementing the High-Quality Plans described under the selection criteria and Competitive Preference Priority 2 and describe each Participating State Agency's budgetary role²⁰ in carrying out the State Plan.

For purposes of the budget, we expect that the State will link its proposed High-Quality Plans to "projects" that the State believes are necessary in order to implement its plans. The State might choose to design some projects that address only one criterion's High-Quality Plan, while other projects might address several similarly-focused criteria as one group. For example, the State might choose to have one "management project" focused on criterion (A)(3), organizing and aligning the early learning and development system to achieve success. It might have another "workforce project" that addresses criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) under the Great Early Childhood Education Workforce section.

Some projects may be done entirely by one Participating State Agency, while others may be done by multiple agencies in collaboration with one another. The State, together with its

²⁰ Participating State Agency's budgetary roles should be consistent with the scope of work outlined in the Participating State Agency's MOU or other binding agreement.

Participating State Agencies, will define the projects required to implement the State Plan and will determine which Participating State Agencies will be involved in each project, as shown below.



To support the budgeting process, we strongly suggest that applicants use the RTT-ELC budget spreadsheets prepared by the Departments to build their budgets. These spreadsheets must be submitted together with, but in a file separate from, the application.²¹ These spreadsheets have formulas built into them that are intended to help States produce the budget tables required within this section.

The following information must be included in the State's budget:

- I. **Budget Summaries**: In this section, the State provides overall budget summary information by budget category, Participating State Agency, and project.
 - a. **Budget Summary by Budget Category**. This is the cover sheet for the budget. (See Budget Table I-1.) States should complete this table as the final step in their budgeting process, and include this table as the first page of the State's budget. (Note: Each row in this table is calculated by adding together the corresponding rows in each of the Participating State Agency Budget by Category tables. If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these "roll-up" calculations are done automatically.)
 - b. **Budget Summary by Participating State Agency**. This summary lists the total annual budget for each Participating State Agency. (See Budget Table I-2.) States should complete this table after completing Budget Table II-1 for each Participating State Agency (see Part II: Participating State Agency Budgets). If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these "roll-up" calculations are done automatically for the State.
 - c. **Budget Summary by Project**. This summary lists the total annual budget for each of the projects. (See Budget Table I-3.) States should complete this table after completing Budget Table II-2 for each Participating State Agency (see Part II:

²¹ See Application Submission Procedures, section XV. Please note that the RTT-ELC budget spreadsheets will not be used by the reviewers to judge or score the State's application. However, these spreadsheets do produce tables that States may use in completing the budget tables that the State submits as part of its application. In addition, the budget spreadsheets will be used by the Departments for budget reviews.

Participating State Agency Budgets). If the State uses the budget spreadsheets provided, these “roll-up” calculations are done automatically for the State.

- d. Budget Summary Narrative. This budget narrative accompanies the three Budget Summary Tables and provides the rationale for the budget. The narrative should include, for example, an overview of each Participating State Agency’s budgetary responsibilities and descriptions of each project that the State has included in its budget.
- II. Budgets for Each Participating State Agency. In this section, the State describes each Participating State Agency’s budgetary responsibilities.²² The State should replicate this section for each Participating State Agency and for each Participating State Agency complete the following:
- a. Participating State Agency By Budget Category. This is the budget for each Participating State Agency by budget category for each year for which funding is requested. (See Budget Table II-1.)
 - b. Participating State Agency By Project. This table lists the Participating State Agency’s proposed budget for each project in which it is involved. (See Budget Table II-2.)
 - c. Participating State Agency Budget Narrative. This budget narrative describes the Participating State Agency’s budget category line items and addresses how the Participating State Agency’s budget will support the implementation of each project in which it is involved.

The State should replicate Budget Part II for each Participating State Agency as follows:

- For Participating State Agency 1: Budget by Category, Budget by Project, Narrative
- For Participating State Agency 2: Budget by Category, Budget by Project, Narrative

²² Participating State Agency’s budgetary roles should be consistent with the scope of work outlined in the Participating State Agency’s MOU or other binding agreement.

BUDGET PART I: SUMMARY

BUDGET PART I-TABLES

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category--The State must include the budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant. These line items are derived by adding together the corresponding line items from each of the Participating State Agency Budget Tables.

Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel					
2. Fringe Benefits					
3. Travel					
4. Equipment					
5. Supplies					
6. Contractual					
7. Training Stipends					
8. Other					
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)					
10. Indirect Costs*					
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.					
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance					
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)					
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan					
15. Total Statewide Budget (add lines 13-14)					
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.</p>					

<u>Budget Table I-1: Budget Summary by Budget Category</u> (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b))					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<p><u>Line 10:</u> If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The State must set aside \$400,000 from its grant funds for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated to Participating State Agencies evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.</p>					

Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency--*The State must include the budget totals for each Participating State Agency for each year of the grant. These line items should be consistent with the totals of each of the Participating State Agency Budgets provided in Budget Tables II-1.*

<u>Budget Table I-2: Budget Summary by Participating State Agency</u> (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)
<Agency 1>					
<Agency 2>					
<Agency 3>					
Total Statewide Budget					

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)
<Project 1>					
<Project 2>					
<Project 3>					
Total Statewide Budget					

BUDGET PART I -NARRATIVE

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

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

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of five pages)

BUDGET PART II: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY

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

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

BUDGET PART II - TABLES

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency Budget By Budget Category--*The State must include the Participating State Agency’s budget totals for each budget category for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <Participating State Agency Name>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
1. Personnel					
2. Fringe Benefits					
3. Travel					
4. Equipment					
5. Supplies					
6. Contractual					
7. Training Stipends					
8. Other					
9. Total Direct Costs (add lines 1-8)					
10. Indirect Costs*					
11. Funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners.					
12. Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance					

Budget Table II-1: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <Participating State Agency Name>					
Budget Categories	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
13. Total Grant Funds Requested (add lines 9-12)					
14. Funds from other sources used to support the State Plan					
15. Total Budget (add lines 13-14)					
<p><u>Columns (a) through (d):</u> For each grant year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.</p> <p><u>Column (e):</u> Show the total amount requested for all grant years.</p> <p><u>Line 6:</u> Show the amount of funds allocated through contracts with vendors for products to be acquired and/or professional services to be provided. A State may apply its indirect cost rate only against the first \$25,000 of each contract included in line 6.</p> <p><u>Line 10:</u> If the State plans to request reimbursement for indirect costs, complete the Indirect Cost Information form at the end of this Budget section. Note that indirect costs are not allocated to line 11.</p> <p><u>Line 11:</u> Show the amount of funds to be distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Departments expect that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.</p> <p><u>Line 12:</u> The Participating State Agency's allocation of the \$400,000 the State must set aside from its Total Grant Funds Requested for the purpose of participating in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS. This is primarily to be used for travel and may be allocated evenly across the four years of the grant.</p> <p><u>Line 13:</u> This is the total funding requested under this grant.</p> <p><u>Line 14:</u> Show total funding from other sources (including Federal, State, private, or local) being used to support the State Plan and describe these funding sources in the budget narrative.</p>					

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency Budget By Project--*The State must include the Participating State Agency's proposed budget totals for each project for each year of the grant.*

Budget Table II-2: Participating State Agency (Evidence for selection criterion (A)(4)(b)) <i><Participating State Agency Name></i>					
Project	Grant Year 1 (a)	Grant Year 2 (b)	Grant Year 3 (c)	Grant Year 4 (d)	Total (e)
<i><Project 1></i>					
<i><Project 2></i>					
<i><Project 3></i>					
Total Budget					

BUDGET PART II - NARRATIVE

Describe, in the text box below, the Participating State Agency's budget, including--

- *How the Participating State Agency plans to organize its operations in order to manage the RTT-ELC funds and accomplish the work set forth in the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work;*
- *For each project in which the Participating State Agency is involved, and consistent with the MOU or other binding agreement and scope of work:*
 - *An explanation of the Participating State Agency's roles and responsibilities*
 - *An explanation of how the proposed project annual budget was derived*
- *A detailed explanation of each budget category line item, including the information below.*

1) Personnel

Provide:

- The title and role of each position to be compensated under this grant.
- The salary for each position.
- The amount of time, such as hours or percentage of time, to be expended by each position.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The importance of each position to the success of specific. If curriculum vitae, an organizational chart, or other supporting information will be helpful to reviewers, attach in the Appendix and describe its location.

2) Fringe Benefits

Provide:

- The fringe benefit percentages for all personnel.
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

3) Travel

Provide:

- An estimate of the number of trips.
- An estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs for each trip.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the travel, how it relates to project goals, and how it will contribute to project success.

4) Equipment

Provide:

- The type of equipment to be purchased.

- The estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased.
- The definition of equipment used by the State.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The justification of the need for the items of equipment to be purchased.

5) Supplies

Provide:

- An estimate of materials and supplies needed, by nature of expense or general category (*e.g.*, instructional materials, office supplies).
- The basis for cost estimates or computations.

6) Contractual

Provide:

- The products to be acquired and/or the professional services to be provided.
- The estimated cost per expected procurement.
- For professional services contracts, the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to this proposed grant award.
- A brief statement that the State has followed the procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 - 74.48 and Part 80.36.
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose and relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

7) Training Stipends

Note:

- The training stipend line item only pertains to costs associated with long-term training programs and college or university coursework that results in a credential or degree, not workshops or short-term training supported by this program.
- Salary stipends paid to teachers and other early learning personnel for participating in short-term professional development should be reported in Personnel (line 1).

Provide:

- Descriptions of training stipends to be provided, consistent with the “note” above.
- The cost estimates and basis for these estimates.

Explain:

- The purpose of the training.

8) Other

Provide:

- Other items by major type or category.
- The cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of the expenditures.

9) Total Direct Costs

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures, across all budget categories in lines 1-8, for each year of the budget.

10) Indirect Costs

Provide:

- Identify and apply the indirect cost rate. (See the section that follows, Budget: Indirect Cost Information.)

11) Funds distributed to localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws.

Provide:

- The specific activities to be done by localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners.
- The estimated cost of each activity.
- The approximate number of localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners involved in each activity.
- The total cost of each activity (across all localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs and other partners).
- Any additional basis for cost estimates or computations.

Explain:

- The purpose of each activity and its relation to the State Plan or specific project.

Note: States are not required to provide budgets for how the localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners will use these funds. However, the Department expects that, as part of the administration and oversight of the grant, States will monitor and track all expenditures to ensure that localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, and other partners spend these funds in accordance with the State Plan.

12) Funds set aside for participation in grantee technical assistance

Provide:

- The amount per year set aside for this Participating State Agency.

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

13) Total Funds Requested

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 9-12, for each year of the budget.

13) Other Funds Allocated to the State Plan

Provide:

- A description of the sources of other funds the State is using to support the projects in the State Plan.
- A description of how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used for activities and services described in the State Plan, if applicable.
- Any financial contributions being made by private entities such as foundations.

Explain:

- Each funding source, the activities being funded and their relation to the State Plan or specific project, and any requirements placed on the use of funds or timing of the activity.

14) Total Budget

Provide:

- The sum of expenditures in lines 13 and 14, for each year of the budget

(Enter narrative here – recommended maximum of five pages)

IX. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

(a) The State's application must be signed by the Governor or an authorized representative; an authorized representative from the Lead Agency; and an authorized representative from each Participating State Agency. The State must provide the required signatures in section IV, Application Assurances and Certifications of the application.

(b) The State must submit a certification from the State Attorney General or an authorized representative that the State's description of, and statements and conclusions in its application concerning, State law, statute, and regulation are complete and accurate and constitute a reasonable interpretation of State law, statute, and regulation. The State must provide this certification in section IV, Application Assurances and Certifications of the application.

(c) The State must complete the budget spreadsheets that are provided in the application package and submit the completed spreadsheet as part of its application. These spreadsheets should be included on the CD or DVD that the State submits as its application.

Note: The budget spreadsheets will be used by the Departments for budget reviews. However, the reviewers will not judge or score these budget spreadsheets. Reviewers will limit their evaluation of the State's response to (A)(4)(b) to the information provided by the State in the budget section of the application (see section VIII, Budget).

(d) The State must submit preliminary scopes of work for each Participating State Agency as part of the executed MOU or other binding agreement. (See section XIII in this application.) Each preliminary scope of work must describe the portions of the State's proposed plans that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement. If a State is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, the State will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work for each Participating State Agency. (See section (k) of the Program Requirements, section XI in this application.)

(e) The State must include a budget that details how it will use grant funds awarded under this competition, and funds from other Federal, State, private, and local sources to achieve the outcomes of the State Plan (as described in selection criterion (A)(4)(a)), and how the State will use funds awarded under this program to--

(1) Achieve its targets for increasing the number and percentage of Early Learning and Development Programs that are participating in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criterion (B)(2)(c)); and

(2) Achieve its targets for increasing the number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criterion (B)(4)(c)).

(f) The State must provide an overall summary for the State Plan and a rationale for why it has chosen to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area, including—

- How the State's choices build on its progress to date in each Focused Investment Area (as outlined in Tables (A)(1)6-13 and in the narrative under (A)(1)); and
- Why these selected criteria will best achieve the State's ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers.

(g) The State, within each Focused Investment Area, must select and address--

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

(h) Where the State is submitting a High-Quality Plan, the State must include in its application a detailed plan that is feasible and has a high probability of successful implementation and includes, but need not be limited to--

(1) The key goals;

(2) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up over time to eventually achieve statewide implementation;

(3) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;

(4) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;

(5) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan;

(6) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;

(7) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable;

(8) How the State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and

(9) How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs, as well as the unique needs of special populations of Children with High Needs.

X. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A State receiving funds under an RTT-ELC grant must submit an annual report that must include, in addition to the standard elements, a description of the State's progress to date on its goals, timelines, and budgets, as well as actual performance compared to the annual targets the State established in its application with respect to each performance measure. Further, a State receiving funds under this program is accountable for meeting the goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets established in the application; adhering to an annual fund drawdown schedule that is tied to meeting these goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets; and fulfilling and maintaining all other conditions for the conduct of the project. The Departments will monitor a State's progress in meeting the State's goals, timelines, budget, and annual targets and in fulfilling other applicable requirements. In addition, we may collect additional data as part of a State's annual reporting requirements.

To support a collaborative process with the State, we may require that applicants who are selected to receive an award enter into a written performance or cooperative agreement. If we determine that a State is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets or is not fulfilling other applicable requirements, we will take appropriate action, which could include establishing a collaborative process or taking enforcement measures with respect to this grant, such as placing the State in high-risk status, putting the State on reimbursement payment status, or delaying or withholding funds.

XI. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A State that receives a grant must meet the following requirements:

(a) The State must continue to participate in the programs authorized under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA; in the CCDF program; and in the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program (pursuant to section 511 of Title V of the Social Security Act, as added by section 2951 of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-148)) for the duration of the grant.

(b) The State is prohibited from spending funds from the grant on the direct delivery of health services.

(c) The State must participate in RTT-ELC grantee technical assistance activities facilitated by ED or HHS, individually or in collaboration with other State grantees in order to share effective program practices and solutions and collaboratively solve problems, and must set aside at least \$400,000 from its grant funds for this purpose.

(d) The State must--

(1) Comply with the requirements of any evaluation sponsored by ED or HHS of any of the State's activities carried out with the grant;

(2) Comply with the requirements of any cross-State evaluation--as part of a consortium of States--of any of the State's proposed reforms, if that evaluation is coordinated or funded by ED or HHS, including by using common measures and data collection instruments and collecting data necessary to the evaluation;

(3) Together with its independent evaluator, if any, cooperate with any technical assistance regarding evaluations provided by ED or HHS. The purpose of this technical assistance will be to ensure that the validation of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and any other evaluations conducted by States or their independent evaluators, if any, are of the highest quality and to encourage commonality in approaches where such commonality is feasible and useful;

(4) Submit to ED and HHS for review and comment its design for the validation of its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (as described in selection criteria (B)(5)) and any other evaluations of activities included in the State Plan, including any activities that are part of the State's Focused Investment Areas, as applicable; and

(5) Make widely available through formal (*e.g.*, peer-reviewed journals) or informal (*e.g.*, newsletters) mechanisms, and in print or electronically, the results of any evaluations it conducts of its funded activities.

(e) The State must have a longitudinal data system that includes the 12 elements described in section 6401(e)(2)(D) of the America COMPETES Act by the date required under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) grant and in accordance with Indicator (b)(1) of its approved SFSF plan.

(f) The State must comply with the requirements of all applicable Federal, State, and local privacy laws, including the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act, and the privacy requirements in IDEA, and their applicable regulations.

(g) The State must ensure that the grant activities are implemented in accordance with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws.

(h) The State must provide researchers with access, consistent with the requirements of all applicable Federal State, and local privacy laws, to data from its Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and the State's coordinated early learning data system (if applicable) so that they can analyze the State's quality improvement efforts and answer key policy and practice questions.

(i) Unless otherwise protected as proprietary information by Federal or State law or a specific written agreement, the State must make any work (*e.g.*, materials, tools, processes, systems) developed under its grant freely available to the public, including by posting the work on a Web site identified or sponsored by ED or HHS. Any Web sites developed under this grant must meet government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility.

(j) Funds made available under an RTT-ELC grant must be used to supplement, not supplant, any Federal, State, or local funds that, in the absence of the funds awarded under this grant, would be available for increasing access to and improving the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs.

(k) For a State that is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, the State will have up to 90 days from the grant award notification date to complete final scopes of work for each Participating State Agency. These final scopes of work must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with their corresponding preliminary scopes of work and with the State's grant application, and must include the Participating State Agency's specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, key personnel, and annual targets for key performance measures for the portions of the State's proposed plans that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement.

XII. CONTRACTING FOR SERVICES

Generally, all procurement transactions by State or local educational agencies made with RTT-ELC grant funds must be conducted in a manner providing full and open competition, consistent with the standards in section 80.36 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). This section requires that grantees use their own procurement procedures (which reflect State and local laws and regulations) to select contractors, provided that those procedures meet certain standards described in EDGAR.

Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for the proposed project if a grant is awarded.

XIII. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**RACE TO THE TOP-EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE
PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY
MODEL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING****(Appendix C of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge
Notice Inviting Applications)****Background for Memorandum of Understanding**

Each Participating State Agency identified in a State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) State Plan is required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other binding agreement with the State's Lead Agency that specifies the scope of the work that will be implemented by the Participating State Agency. The purpose of the MOU or other binding agreement is to define a relationship between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency that is specific to the RTT-ELC competition; the MOU or other binding agreement is not meant to detail all typical aspects of grant coordination or administration.

To support States in working efficiently with their Participating State Agencies to affirm each Participating State Agency's participation in the State Plan, ED and HHS have produced a model MOU, which is attached. This model MOU may serve as a template for States; however, States are not required to use it. States may use a document other than the model MOU, as long as it includes the key features noted below and in the model MOU. States should consult with their State attorneys on what is most appropriate. States may allow multiple Participating State Agencies to sign a single MOU or other binding agreement, with customized exhibits for each Participating State Agency, if the State so chooses.

At a minimum, an RTT-ELC MOU or other binding agreement should include the following key features, each of which is described in detail below and exemplified in the attached model MOU: (i) terms and conditions; (ii) a scope of work; and, (iii) authorized signatures.

(i) Terms and conditions: Each Participating State Agency must sign a standard set of terms and conditions that includes, at a minimum, key roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency; State recourse for non-performance by the Participating State Agency; and assurances that make clear what the Participating State Agency is agreeing to do.

(ii) Scope of work: RTT-ELC MOUs or other binding agreements must include a preliminary scope of work (included in the model RTT-ELC MOU as Exhibit I) that is completed by each Participating State Agency. The scope of work must be signed and dated by an authorized Participating State Agency official and an authorized Lead Agency official. In the interest of time and in consideration of the effort it will take for the Lead Agency and Participating State Agencies to develop detailed work plans for RTT-ELC, the scope of work submitted by Participating State Agencies and Lead Agencies as part of a State's application may be preliminary. Preliminary scopes of work must, at a minimum, identify all applicable

portions of the State Plan that the Participating State Agency is agreeing to implement and include the required assurances. (Note that in order for a State to be eligible for the RTT-ELC competition, the Lead Agency must have executed with each Participating State Agency an MOU or other binding agreement, which the State must attach to its application and which must describe the Participating State Agency's level of participation in the grant and must include the required assurances.)

If a State is awarded an RTT-ELC grant, Participating State Agencies will have up to 90 days to complete final scopes of work, which must contain detailed work plans that are consistent with each Participating State Agency's preliminary scope of work and with the State's grant application, and must include the Participating State Agencies' specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel.

(iii) Authorized Signatures: The signatures on the MOU or other binding agreement demonstrate an acknowledgement of the relationship between the Participating State Agency and the Lead Agency. With respect to the relationship between the Participating State Agency and the Lead Agency, the Lead Agency's counter-signature on the MOU or other binding agreement indicates that the Participating State Agency's commitment is consistent with the requirement that a Participating State Agency implement all applicable portions of the State Plan.

MODEL PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into by and between _____ (“Lead Agency”) and _____ (“Participating State Agency”). The purpose of this agreement is to establish a framework of collaboration, as well as articulate specific roles and responsibilities in support of the State in its implementation of an approved Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant project.

I. ASSURANCES

The Participating State Agency hereby certifies and represents that it:

- 1) Agrees to be a Participating State Agency and will implement those portions of the State Plan indicated in Exhibit I, if the State application is funded;
- 2) Agrees to use, to the extent applicable and consistent with the State Plan and Exhibit I:
 - (a) A set of statewide Early Learning and Development Standards;
 - (b) A set of statewide Program Standards;
 - (c) A statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and
 - (d) A statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and progression of credentials.

(Please note that Participating State Agencies must provide these assurances in order for the State to be eligible for a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.)

- 3) Has all requisite power and authority to execute and fulfill the terms of this MOU;
- 4) Is familiar with the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application and is supportive of and committed to working on all applicable portions of the State Plan;
- 5) Will provide a Final Scope of Work only if the State’s application is funded and will do so in a timely fashion but no later than 90 days after a grant is awarded; and will describe the Participating State Agency’s specific goals, activities, timelines, budgets, and key personnel (“Participating State Agency Plan”) in a manner that is consistent with the Preliminary Scope of Work (Exhibit I), with the Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including existing funds, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes of the State Plan; and
- 6) Will comply with all of the terms of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant, this agreement, and all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including laws and regulations applicable to the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge program, and the applicable provisions of EDGAR (34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98 and 99).

II. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

A. PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Lead Agency in implementing the tasks and activities described in the State’s Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant application, the Participating State Agency will:

- 1) Implement the Participating State Agency Scope of Work as identified in the Exhibit I of this agreement;
- 2) Abide by the governance structure outlined in the State Plan;

- 3) Abide by the Participating State Agency's Budget included in section VIII of the State Plan (including the existing funds from Federal, State, private and local sources, if any, that the Participating State Agency is using to achieve the outcomes in the RTT-ELC State Plan);
- 4) Actively participate in all relevant meetings or other events that are organized or sponsored by the State, by the U.S. Department of Education ("ED"), or by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS");
- 5) Post to any Web site specified by the State, ED, or HHS, in a timely manner, all non-proprietary products and lessons learned developed using Federal funds awarded under the RTT-ELC grant;
- 6) Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of this grant conducted by the State, ED, or HHS;
- 7) Be responsive to State, ED, or HHS requests for project information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered, consistent with applicable local, State and Federal privacy laws.

B. LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

In assisting the Participating State Agencies in implementing their tasks and activities described in the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge application, the Lead Agency will:

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

C. JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) The Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will each appoint a key contact person for the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.
- 2) These key contacts from the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency will maintain frequent communication to facilitate cooperation under this MOU, consistent with the State Plan and governance structure.
- 3) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will work together to determine appropriate timelines for project updates and status reports throughout the grant period.
- 4) Lead Agency and Participating State Agency personnel will negotiate in good faith toward achieving the overall goals of the State's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant, including when the State Plan requires modifications that affect the Participating State Agency, or when the Participating State Agency's Scope of Work requires modifications.

D. STATE RECOURSE IN THE EVENT OF PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCY'S FAILURE TO PERFORM

If the Lead Agency determines that the Participating State Agency is not meeting its goals, timelines, budget, or annual targets, or is in some other way not fulfilling applicable requirements, the Lead Agency will take appropriate enforcement action, which could include initiating a collaborative process by which to attempt to resolve the disagreements between the Lead Agency and the Participating State Agency, or

initiating such enforcement measures as are available to the Lead Agency, under applicable State or Federal law.

III. MODIFICATIONS

This Memorandum of Understanding may be amended only by written agreement signed by each of the parties involved, in consultation with ED.

IV. DURATION

This Memorandum of Understanding shall be effective, beginning with the date of the last signature hereon and, if a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant is received by the State, ending upon the expiration of the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge grant project period.

V. SIGNATURES

Authorized Representative of Lead Agency:

Signature Date

Print Name Title

Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency:

Signature Date

Print Name Title

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
	<p>Department of Education</p> <p>Governor's Office/State Advisory Council</p> <p>Governor's Office, Head Start Collaboration Office</p> <p>Department of Health ACUDEN</p> <p>Department of Family/ Licensing Division</p> <p>Head Start Collaboration Office</p> <p>Governor's Office/State Advisory Council</p>	<p>Responsible for the revision of the Early Learning Standards as needed.</p> <p>Responsible for the educational campaign and outreach to early learning programs.</p> <p>Responsible for making available information regarding training and technical assistance; coordination with all EHS and HS programs in Puerto Rico.</p> <p>Responsible for the development of a medical form that documents compliance with health guidelines established by the State.</p> <p>To incorporate the Character Count philosophy as part of our early learning comprehensive system.</p>
(B)(2)	<p>Governor's Office/ Advisory Council</p> <p>ACUDEN</p> <p>Department of Family/ Licensing Division</p> <p>Governor's Office/CIO Office</p>	<p>Responsible for the educational campaign to parents and providers about Pasitos and the increase of early learning programs in the QRIS system from the 25 high needs town identified. Responsible for the Scholarship Program as part of the QRIS system.</p> <p>Responsible for the expansion of the QRIS pilot study and the increase of other learning programs in the QRIS system. Responsible for the provision of incentives to early learning programs that will participate of the QRIS System. Responsible for incorporating the QRIS system as part of their consumer education to CCDF participants.</p> <p>Responsible for promoting the participation on QRIS among EHS and HS grantees in Puerto Rico. Responsible for the identification of the early learning programs locate in the 25 towns identified as high needs/priority.</p>

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
	Head Start Collaboration Office State Advisory Council, The Office of the General Coordinator for Socioeconomic Financing and Self Management, Head Start Collaboration Office	Responsible for promoting the participation on QRIS among EHS and HS grantees in Puerto Rico. Responsible for the identification of the early learning programs locate in the 25 towns identified as high needs/priority.
(B)(3)	Governor's Office/State Advisory Council, ACUDEN, Department of Family ACUDEN Governor's Office/State Advisory Council Department of Family, Department of Health, ACUDEN, Head Start Collaboration Office, Department of Education, The Office of the General Coordinator for Socioeconomic Financing and Self Management, United Way	Responsible for the elaboration of legislation to establish PASITOS as the State's Quality Improvement System, displays of quality rating information on centers and family education. Responsible for the continuation of the QRIS Pilot Study and development of the QRIS Unit. Responsible for the educational campaign on the quality rating system to parents and centers. Responsible for the promotion of the Quality Rating System among the families served in their programs by using consumer education process, group orientations, brochures, web sites, etc.
(B)(4)	Governors Office/State Advisory Council, Department of Family, Department of Health, Head Start Collaboration Office, ACUDEN ACUDEN	Representatives from all participating agencies will be part of a committee in collaboration with the University of Puerto Rico to analyze and approve the final version of the QRIS Pasitos. Responsible for incorporating the QRIS electronic database developed in the pilot study as part of the QRIS Unit. Responsible for the incentive program for the QRIS participating programs to promote programs to obtain 5 Pasitos in the QRIS. Responsible for promoting among early learning programs the QRIS System.
(B)(5)	ACUDEN	Responsible for the contracting of the External Evaluator to assess the system functioning and

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
		the progress of the 100 centers participating in the pilot study.
(C)(1)	<p>ACUDEN</p> <p>Department of Education Licensing Division Governor's Office/State Advisory Council and Head Start Collaboration Office</p> <p>ACUDEN</p> <p>ACUDEN Department of Family/Licensing Division Department of Health</p> <p>Governor's Office/State Advisory Council</p>	<p>Responsible for the training expansion efforts on Early Learning Standards.</p> <p>Responsible for collaboration in the coordination of Early Learning Standards in collaboration with ACUDEN.</p> <p>Responsible for including the Early Learning Standard in the training efforts and mentoring system of PAT: Developing Learning Environments.</p> <p>Responsible for Early Learning Standards training for Licensing Officials.</p> <p>Responsible for promoting legislation to require all early learning and development programs to apply and align early learning standards.</p>
(C)(2)	<p>Governor's Office/State Advisory Council ACUDEN Department of Health HS Collaboration Office</p> <p>Governor Office/ State Advisory Council Department of Health Department of Education HS Collaboration Office ACUDEN</p> <p>All Participating Agencies Governor's Office/ CIO Office</p>	<p>Responsible for promoting the use ASQ as the uniform screening tool for early childhood programs in Puerto Rico.</p> <p>Responsible for the development of policies and protocols for the uniform screening process, referral and reports.</p> <p>Responsible and committed to work in collaboration with the CIO Office on the Data for PR early learning data system.</p>

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
	ACUDEN Department of Health Governor's Office/State Advisory Council	Responsible for training and TA strategies on ASQ administration, interpretation and sharing results of the screening process. Responsible for overseeing the State level articulation of this effort.
(C)(3)	Governor's Office, State Advisory Council ACUDEN Department of Health ACUDEN Office of the Governor/State Advisory Council Department of Health Department of Health ACUDEN Department of Family Department of Education Department of Sports and Recreation Governor's Office/State Advisory Council Department of Sports and	Responsible for disseminating standards for disseminating standards about health and behavior screening and aligning their policies and protocols. Responsible for the conclusion of the QRIS Pilot Study and the evaluation and validation of the QRIS. Responsible for establishing a committee in order to analyze the results of the evaluation and validation process and incorporating the necessary strategies. Responsible for training and TA on preventive health guidelines, including assessment standards, referral procedures and best practices. Department of Health will be responsible in collaboration with the stated agencies to revise existing standards about nutrition and physical activity. Responsible for establishing means of dissemination about information regarding healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, and physical activities in collaboration with Participating Agencies. An information kit will developed in order to maintain an uniform message. Responsible for the following initiatives:

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
	<p>Recreation</p> <p>ACUDEN Department of Health</p> <p>Office of the Governor/ State Advisory Council</p> <p>Department of Health ACUDEN Head Start Collaboration Office Governor's Office/ State Advisory Council</p>	<p>Playing for your Health, The Early Childhood Recreational Center and the Institute for Development of Recreation and Physical Activity for the Early Childhood Workforce.</p> <p>Responsible for providing TA to the Sports and Recreation Department to guarantee that activities are appropriate for early childhood.</p> <p>Responsible for the establishment of the Born to Learn Parks in collaboration with United Way and the private sector.</p> <p>Responsible for the identification of means to collect data about the screening, follow up and treatment. Participation of the CIO Office meetings about the data system design.</p>
(C)(4)	<p>Department of Family</p> <p>ACUDEN</p> <p>Department of Family</p>	<p>Responsible for the creation of the Family Engagement Standards in collaboration with representatives of the Participating Agencies and early learning programs.</p> <p>Responsible for the expansion of existing CENTRANAs' in order to strengthen their services regarding family engagement. This will include the Family Profile in order to coordinate services for the families.</p> <p>Responsible for the expansion of CENTRANA establishing 4 new centers in high needs communities in coordination with OFSA.</p> <p>Responsible for the implementation of an early reader program as part of CENTRANA's services. This program will engage families and teachers.</p> <p>Responsible for the dissemination the family engagement standards and the alignment of the current family engagement strategies.</p> <p>Responsible for the training on family engagement standards to early learning programs in collaboration with Participating</p>

Selection Criterion	Participating Party	Type of Participation
		agencies.
(D)(1)	Governor's Office/ State Advisory Council ACUDEN Governor's Office/State Advisory Council ACUDEN Governor's Office/CIO Office	Responsible for the continuation and expansion of the Scholarship Program for the Early Learning Workforce in order to increase the number of teachers with CDA credentials. Responsible for the design and implementation of the Puerto Rico Early Childhood Institute. Responsible for the development of the professional development system. Other participating agencies will collaborate in this effort, as well as early learning programs, universities, etc. Responsible for the design and implementation of the data system.
(D)(2)	Governor's Office/State Advisory Council	Responsible for coordinating with the PR General Education Council access and unite our efforts in order that to the post-secondary education institutions will initiate the alignment process of academic content to the core knowledge developed by the State.
(E)(1)	Department of Education	Responsible of expanding the SIE data system in order to report the Kindergarten Entry Assessment and aligned to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System.
(E)(2)	Governor's Office/ CIO Office and State Advisory Council	Responsible for the design and implementation of the early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System.

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Lead Agency*)
Governor's Office

Date

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency*)
Department of Sports & Recreation

Date

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency*) Date
Department of Education

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency*) Date
Department of Health

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency*) Date
Department of the Family

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Participating State Agency*) Date
Administration for Integral Child Care & Development

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Partner Entity*) Date
Puerto Rico Council on Education

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Partner Entity*) Date
United Way

Signature (*Authorized Representative of Partner Entity*) Date
The Office of the General Coordinator for Socioeconomic Financing and Self Management

XIV. SCORING RUBRIC

I. Introduction

To help ensure inter-reviewer reliability and transparency for the RTT-ELC applicants, ED and HHS have created and are publishing a rubric for scoring State applications. The pages that follow detail the rubric and allocation of point values that reviewers will be using. The rubric will be used by reviewers to ensure consistency across and within review panels.

The rubric allocates points to each criterion. In all, the RTT-ELC scoring rubric includes 17 selection criteria and two competitive preference priorities. These collectively add up to 300 points. The selection criteria are divided into two sections: Core Areas and Focused Investment Areas.

- Applicants must respond to all of the selection criteria within each of the two Core Areas: (A) Successful State Systems and (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs.
- Applicants have more flexibility within each of the Focused Investment Areas: (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce; and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress. In these sections, applicants may select which selection criteria to address, focusing on those that the State believes will have the most impact on school readiness for its Children with High Needs, given that State's context and the current status of its early learning and development activities. The Focused Investment Areas must be addressed as follows.

Focused Investment Areas

- The applicant must select and address--
 - At least two selection criteria from Focused Investment Area (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children; and
 - At least one selection criterion each from Focused Investment Areas (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress.
- Each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E) is worth a specific number of points; these points will be evenly divided across the selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that section.

Priorities

Applicants address the absolute priority throughout their applications; they do not write separately to this priority. The absolute priority must be met in order for an applicant to receive funding.

Applications that choose to address a competitive preference priority will earn extra points under that priority if the reviewers determine that the response is of high quality. Applicants may choose to write to invitational priorities to extend the scope of the application; applicants are invited to address these and may apply funds from this grant to implement activities under them, but do not earn additional points for doing so.

Reviewers will be required to make thoughtful judgments about the quality of the State's application and will be assessing, based on the criteria, the comprehensiveness, feasibility, and likely impact of the State's application. Reviewers will also be asked to evaluate, for example, the extent to which the State has set ambitious but achievable annual targets in its application. Reviewers will also need to make informed judgments about the State's goals, the rationales for the Focused Investment Areas, the activities the State has chosen to undertake, and the timelines and credibility of the State's plans.

This appendix includes information about the point values for each criterion and priority, guidance on scoring, and the rubric that we will provide to reviewers.

II. Points Overview

The chart below shows the maximum number of points that are assigned to each criterion.

	Points Available	Percent
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge: Points Overview		
A. Successful State Systems		
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development.	20	
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating work across the State	10	
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work	15	
Core Area A Subtotal	65	23
B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs		
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs	20	
(B)(5) Validating the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	
Core Area B Subtotal	75	27
C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children		
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards	60 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems		
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing health, behavioral, and developmental needs		
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families		

	Points Available	Percent
Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge: Points Overview		
Focused Investment Area C Subtotal	60	21
D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce		
(D)(1) Developing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials	40 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators		
Focused Investment Area D Subtotal	40	14
E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress		
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children at kindergarten entry	40 (divided evenly across the criteria addressed)	
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system		
Focused Investment Area E Subtotal	40	14
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	
Competitive Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS	10	
Competitive Priority 3: Understanding status of learning and development at Kindergarten Entry	10	
Grand Total	300	

III. About Scoring

General Notes about Scoring

There are two terms that we use repeatedly in the notice: High-Quality Plan and “ambitious yet achievable” goals or targets. These are anchor terms for both applicants to understand and reviewers to use in guiding their scoring. We discuss each below.

- *A High-Quality Plan.* In determining the quality of a State’s plan for a given selection criterion or competitive preference priority, reviewers will assess the extent to which the plan meets the definition (as provided in the notice) of a High-Quality Plan, including whether it is feasible and has a high probability of successful implementation and contains the following components--
 - (a) The key goals;
 - (b) The key activities to be undertaken; the rationale for the activities; and, if applicable, where in the State the activities will be initially implemented, and where and how they will be scaled up to achieve statewide implementation;

- (c) A realistic timeline, including key milestones, for implementing each key activity;
- (d) The party or parties responsible for implementing each activity and other key personnel assigned to each activity;
- (e) Appropriate financial resources to support successful implementation of the plan;
- (f) The information requested as supporting evidence, if any, together with any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers in judging the credibility of the plan;
- (g) The information requested in the performance measures, where applicable;
- (h) How the State will address the needs of the different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and
- (i) How the State will meet the needs of Children with High Needs, as well as the unique needs of special populations of Children with High Needs.

Using the information provided to them in the application, reviewers will assess the extent to which the proposed plan in a specific selection criterion is a High-Quality Plan that is credible, feasible to implement, and likely to result in the outcomes the State has put forward.

- *Ambitious yet achievable.* In determining whether a State has ambitious yet achievable goals or targets for a given selection criterion, reviewers will examine the State's goals or targets in the context of the State's plan and the evidence submitted (if any) in support of the plan. Reviewers will not be looking for any specific targets nor will they necessarily reward higher targets above lower ones with higher scores. Rather, reviewers will reward States for developing goals and targets that, in light of each State's plan and the current context and status of the work in that State, are shown to be "ambitious yet achievable."

About Assigning Points

Reviewers will assign points to an application for each selection criterion in Core Areas (A) and (B) and for each selection criterion that the State has chosen to address within Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E). Reviewers will also assign points to the competitive preference priorities. Points for a selection criterion or priority (e.g., (B)(4) or Priority 2) are assigned by reviewers for the totality of the applicant's response; that is, reviewers need not divide the total available points equally across the sub-criteria.

There are two scoring rubrics to guide reviewers when awarding points:

- The Quality Rubric, which provides guidance on how to allocate points for high-, medium-, and low-quality responses to specified selection criteria; and
- The Quality and Implementation Rubric, which provides guidance on how to allocate points for selection criteria and competitive preference priority two where reviewers are assessing the quality of both plans and existing implementation.

The chart below indicates which rubric the State will use for each criterion or competitive preference priority.

Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge: Rubric Table	Points Available	Type of Rubric Used
A. Successful State Systems		
(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development.	20	Quality
(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.	20	Quality
(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating work across the State	10	Quality and Implementation
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work	15	Quality
Core Area A Subtotal	65	
B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs		
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	Quality and Implementation
(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	Quality and Implementation
(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs	15	Quality and Implementation
(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs	20	Quality and Implementation
(B)(5) Validating the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	15	Quality
Core Area B Subtotal	75	
C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children		
(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards	60 (divided evenly across criteria addressed)	Quality and Implementation
(C)(2) Supporting effective uses of Comprehensive Assessment Systems		
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing health, behavioral, and developmental needs		
(C)(4) Engaging and supporting families		
Focused Investment Area C Subtotal	60	
D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce		
(D)(1) Developing Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials	40 (divided evenly across criteria addressed)	Quality and Implementation
(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators		
Focused Investment Area D Subtotal	40	
E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress		
(E)(1) Understanding the status of children at kindergarten entry	40 (divided evenly across criteria addressed)	Quality and Implementation
(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system		
Focused Investment Area E Subtotal	40	
Total Points Available for Selection Criteria	280	

Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge: Rubric Table	Points Available	Type of Rubric Used
Competitive Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the TQRIS	10	Quality and Implementation
Competitive Priority 3: Understanding the status of children at kindergarten entry	10	Addressed in Table (A)(1)-12 or in selection criterion (E)(1)
Grand Total	300	

Quality Rubric

The following scoring rubric will be used to guide the reviewers in scoring selection criteria governed by the Quality Rubric. (See “General Notes about Scoring” for more information about how reviewers will assess High-Quality Plans and “ambitious yet achievable” targets and goals.)

	Percentage of Available Points Awarded
High-quality response	80-100%
Medium/high-quality response	50-80%
Medium/low-quality response	20-50%
Low-quality response	0-20%

Quality and Implementation Rubric

This scoring rubric provides guidance on how to allocate points for selection criteria and Competitive Preference Priority 2 where reviewers are assessing both plans and existing implementations. In reviewing the elements for each selection criterion, reviewers will need to consider the degree of implementation; more points are awarded for implementation efforts in the implementation phase than those that are in the planning stages, and more points are awarded for efforts where implementation is complete or closer to completion. When evaluating the degree of implementation, reviewers will consider:

- The extent to which each element in the selection criterion is implemented in the State;
- The extent to which the State has implemented each element across different types of Early Learning and Development Programs, if applicable; and
- The extent to which the State has implemented each element across the State’s special populations of Children with High Needs, if applicable.

The reviewers will also need to make a determination about the quality of the response to each element. High-quality responses are rewarded over low-quality responses. Therefore, elements that are fully implemented with high quality are rewarded over plans that are of fully implemented but of lower quality. (See “General Notes About Scoring” for more information about how reviewers will assess High-Quality Plans and “ambitious yet achievable” targets and goals.) The chart below shows how points will be awarded.

	Not or Minimally Implemented	Partially Implemented	Substantially or Fully Implemented
High-quality response	40-60%	60-80%	80-100%
Medium-quality response	1-40%	10-60%	20-80%
Low-quality response	0%	0-10%	0-20%

About Priorities

There are three types of priorities in the RTT-ELC competition.

- Applicants should address the absolute priority across the entire application and should not address it separately. It will be assessed by reviewers after they have fully reviewed and evaluated the entire application, to ensure that the application has met the priority. If an application has not met the priority, it will be eliminated from the competition. A State meets the absolute priority if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the absolute priority.
- The competitive preference priorities earn points in a manner similar to selection criteria.
 - Competitive Preference Priority 2 is worth up to 10 points and will be assessed using the Quality and Implementation Rubric.
 - Competitive Preference Priority 3 is worth 10 points; all 10 points are earned if the competitive preference priority is met. A State will earn competitive preference priority points if a majority of reviewers determines that the State has met the competitive preference priority. No points are earned if a majority of reviewers determine that the applicant has not met the competitive preference priority.
A State meets the competitive preference priority for—
 - Demonstrating , by verifying that all elements in Table (A)(1)-12 have been met, that the State has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1); or
 - Writing to selection criterion (E)(1) and earning a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.
- The invitational priorities are addressed in their own separate sections. While applicants are invited to write to the invitational priorities, these will not earn points.

In the Event of a Tie

If two or more applications have the same score and there is not sufficient funding to support all of the tied applicants, the applicants' overall scores on Core Area (B) will be used to break the tie

XV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

Please note that you must follow the Application Procedures as described in the Federal Register notice announcing the grant competition.

Submission Information and Deadline.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted by mail or hand delivery. The Departments strongly recommends the use of overnight mail. Applications postmarked on the deadline date but arriving late will not be read.

The deadline for submission of applications is October 19, 2011.

Application Submission Format.

The Secretaries strongly request the applicant to limit the application text narrative to no more than 150 pages and limit appendices to no more than 150 pages. A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. Line spacing for the narratives is set to 1.5 spacing, and the font used is 12 point Times New Roman. Each page in the application should have a page number. The Secretaries strongly requests that applicants follow the recommended page limits, although the Secretaries will consider applications of greater length.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted in electronic format on a CD or DVD, with CD-ROM or DVD-ROM preferred. In addition, applicants must submit a signed paper original of section IV of the application and one copy of that signed original. Autopen, copies, .PDFs (Adobe Portable Document Format), and faxed copies of signature pages are not acceptable originals. Section IV of the application includes the Application Assurances and Certifications.

We strongly request the applicant to submit a CD or DVD of its application that includes the following files:

1. A single file that contains the body of the application, including required budget tables, that has been converted into a .PDF (Portable Document) format so that the .PDF is searchable. Note that a .PDF created from a scanned document will not be searchable.

2. A single file in a .PDF format that contains all of the required signature pages. The signature pages may be scanned and turned into a PDF.

3. Copies of the completed electronic budget spreadsheets with the required budget tables, which should be in a separate file from the body of the application. The spreadsheets will not be reviewed by peer reviewers but will be used by the Departments for budget reviews.

Each of these items must be clearly labeled with the State's name and any other relevant identifying information. States must not password-protect these files.

We must receive all grant applications by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. ***We will not accept an application for this competition after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.*** Therefore, we strongly recommend that applicants arrange for mailing or hand delivery of their application in advance of the application deadline date.

Submission of Applications by Mail.

States choosing to submit their application (*i.e.*, the CD or DVD, the signed paper original of section IV of the application, and the copy of that original) by mail (either through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) should use the following mailing address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

We must receive applications on or before the application deadline date. Therefore, to avoid delays, we strongly recommend sending applications via overnight mail. ***If we receive an application after the application deadline, we will not consider that application.***

Submission of Applications by Hand Delivery.

States choosing to submit their application (*i.e.*, the CD or DVD, the signed paper original of section IV of the application, and the copy of that original) by hand delivery (including via a courier service) should use the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.412)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

If we receive an application after the application deadline, we will not consider that application.

Envelope Requirements and Receipt.

When an applicant submits its application, whether by mail or hand delivery--

(1) It must indicate on the envelope that the CFDA number of the competition under which it is submitting its application is 84.412; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to the applicant a notification of receipt of the grant application. If the applicant does not receive this notification, it should call the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

In accordance with 34 CFR 75.216(b) and (c), an application will not be evaluated for funding if the applicant does not comply with all of the procedural rules that govern the submission of the application or the application does not contain the information required under the program.

XVI. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Please use the following checklist to ensure that your application is complete:

Formatting Recommendations (page 11)

- Are all the pages 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides?
- Are all pages numbered?
- Is the line spacing for the narratives set to 1.5 spacing, and the font to 12 point Times New Roman?

Application Assurances and Certifications (page 20)

- Is all of the requested information included on the Race to the Top–Early Learning Challenge Application Assurances and Certifications page?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Governor or his/her authorized representative signed and dated the Application Assurances and Certifications?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has an authorized representative from the Lead Agency signed the Application Assurances and Certifications?
SIGNATURE REQUIRED -- Has an authorized representative from each Participating State Agency signed the Application Assurances and Certifications? (Note: all Participating State Agencies must sign the application. See definition of Participating State Agency, page 17)

State Attorney General Certification (page 22)

- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the State Attorney General or his/her authorized representative signed the Certifications?

Accountability, Transparency, Reporting, and Other Assurances and Certifications (page 23)

- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Governor or his/her authorized representative signed the other Assurances and Certifications?

Eligibility Requirements (page 24)

- Has the State Provided a list of the Participating State Agencies?
- Has the State completed an MOU with each Participating State Agency?
- Does each MOU include the necessary assurances?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has every Participating State Agency signed an MOU that includes a preliminary Scope of Work, using Exhibit I or an equivalent model?
- SIGNATURE REQUIRED** – Has the Lead Agency counter-signed every MOU and preliminary Scope of Work?
- Has the State certified that it has an operational State advisory council that meets the necessary requirements?

- Has the State certified that it is participating in the home visiting program, consistent with the requirement on page 25?

Selection Criteria

Core Areas (page 26)

(A) Successful State Systems and (B) High-Quality, Accountable Programs

- Has the State responded to each of the selection criteria in Core Areas (A) and (B)?

Focused Investment Areas

(C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children (page 56)

- Has the State responded to at least two of the selection criteria in section (C)?

(D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce (page 64)

- Has the State responded to at least one of the selection criteria in (D)?

(E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress (page 68)

- Has the State responded to at least one of the selection criteria in (E)?

OPTIONAL: Competition Priorities (page 71)

- Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System, if the State has chosen to respond.
- Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry, if the State has chosen to respond.
 - If yes, has the State provided the necessary information in Table (A)(1)-12 or written to (E)(1)?
- Invitational Priority 4: Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades
- Invitational Priority 5: Encouraging Private-Sector Support

Budget (page 75)

- Has the State completed the following elements of the Budget?
 - Budget Part I: Summary Tables and Narratives
 - Budget Part II: Participating State Agency Budget Tables and Narratives, for each Participating State Agency
 - Indirect Costs form
- Has the State created its budget spreadsheets?

Appendix (page 117)

- Has the State created a table of contents for its appendix?
- Has the State included all required documents per the instructions in the application?
- OPTIONAL: Has the State included supporting information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers?

Application Requirements (page 92)

- Has the State fulfilled all of the application requirements?

Application Submission Procedures (page 111)

- Has the State complied with the submission format requirements, including the application deadline for submission?
- Has the State submitted a single .PDF file of the entire application that was created in a format that is searchable? Note that a .PDF created from a scanned document will not be searchable.
- Has the State submitted originals of all the required Signature pages?
- Has the State submitted its budget spreadsheets?