

Key terms searched with: professional development, community/communities of practice, peer learning, and peer-learning community

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## Arkansas

### Plans to engage in Relationship-Based Professional Development (RBPD) [e21]

“In addition to working with the Parent Coordinator and other state-level staff, these regional committees participate in an annual School Readiness Summit, which is an important forum for state–local communication and a chance for SRT members to engage in peer learning and networking and engage in inter-community communication.” [e124]

“Each year, SRTs from across the state participate in a School Readiness Leadership/Teacher Training Summit. In addition to sessions offered with national experts on birth–third systems, and opportunities to engage with vendors showcasing their school readiness, transitions, and data systems products, participants also have opportunities to engage in peer learning opportunities. Each year various SRTs from across the state are invited to speak and share about successes and challenges in their communities and present any resources they have developed.

The SRTs in the High-Need Communities selected for this grant will be charged with developing, sharing, and regularly updating a Birth–Third Grade Strategic Plan (Activity 2.2) that includes: community-based needs assessments identifying child/family demographics and feeder/mobility patterns; explicit roles and responsibilities for each partner; and benchmarks for progress. During the 2015 School Readiness Leadership/Teacher Training Summit, one day will be solely focused on the strategic planning process (the other will focus on family engagement).” [e140]

“In an effort to strengthen the quality and intentionality of adult–adult and adult–child interactions, Arkansas is proposing to expand the *Powerful Interactions* program statewide. The *Powerful Interactions* program is a strengths-based approach to providing technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching based on a cascade model of change: Supervisors, monitors, assessors, and coaches use *Powerful Interactions* strategies as they work with teachers and directors. When teachers and directors experience *Powerful Interactions*, they are more likely to implement *Powerful Interactions* strategies with children. The goal of this proposed project is to expand the current limited trainings to a statewide model, supporting a culture of *Powerful Interactions* at all levels of the ECE workforce.” [e54]

“As articulated in the Ambitious and Achievable Plan in Table C.1.f, the State will collaborate with the author of *Coaching with Powerful Interactions* to update existing training for RBPD providers (monitors, assessors, TA providers, coaches, trainers). To support RBPD providers after the training, the State will establish and facilitate online communities of practice and hold annual one-day *Powerful Interactions* Summits for participants to share experiences and explore strategies for strengthening implementation. Teachers will be trained on how to integrate *Powerful Interactions* strategies into their daily work with children and families, and small, two-day seminars will be offered to directors and principals focused on how to support teachers. The State will evaluate the effectiveness of the *Powerful Interactions* trainings and supports by examining pre- and post- data from the *Interactions* subscale of the *ECERS* (already collected for monitoring purposes) across four permutations of teachers attending/not attending

training and directors attending/not attending the Supporting Teachers seminar. The state recognizes that because groups will not be randomly assigned, conclusions need to be tempered with caution.

However, given the low-cost of this evaluation method, it is deemed a worthwhile preliminary exploratory effort to examine the effects of the Powerful Interactions program that may guide future workforce development initiatives and research efforts.” [e54]

“Classroom quality assessment data is used in a formative way to guide and foster program improvement efforts by informing the design and delivery of research-based professional development on topics of relevance as identified through *ECERS* data, identifying “at-risk” programs and providing systematic coaching and reports, and assisting ABC staff in constructively using the *ECERS* Summary Report to validate program strengths.” [e67]

“Subgrantees will be establishing collaborative relationships with other early learning providers in their community and will engage in practices such as resource pooling, shared professional development, and joint recruitment and outreach efforts.” [e124]

“In addition, a state initiative starting in 2012 created local School Readiness Teams (SRTs) that are charged with promoting collaborative relationships in a number of areas including transitions, professional development, resource pooling, family engagement, data, inclusion, and outreach and communication efforts. At minimum, these teams include representatives from Head Start, child care, special education, and the LEA.” [e128]

“Arkansas seeks to implement the ambitious and achievable plan articulated in Table F.1 to align High-Quality Preschool Programs supported by this grant with programs and systems that serve children from birth through third grade. The key goals of this plan include:...

4. Foster teamwork, collaboration, and shared learning opportunities at all levels within the birth–3rd work, through regular, inclusive, and shared professional development, including communities of practice.” [e138]

“Once ECE programs have been identified, formal agreements (e.g., MOUs) that promote collaborative relationships will be established among these ECE programs and HQPPs. Details of the MOUs will include descriptions of activities such as referral coordination, pooling of resources related to professional development, joint recruitment and child find efforts.” [e139]

“Joint Professional Development and Collaboration

In addition to coordination of programs at the community-level, efforts will also be made to include ECE staff (e.g., child care center teachers, center directors, and family child care educators) in joint professional development and leadership opportunities. As outlined in Activity 4.1, subgrantees will provide cross-sector and cross-age/grade professional development opportunities. Each community will determine the best means of delivering this professional development to meet local needs. Some communities may use funding to expand access to existing trainings on relevant topics to school district staff as well as community-based providers. Other communities may choose to implement a community

of practice model that involve preschool teachers (ABC HQPP, child care, Head Start) and kindergarten teachers. Communities of practice are a research-based form of professional development in which a cohort of educators collaborate toward shared long-term goals and use each other as learning resources.<sup>37</sup> Within this model, teachers benefit from ongoing access to a highly qualified facilitator as well as the opportunity to receive feedback, advice, and support from their peers. Positive effects of communities of practice and “teacher study groups” such as increasing teachers’ relevant content and pedagogical knowledge, improving pedagogical practices in the classroom, and fostering positive child outcomes have been found in elementary school and early childhood contexts.<sup>38</sup> Decisions regarding the logistics of implementation will be made at the local level to meet the needs and constraints of local systems and programs. For example, some sites may choose to hold trainings or joint meetings during designated teacher planning time, some may choose to offer substitutes, or hold meetings during pre-designated professional development days. If meetings are held outside of school hours, subgrantees may choose to use funding to offer incentives to teachers such as stipends or the purchase of classroom supplies (depending on local labor and union laws and regulations).”

[e140-e141]

“F(2)(b)(i) Promoting collaboration between preschool and kindergarten teachers

As described in detail in Section F(1)(a) and Goal 4 of the Ambitious and Achievable Plan in Table F.1, there are a myriad of ways in which the State and Subgrantees will promote collaboration among preschool and kindergarten teachers. First, Subgrantees will implement professional development and joint training opportunities that are offered to early childhood practitioners and elementary school teachers across sectors and grades. An example of high quality, research-based joint professional development would include the implementation of communities of practice in which preschool and kindergarten teachers would have opportunities to observe each other’s classroom practices; discuss child and classroom data; engage in shared learning about effective instruction and the linkages among curricular goals, content, and teaching strategies; and identify and share professional development content that meets their self-identified needs (Activity 4.1). Additionally, Leadership Teams will be established to promote collaboration among school principals and preschool directors/administrators (Activity 4.2). These teams will discuss ongoing collaborative efforts including reviewing data to inform decisions about instructional strategies, learning environments, teacher assignments, and professional development priorities. [e145 – e 146]

## Connecticut

“b. *High-quality professional development.* High-quality early childhood professional development in Connecticut is designed, delivered, and evaluated based on adult learning theories, current research, and models. Core components foundational to effective professional learning include:

- Building on what educators already know to enhance their knowledge, skills, and perceptions about teaching and learning.
- Aligning the content to the needs of the learner and the goals of the setting in which children are served.
- Designing experiences that allow for active engagement, metacognition, application, self-assessment of skills, opportunities to engage in ongoing feedback and ongoing support.
- Providing for practical application in a job-embedded opportunity to learn from and collaborate with others such as peers, coaches, and mentors through modeling, reciprocity in a feedback, and goal setting.
- Assessing personal learning through self-assessment of competency development as well as actively engaging in evaluative assessment with program leadership.

The design, delivery, and assessment of professional learning must be rooted in core competencies and delivered by approved facilitators that hold the competencies needed to address learning needs. High-quality professional development is a cornerstone to a high-quality professional development system that has quality assurance measures to ensure effectiveness at the individual level as well as ensures the facilitator and the content is appropriate. Section B (4) contains more detailed information on Connecticut’s workforce development design.

Included in our high-quality plan for this grant is ensuring that each Subgrantee will be able to purchase professional development for all personnel who will be participating in this grant to include at least three full days of training in topics such as the CT Early Learning and Development Standards, social-emotional development, Scientifically Based Interventions (response to intervention), and special education assessment and referral. These intentionally designed professional development modules will be followed by seven three-hour sessions of on-site coaching and mentoring for each classroom to maximize effect. The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and the Core Knowledge and Competencies for early childhood teachers will be the foundation for our professional development. See Appendix #3 – Core Knowledge and Competencies.

Initial training in 2015 will be arranged through the state’s regional educational service centers or other professional development providers. The plan for the second through fourth years of the grant will be to shift the locus of that training and technical assistance to the five regional quality improvement hubs.”  
[e29 – e30]

*“High-Quality Professional Development*

Over the past three years, Connecticut has reviewed plans to revise its current professional development system through the lens of effectiveness, meeting educator needs, and connecting to our new CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework (CKCs) for teachers. We have learned that Connecticut has some structural and process elements of a professional development system that can provide a good foundation for renovating the system. The following plan will better address the needs of our workforce to choose appropriate professional learning experiences, provide for effective technical assistance from coaches, mentors, and consultants, and ultimately enhance teaching practices. For example:

- Creating policies that guide the renovation and implementation of the Connecticut Professional Development System is critical. Connecticut will use the NAEYC Workforce Blueprint as the seminal resource for this work.
- The Professional Registry provides a mechanism for the early childhood workforce to store professional development information as well as a resource for the State to examine data about the workforce and progress toward competency, credentialing, and degree goals. As the transfer of the Professional Registry is embedded in the Early Childhood Information System (ECIS), technical upgrades will be implemented for ease of use by consumers and the state.
- The career ladder currently has 15 rungs. Simplifying the ladder to align with credential and degree progressions as well as structure lattices that outline the Core Knowledge and Competency Frameworks for Teachers and for Technical Assistance Providers will provide a realistic benchmarking system for individuals to plan goals and track progress.
- Building a training and technical assistance approval system with quality assurance is critical to measuring effectiveness of the implementation of the professional development system. Critical to this effort is the use of our Core Knowledge and Competency Frameworks and the inclusion of tools within the framework for self-reflection as well as tools that link technical assistance to providers. The ultimate goal is to provide teaching staff with high quality professional development in conjunction with supporting leadership with the skills and knowledge to build and sustain an organizational learning environment.”

[e56-e57]

“The cross-sector Quality Improvement System, or QIS, will focus on improving quality in early care and education settings by creating a comprehensive professional development system through training, technical assistance, coaching and mentoring for early childhood providers. Once programs are adequately supported to improve quality, Connecticut will then institute the rating system as a vehicle to measure quality and inform parent choice. See Appendix #6 – Quality Rating and Improvement System (QIS) Standards, Criteria and Indicators.” [e63]

“Connecticut is well-poised to implement high-quality State Preschool Programs due to its strong organizational capacity and existing infrastructure of the school readiness councils. Each of our Subgrantees represent communities with a history of delivering high-quality preschool services that have strong school readiness councils in place to coordinate existing resources, oversee program quality, and regularly monitor programs operations. These communities have strong relationships with their

fiduciaries. In addition, these communities have a solid practice of collaborating with the public schools to maintain ongoing two-way communication and cross-sector professional development among kindergarten and preschool staff and program administrators to ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten.” [e121]

“For this grant, we have included funding for high-quality professional development in the funds allocated to each Subgrantee for personnel in each classroom that includes eligible children as well as for the school readiness liaison for each school readiness council. The OEC will ensure that each Subgrantee will be able to purchase professional development for all personnel who will be participating in this grant to include at least three full days of training in topics such as the CT Early Learning and Development Standards, social-emotional development, Scientifically Based Interventions (response to intervention), and special education assessment and referral. These intentionally designed professional development modules will be followed by seven three-hour sessions of on-site coaching and mentoring for each classroom to maximize effect. The Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards and the Core Knowledge and Competencies for early childhood teachers will be the foundation for our professional development.” [e128]

“Connecticut is a leader in using a professional development model tied to standards, instruction and assessment. Since 2008, Connecticut has been implementing the cycle of intentional teaching that is composed of planning experiences to support children’s development, gathering information about how they are progressing, and adjusting what is being done to support them based upon this information. The Response To Intervention model has been the foundational element of the cycle of intentional professional development initiative. Connecticut is in the process of calibrating the cycle of intentional teaching model to our new Birth to Age 5 Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS).

Under this grant, the Office of Early Childhood will hold joint training on the cycle of intentional teaching with our early learning providers and public school kindergarten teachers and specialists in the 14 selected communities. These opportunities will provide cross-age, cross-sector professional growth opportunities that allow professionals to engage with their peers to assess, reflect on and improve their own teaching practices.

The Office of Early Childhood provides early learning providers with funds for quality enhancement with a focus on collaboration and coordination of services, professional development, and workforce preparation. These quality initiatives are inclusive of licensed and unlicensed providers, including the public schools.

A critical component of our professional development work is placing priorities on teacher, leaders, and all staff members in State Preschool Programs and public schools to understand the importance of and employ strategies for engaging families. As part of our development and implementation of our new ELDS, we recognized that families are primary partners in their children’s learning and development. It brought attention to the need for authentic family engagement in curricular decisions, collaboration on teaching strategies, and partners in authentic assessment. Under this grant, the Office of Early

PDG Apps – Peer Learning Excerpts

Childhood will hire an individual to focus on family engagement strategies and work with local communities that will be provided with funding to implement family engagement work in the community.”

[e135 – e136]



## Illinois

Chicago Public Schools (CPS) - “Teachers at these schools participate in a Community of Practice (professional learning community) and online professional development modules, which support both their content knowledge and their pedagogical understanding and capacity to implement high-quality science learning experiences.” [e107]

“Also through RTT-ELC, Illinois has funded an innovative approach to implementing and strengthening embedded professional development and professional learning communities in PFA and Head Start programs that have not yet reached the Gold Circle of Quality in ExceleRate Illinois. Through a competitive process, the State identified a contractor, the Ounce of Prevention Fund, which has begun to implement “Going for Gold,” an intensive 12-month cohort-based experience that will provide instructional leaders (e.g., instructional coordinators, education coordinators, master teachers, etc.) in up to 200 programs statewide with structured learning and proven supports that assist them in overcoming the challenges of managing school- or center-based preschool programs, and reshaping their daily work to focus on implementing embedded professional development. The Ounce was also selected as the contractor to provide supports to Gold-rated programs seeking the Award of Excellence in Preschool Teaching and Learning in ExceleRate Illinois. As in Going for Gold, the focus of these support services, entitled “Lead. Learn. Excel.,” will be on building instructional leaders’ capacity to establish program-embedded professional development routines for continuous professional learning, instructional effectiveness, and improvements in practice, as well as the necessary structures and systems to achieve the standards of the Award of Excellence (page 75 in Appendix).

The approach for both of these support programs is modeled after the highly successful work completed by the Ounce as part of their Investing in Innovation (i3) grant from the US Department of Education. Depending upon the rating of their current PFA program, each Subgrantee under this grant will participate in either the Going for Gold or Lead. Learn. Excel. support program. Funding for these services (totaling approximately \$4 million) is available through RTT-ELC through December 2016. An additional \$1,000,000 in state resources is included in this plan to continue these services for new More at Four programs through at least December 2019.” [e54 – e55]

“Regional Offices of Education (ROE), independent educational partners, which provide regional professional development, as well as the Illinois Center for School Improvement, a state contractor charged with providing technical assistance on school improvement.” [e60]

“ISBE has developed a robust communication system to keep PFA grantees, including the new More at Four programs, informed of the state-level efforts described in Section (C)(1), including efforts around professional development, workforce and leadership development, and community systems development. This communication system includes an email list serve, a special section of the weekly State Superintendent’s newsletter to school district superintendents, a very comprehensive website, and conferences and webinars for PFA administrators. In addition, each PFA program is assigned to a Principal Consultant who regularly communicates with the program and ensures that the program is

aware of all of the services offered by ISBE and its many state-level contractors dedicated to supporting high-quality program implementation.” [e91 – e92]

“In all selected communities, both the school district and local community-based providers have indicated a willingness to work together to identify and serve children with very high needs. In most of the communities, there is already a strong early childhood collaboration that shares professional development opportunities, resources, and referrals. As described in Competitive Preference Priority 2, the State will invest in a system of support to local collaborations that will ensure that the remaining communities also develop a local system that promotes sharing of resources between school districts and community-based Early Learning Providers.” [e101]

“Professional Development: Illinois has developed a strong system of professional development supports for early learning providers. With funding from ISBE, The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning and STAR NET provide a rich array of training opportunities for staff in PFA programs throughout the state, including those in community-based centers. In addition, all early learning programs, whether school- or community-based, can access trainings provided through the statewide network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, including many trainings that are available on-line and/or in multiple languages. Over the past several years, both The Center and the CCR&Rs have been moving away from single-session workshops and towards more effective professional development models that include multi-session series with opportunities between sessions for intentional “practice” implementation of new skills and opportunities to reflect on that practice with instructors.

The Center will implement a special series of supports for teachers who are new to PFA. High-quality preschool classrooms require teachers with both core knowledge about best practices in early education and unique skills for working with high-risk preschoolers and their families, along with additional knowledge about services provided by community partners and braided/blended funding requirements. A one day face-to-face New PFA Teacher’s Academy (Academy) will be implemented to enable the newest cadre of teachers to create their own regional network of new practitioners and enhance their individual skill sets. In addition to keynote addresses from leading experts in the field, the Academy will include breakout sessions that provide targeted overviews of foundational elements of high-quality early childhood education and of Illinois’ early learning system. The Academy will be followed-up by a regionally-based webinar series to provide ongoing support and networking. The Academy will supplement and not replace the expectation support for teachers’ skill development through district level training/mentoring and other state funded trainings.

Illinois is in the midst of implementing a significant shift in the way it provides support to early learning programs seeking to improve their quality. Whereas in the past the State supported many efforts directed chiefly at teachers and other classroom level staff, Illinois and its contractors are now developing many more supports for instructional leaders in programs. These leaders are being trained and supported in implementing professional learning communities within their programs, through which they will provide highly effective embedded professional development centered on teachers’ instructional practice.”

[e101 – e 102]

“Illinois believes that a high-quality, intentionally aligned education system from preschool to third grade is essential for the success of the State’s highest-need children and is committed to ensure a high-quality, comprehensive system of teaching, learning, and support for children from preschool to third grade. As a part of the Memorandum of Understanding, participating districts have committed to the following strategies specifically to ensure preschool-to-third grade alignment:

- Curriculum alignment between the More at Four program and the kindergarten program into which children will transition, including joint professional development opportunities for teachers.”

[e114]

## Louisiana

To ensure these children receive quality services, subgrantees participate in local leadership teams through their Community Network Pilot who meet monthly to plan professional development opportunities for teachers and develop, discuss, and adapt instructional supports for students. Professional development will be designed to target both teacher and student need.

Teachers will use *Teaching Strategies GOLD* and other available assessment data and screening tools to identify children who need additional support. Leaders will use *CLASS* data to determine teacher needs. Finally, because the LDE is responsible for Child Care Resource and Referral agencies as well as quality supports, including mental health consultation, the LDE can direct supports quickly based on subgrantee and child needs.” [e93]

“Specifically, the Community Network Pilots are:

- Strengthening local transitions from preschool to kindergarten by including kindergarten teachers in some of the trainings on the *ELDS*, *CLASS*, and *Teaching Strategies GOLD*;
- Providing integrated professional development where teachers and leaders from child care, Head Start, public preschool, and nonpublic preschool train and learn together
- ...
- Continually reporting and analyzing community-level, de-identified data to make professional development and allocation decisions.”

[e94]

“The state has already invested significant time, effort, and resources to ensure strong partnerships at the local level, and the state will continue to work closely with subgrantees to model and foster a learning culture where all partners are able to learn from and support each other.” [e95]

“C. 1(f): Partnerships with Community Network Pilots to improve professional development and with Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies to improve training programs. The state will also launch a Request for Proposals for innovative teacher training on the CDA (Appendix C. 1)” [e68]

## Maine

Three Public Preschool PD coaches. Provide “targeted, evidence-based training and technical assistance to teachers, working to develop collaboration (now done by Department staff). Coaches uses data from teacher survey to target, one of the areas for training includes “Creating communities of practice designed to foster continuous improvement in public preschool.” (e36)

PD – trainer the trainer events on *Learning Language and Loving It* (Hanen); subgrantee gets PD dollars that local providers can use for training and TA through Maine Roads to Quality; promote connection between public schools and Maine’s PD network. (e48)

PD on research-based curriculum and assessment (must align with Maine’s ELDS) (e52)

Summer Institutes offered annually – “open to all early childhood sectors and will include national experts in language and literacy, math, developing Prek-3 frameworks, connecting family supports to the early elementary years, etc. Representatives from each subgrantee will assist in the planning of these institutes as well as presenting their own work funded by the grant to share their learning statewide.” (e52)

Each subgrantee has a preschool coach/coordinator (e55), coordinators meet monthly (e75)

## Maryland

In addition, Maryland's RTT-ELC implementation includes Making Access Happen, a coaching and technical assistance support model which is designed for teaching staff in community-based programs to be better trained and prepared to work with children with disabilities in least restrictive environments, as intended and promulgated by State regulation.

At the heart of the statewide expansion of Making Access Happen is the enhancement of practitioners' skills in universal design for learning (UDL) practices and collaborative strategies to close the achievement gap for all children. At its core, the program uses a trainer-of-trainers coaching model to establish an enhanced professional development program for early childhood special education personnel, administrators, parents, and early learning providers who serve young children with disabilities and their families in inclusive settings. [e32]

Maryland's training approval program will be aligned to the newly revised Workforce Standards and Competency Framework which is funded by RTT-ELC and currently in draft for review by stakeholders. It includes eight core competency areas and the range of competencies from Novice to Expert.

In addition, Maryland's Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund (MCCCPDF), which has been in existence since 2006, will continue to provide scholarships to child care teachers interested in pursuing a post-secondary degree in any of the 17 selected institutions of higher education in Maryland. Graduates who earned their bachelor's degrees with the help of this fund might be eligible to enroll in the MAAPP. [e38]

Stopped e73

## Massachusetts

[note: most of MA application not searchable, read through the narrative to pull out info]

**“Project Peer Assistance and Coaching.** Also a RTT-ELC funded project, this effort is focused on designing a model for peer assistance and coaching to help programs improve quality as evidence by their ability to meet criteria on the QRIS. Colleague coaches define and enhance the colleague-to-colleague relationship to support individual educator growth and change. This model for peer coaching combines the promise of coaching as an effective quality improvement strategy and the reality that the existing early childhood teachers and directors may be well-equipped to support each others’ practices. This model takes elements from Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) coaching model currently used in many K-12 school districts.” [e43]

**“Professional Development.** The EPS Grantee specialist will work with programs to comply with Individualized and Joint Professional Development (JPD), on how high quality programs will be implement, and [F(1-2)] on creating and supporting a strong B-E continuum.” [e74]

Mentions that linkages with I/T and K-3 include PD [e83]

**“Readiness Centers** further support professional development and improve alignment across Massachusetts' education entities birth - 20 years old. They are operated by regional consortia of partners, which include public and private institutions of higher education, school districts, early education and out-of-school-time providers, educational collaboratives, non-profit organizations, business, and community.” [e127]

In appendix, sample MOU has language around joint professional development b/t public & community-based early education & care administrators and educators (e160); joint PD on use of formative assessment tool (e161), comp services, inclusion (e162)

“Joint professional development among early childhood leaders and educators is required as part of a strong system of collaboration and an important opportunity for ensuring that all children in the community have access to high quality preschool opportunities. Strong structures for collaboration and communication between public and community-based early education and care providers provide the opportunity to coordinate access to full-day, full-year preschool services, including comprehensive services for four year old children in the community. [e355, General Education Provisions Act, Section 427]

## New Jersey

See e175 for description of PLCs in Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines. Says districts provided a toolkit by the National Staff Development Council (NSDC)

Training academy – strategies for PD include PLCs [e64]

KEA – “Throughout the rollout, NJKEA teacher training will be supported by the training of district administrators as well as Professional Learning Communities that help to embed principles of assessment in every day practice.” [e73]

“Teachers in participating school districts will complete the Kindergarten Seminar (administrators will have an overview), and will also attend professional development focused on using child and classroom data to create a continuous evaluation and improvement cycle in kindergarten through third grade (see Section (e)(ii) above), provided by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), and the Center for Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes at Rutgers University (CEELO). The goal of NIEER and CEELO is to build communities of practice among New Jersey school districts to provide support in their understanding of critical topics and their application to early childhood.” [e133]



## New York

Community to community capacity building.

“Both SED and the

ECAC have created a wealth of professional development materials and technical assistance supports to nurture the relationships between the state and local partners. The Preschool Development Grant allows New York to leverage its \$750 million investment in Pre-K to build the capacity of SED to support local programs while building the capacity of local communities. Grant funds will also be used to develop local leadership to provide technical assistance to other communities as New York scales up its most effective practices in ensuring strong partnerships at both the state and local levels.” [e106-107]

“Professional Development: Each Pre-K program funded through the State’s competitive grants programs--the 2013 Priority Pre-K and the 2014 Full-Day Pre-K Programs -requires a needs assessment for professional development. A professional development survey was distributed in fall of 2014 to all state-funded Pre-K programs and voluntarily-registered kindergarten and nursery schools to discern major areas of need and interest. Based on responses, SED is developing an action plan for statewide, regional, and local professional development, including the development of web-based resources. Professional development is also available through Network Team Institutes offered by NYSED throughout the year.” [e115]

“the UPK RFP’s Statement of Assurances asks districts to “provide professional development, integrated with K-Grade 3, for staff and teachers in all public and non-public UPK classrooms.” This policy guidance, along with other specific strategies, affirms New York’s vision for a birth to third grade system.” [e121]

“The topics covered in professional development for the full range of early childhood professionals will also be adapted for use by parents in publications and presentation as appropriate. SED will work with Subgrantees to develop workshops for parents about child development, developmentally appropriate activities, and assessing children’s progress. Appropriate expectations related to age and grade will also be covered through this training. There will be training for the early childhood staff around the same topics as well as the academic learning standards for Pre-K and kindergarten. The outreach to parents will be a key priority for the local school-community partnerships. Parents will participate in these partnerships and can help design the content and format of resources and workshops. Furthermore, the EDI process uses Community Cafés, which are parent-hosted gatherings where people participate in a series of guided conversations. These conversations work to build community wisdom and parent voice to impact policy, practice, and action to improve the lives of children and their families.” [e122]

Transition Forums teachers, caregivers and parents in the P-3 grades – “As a positive outcome of the Transition Forums, attendees from surrounding counties replicated similar professional development forums in their communities and districts on topics including, but not limited to, school readiness, alignment strategies, and necessary transition structures.” [e140]

Local Education Agency Transition Self-Assessment Tool – analyzes practices, including “analysis of shared professional development for early childhood staff of school districts and community-based organizations to determine if they are receiving knowledge that is helping them provide appropriate instruction to students.” [e140]

## Rhode Island

“RIDE also implements program-level professional development opportunities each year for all pre-kindergarten program staff. These evidence-based professional development opportunities occur throughout the school year and focus on professional development areas that are common across Pre-K Programs. State Pre-Kindergarten Program staff is mandated to attend all RIDE sponsored professional development opportunities. Pre-K Programs also develop additional individualized program improvement and professional development goals that are a requirement of CECE Program Approval.” [e51]

“Under this grant, each sub-grantee’s contract will include a \$10,000 set-aside in order to fund the program’s annual technical assistance and professional development needs as identified in the CECE and state Pre-K Program requirements. The CECE Regulations address multiple requirements related to continuous quality improvement and ongoing professional development. CECE Approved programs are expected to ensure every staff person has an individual professional development plan aligned with the state’s Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (CECE 4.1, 4.2, 4.3), to engage in continuous quality improvement as evidenced by a Quality Improvement Plan (CECE 5.14), and to ensure a system of staff evaluation and professional development (CECE 5.15 – 5.18).

This set-aside, which is described further in Section E, is also partially reserved for mandatory state Pre-K Professional Development (PD) Days. These PD Days, also described in Selection Criteria (E) will focus on key areas of the CECE and Pre-K Program Standards identified through monitoring and program evaluation as issues common across state Pre-K classrooms. The Rhode Island Department of Education has done substantial work to create professional development that is aligned with the CECE and Pre-K Program Standards through both the current state Pre-K Program and through its Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant. As described in detail in Selection Criteria E, Rhode Island will build upon this work, as well as further develop PD in key areas related to the Program Standards for administrators and teaching staff.

In addition to PD Days, Rhode Island supports programs through participation in required, monthly state Pre-K Program Learning Communities. Because TA Providers are so closely involved with Pre-K Programs’ day-to-day operations, they have been a vital part of providing input for the content and structure of monthly meetings of state Pre-K Program Learning Communities. The Learning Communities help to ensure that state support is responsive to the individual needs of programs as well as needs that are

common across programs. Each month, two Learning Communities convene: one for all state Pre-K administrators and the other for all state Pre-K teachers and teacher assistants. During these monthly meetings, the state Pre-K Program Specialist provides the opportunity for Administrators and teaching staff to support each other in working through challenges and celebrating successes specific to major components of implementing a high-quality program. For example, administrators have convened to reflect on successes and challenges in implementing their Comprehensive Assessment Plans, including sharing evidence of implementation and monitoring of the plans and evidence that the programs were on target to meet their goals. This grant will support using TA Providers as key partners in the Pre-K Learning Communities planning process.

Data from the ongoing TA sessions provided to each sub-grantee will be aggregated and used by the state Pre-K Specialist to identify common continuous quality improvement issues among sub-grantees. Data will also be reviewed to ensure that programs are accessible and relevant to children with special needs, dual language learners, children in the child welfare system and children who are homeless. TA Providers will continue to work collaboratively with the state Pre-K Specialist to design and implement professional development at all levels: during state Pre-K PD days, monthly learning communities, and within their individual work with Pre-K sub-grantees. The supports for the 2014-15 school year will begin in August 2015. [e66-e67]

“Because this grant will provide the opportunity to greatly expand the number of grantees, the state will initially create and mandate attendance of a spring Pre-K Administrator Induction and summer Pre-K Teacher Induction to support Pre-K Program staff in implementing the CECE and Pre-K Program standards. Administrators’ focus will be on effectively implementing state Pre-K requirements, including minimizing administrative costs, as well as curriculum, assessment, and family engagement policies and procedures. Teacher and teacher assistants will attend Induction in July/August of 2015 and will focus on implementing quality curriculum, assessment systems, and family engagement in accordance with CECE Regulations. After these trainings and over the course of the school year, Pre-K sub-grantees will be required to participate in common Pre-K Professional Development (PD) days and monthly Teacher and Administrator Learning Communities. These PD opportunities will be flexible in design and topic, prioritizing topics based on needs identified through a review of all Pre-K sub-grantee Quality Improvement Plans and input of technical assistance professionals and monitoring staff.

The opportunities will build upon the existing high-quality practices of programs, including knowledge and skills learned in induction, focusing not on foundational knowledge, but instead on nuanced, sophisticated, research-based and innovative implementation of a high-quality educational program. Four community PD topics have already been identified based on the needs of current Pre-K Programs. These topics improve the quality delivery of the state Pre-K Program by introducing and supporting the program implementation of evidence-based early childhood education practices that enhance the learning opportunities for every child enrolled in the state Pre-K Program. They include:

- Tiered System of Supports.
- Coordinating and supporting families’ access to community-based Comprehensive Services
- Partnering with Families to Support their Child’s Pre-K Education.

- Connecting with LEAs on Shared Educational Topics

Other PD opportunities will likely include the following: implementing comprehensive child assessment systems, use of evidence-based curriculum resources, supporting English learners, and effective transitions to kindergarten. Additionally, state Pre-K sub-grantees have direct access to the Rhode Island Center for Early Learning Professionals in order to access professional development to meet their individual needs. The Center develops and delivers early childhood education PD and TA experiences, aligned with RI's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (see Appendix W), which also support State Pre-K Programs' continuous program improvement processes. Programs can use Quality Improvement Grants, available under the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, to pay for college-level coursework and research-based professional development for staff to meet goals within their required Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDP) and Program Quality Improvement Plans (QIP)." [e99-e100]

"Specifically, professional development to support kindergarten teachers' understanding of the RIELDS and to support preschool teachers' understanding of the kindergarten expectations will be developed and provided. This will foster enhanced collaboration between Pre-K and kindergarten teachers. Efforts are also underway to engage and inform programs connected to but outside of the early learning community, such as Early Intervention and home visiting programs, to encourage and support understanding and use of the RIELDS." [e119]

"The second component of Rhode Island's child assessment system addresses ongoing formative assessment conducted in early learning programs and used to guide teacher instruction. The concepts related to formative assessment have been aligned between the professional development offered to B-5 educators and the professional development provided to K-3 educators." [e128]

"Through RTT-ELC, Rhode Island was able to launch the new Center for Early Learning Professionals which will be central hub for the ongoing professional development that will be part of this grant." [e132]

## Tennessee

The grant will fund specific professional development opportunities including:

- Teacher and teacher assistant series of training modules focused on implementing a high-quality preschool classroom.
- Administrator’s series of training modules for principals and directors focused on ensuring understanding of high quality preschool classrooms and how to support as well as evaluate the classroom teacher and other staff to ensure high quality classrooms.
- Pyramid Model Consortium Membership and support.
- An annual summit will be held in each community for all the partners collaborating on preschool to share progress and next steps.

[e48 – e49]

“Based on extensive feedback from teachers across the district, MNPS has developed a coaching model to meet the needs of pre-K teachers who are often isolated in site-based programs with little to no systemic support to improve instruction. MNPS believes teachers improve when they have the support of other teachers and coaches in well-organized and meaningful professional learning communities.”

[e68]

“TDOE will facilitate meetings of a Coordination Team of stakeholders: each Subgrantee will select two members to serve on the team with additional members coming from the department. Through quarterly meetings either in person or via teleconference, the Coordination Team will align plans for coordinated assessments, data use and sharing and instructional tools. The Coordination Team will also discuss best practices for family engagement and share strategies and resources for professional development as well as workforce and leadership development. The Coordination Team may also choose to invite members from other relevant agencies or from the community to speak or present on various topics as needed.” [e87]

“A portion of the infrastructure budget outlined in this grant is targeted at two kinds of professional development for participants in this program: training for teachers and training for administrators and principals. For teachers, the state will develop a year-long series of training modules for teachers and teacher assistants focused on implementing a high quality preschool classroom. The training modules for administrators will focus on overseeing a High-Quality Preschool Program and the role that administrators play in ensuring a high-quality environment.

The modules will have a special emphasis for site-based pre-K classrooms where K-12 principals will be taking on new responsibilities for overseeing pre-K. For both trainings, funding in year one will be allocated to developing the training modules to share with teachers and teacher assistants for ensuring implementation of high quality classrooms. The training will incorporate the use of technology for sustaining use of training modules over time.

TDOE also plans to use a portion of the grant funds to begin a partnership with the Pyramid Model Consortium. Membership in the Consortium will guaranteed access to the National Training Institute on Challenging Behavior including participation in the state systems-building session. The Partnership also gives the state access to several networks of trainers, coaches, and community- and state-level systems builders who are engaged in finding similar solutions to common challenges. Beyond these professional development opportunities specifically enabled by the grant, there are myriad opportunities for professional development for a variety of audiences in Tennessee and the Office of Early Learning will work closely with Subgrantees to ensure teachers and administrators participating in this program are able to take advantage of these opportunities.

### **Opportunities for ECE professional development in Tennessee**

- The Tennessee Early Childhood Training Alliance offers scholarships for staff working in early childhood settings to advance their degree and deepen their understanding of the development and education of young children. Scholarship funding supports students working towards an initial credential, Child Development Associate certification, through those seeking a doctorate.
- Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral provides training and technical assistance for child care providers.
- The state and local chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children offer training throughout the year that is open to all the public.
- TDOE has offered year round training for pre-K through second grade teachers on the state standards spanning these grade levels the past three years to encourage the vertical alignment of the educational needs of young children.
- The Governor’s Children’s Cabinet developed a training tool for supporting the transition from preschool to kindergarten that promotes collaboration between the LEA and all entities serving children prior to the kindergarten year. This tool is used to bring together schools and the entities, as well as families, serving children prior to entering kindergarten.” [e92-93]

## Vermont

“Vermont has developed and implemented a comprehensive system of professional development for ELD providers over the past 30 years designed to support those that work in all regulated settings including state preschool programs. Child care licensing requires all ELDP staff to have a current Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP) and document a minimum of 12-18 hours of annual professional development that intentionally supports goals established in each practitioner’s IPDP. Individual qualifications and annual professional development is entered and maintained in a Professional Registry in the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS) as part of the Northern Lights Career Development Center (see E10bi, page 125).” [e61]

“Professional development on KRS and developmentally appropriate assessments and practices to use with kindergartners is as important. Hence, AOE will be contracting with a consultant to create two interactive e-learning modules: a basic introduction to the enhanced VT RKS for administrators and PreK educators, and an in-depth module on administering and interpreting the RKS for kindergarten teachers.” [e100]

“Vermont has developed and implemented a comprehensive system of professional development for ELD staff over the past 30 years designed to support those that work in all regulated settings. This robust infrastructure will support professional development under this application, thus supporting the standards established in Act 166, Vermont’s universal PreK legislation. For example, ELD staff providing services under this application will be included as appropriate in a range of trainings and other professional development activities, such as trainings on TS GOLD and other instruments; special trainings, such as Vermont’s recent Strengthening Families trainings (see E9, page 121); and the Vermont Early Childhood Leadership Institute (see below). One focus of these expanded activities will be to integrate activities and standards from birth through grade three. [e142]

Early Childhood Leadership Institute (RTT-ELC) – “As part of its RTT-ELC implementation, Vermont delivering an Early Childhood Leadership Institute (ECLI). The ECLI will provide programming to 25 early childhood stakeholders per year for the four years of the funding cycle, for a total of 100 participants. The ECLI has been planned and is being implemented by a work group made up of public and private early childhood stakeholders statewide. This Institute will include both leadership development and early childhood content. It will be built on leadership training models developed by the Snelling Center for Government, a Vermont non-profit that created the Vermont Leadership Institute (VLI) in 1995 with the goal of stimulating citizen interest and participation in government.

The VLI is an intensive nine month program consisting of eight overnight sessions, totaling nineteen seminar days between September and June. Each session is held in a different region of the state.” [e147]

“NLCDC is a statewide center that has both a physical office and virtual presence. NLCDC is housed within the Community College of Vermont and works to unify and enhance the professional

development system in Vermont by serving as a central hub with a virtual gateway for communicating system information and resources. [e144]

“Twelve Child care Resource & Referral (CCRR) providers from across Vermont serve as the State’s Early Childhood Professional Development System, each located in one of the Building Bright Futures Regional Council districts/Agency of Human Services regions. These 12 agencies serve as a primary regional or local interface to the professional development system and provide guidance, resources and opportunities.” [e144]

“One of Vermont’s RTT-ELC projects is to provide in-depth professional development opportunities (credit and non-credit bearing) that are focused on increasing early childhood educators’ knowledge and skills in content areas that are especially needed when teaching young children with high needs (e.g., supporting children’s self-regulation, developing cultural competence, serving children in inclusive settings, effective strategies for engaging families). These in-depth, free professional development opportunities will be offered through a week-long summer institute or a three-part series of day-long seminars throughout the year. The participation of professionals in the PDG-Expansion subgrantee programs will be encouraged and prioritized.” [e146-147]

“Vermont’s State Professional Development Grant (SPDG) and Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant support expansion, scale-up and sustainability of the Foundations for Early Learning (FEL) professional development initiative that began in 2008. FEL is now referred to as Early Multi-tiered Systems of Support or ‘Early MTSS’. Over the next five years, Early MTSS will continue to offer professional development to regional cohort leaders and early childhood practitioners based on the pyramid model, a tiered framework of evidence-based practices (EBP) developed by two national, federally funded research and training centers: the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) and the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI).

This tiered framework delivers a comprehensive range of evidence-based practices, strategies and resources to families and early childhood practitioners with the goal of improving early learning, social and emotional well-being and competence for Vermont’s young children birth thru age eight. Early MTSS also aligns the extensive research, materials and practices developed by the Center for Early Literacy Learning to support early learning.

RTT ELC funds will support scale up of Early MTSS at the state, regional and local level to support leadership and organizational systems design to ensure implementation and sustainability of evidence based practices. Early MTSS will collaborate with and provide systems design support to each of Vermont’s 12 Building Bright Futures regional councils in order to develop a shared understanding and readiness to adopt and implement Early MTSS and its processes. Early MTSS trainers and coaches will be provided with professional development by national experts in systems design, implementation science and practice-based coaching to fulfill their requirements as trainers and coaches. Data will be collected, analyzed and reported on the effectiveness of Early MTSS at the trainer, coach, program, regional, state, child and family levels.” [e158]



## PDG Apps – Peer Learning Excerpts

“Further, through RTT-ELC funds, a national PreK-Grade Three organization will provide professional development and coaching to state and local instructional leaders, principals, and program administrators in order to support early childhood educators to improve their practices through a process of collaborative inquiry, an integral aspect of professional reflection and continuous improvement. This organization will provide consultation on advancing a PreKThree approach through PreK-Grade Three learning communities in LEAs across the state..” [e170]

## Virginia

Peer learning network set up by VPI+ Implementation Team and Centers of Preschool Excellence (e70)

“Virginia has designed VPI+ to ensure sustainability beyond the period of this grant. The Preschool Expansion Grant was carefully designed to not only provide greater access to High-Quality Preschool but also to intentionally address persistent barriers to Preschool access in Virginia, cultivate a model for peer learning and sharing of best practices through regional Centers of Excellence that demonstrate the interest and demand for High Quality Preschool, and document improved kindergarten readiness. By piloting key improvements, evaluating the impact of these changes and engaging in a methodical policy improvement strategy, VPI+ will inform and leverage improved policies statewide.” [e96]

“CASTL will guide all professional development and classroom improvement methods with the Subgrantees, including the provision of research-based coaching techniques that have successfully improved teacher effectiveness and student outcomes” [e14]

“VECF will convene a work group focused on developing high quality professional development pathways to identify and support improved competencies for Virginia’s early childhood workforce...During the first grant year, the work group will develop a competency-based professional development framework that informs the requirements and guidance for preservice and in-service education and training for early learning practitioners across all early learning settings (e.g., private, faith-, and community-based child care; Title I, Head Start, and IDEA Parts B and C services; and state-funded VPI classrooms). In years 2-4, the work group will make recommendations and implement strategies to expand implementation of the VPI+ professional development model across training and higher education programs, as well as expand access and affordability to early childhood credentialing programs in community colleges and universities to increase the number of highly skilled teachers in Virginia.” [e36]

“The professional development options will include: 1) engaging online modules on a variety of topics (e.g., teacher-child interactions, literacy development and instruction; math development and instruction, child assessment, working with children with disabilities, dual language learners, supporting positive classroom behavior); and 2) evidence-based coaching by highly qualified and trained VPI+ Regional Coaches who will support the transfer of new knowledge into improved practice. The VPI+ Regional Coaches will also support deepening the understanding of principals and school administrators of the importance of developmentally-appropriate practices through quarterly face-to-face meetings and other capacity-building opportunities.” [e58 – e59]

“CASTL will guide Subgrantees in their development of comprehensive professional development plans for each VPI+ Teacher, Teacher Assistant, and Administrator. The plan will include goals and strategies for individual training based on the individual’s professional development profile, the program’s needs, and the results of the program assessment and site monitoring tool. These plans will utilize local professional development opportunities, accessed in partnership with Smart Beginnings, as well as the ongoing support of VPI+ Coaches and CASTL-provided resources. Training and education activities will be

documented in the early childhood professional development registry. Results will be aggregated by the VDOE VPI+ Coordinator and shared with CASTL at least quarterly to inform professional development opportunities and the implementation of the coaching.” [e72 – e73]

“The VPI+ Implementation Team will coordinate professional development through CASTL and local Smart Beginnings initiatives to provide at least 20 hours of training for each VPI+ teacher and staff person annually; topics will be determined by needs based on TQRIS ratings, assessment data, and feedback from VPI+ coaches. This training will include online and face-to-face options on early learning and kindergarten standards, formative and summative assessments, and curricula. VPI+ staff will receive an additional ten hours of training annually on culturally and linguistically responsive strategies to help families build: protective factors, capacity to support children’s learning and development and advocacy skills. VPI+ Coaches will facilitate successful transition of knowledge into practice. Support will be provided to staff in VPI+ community-based early learning programs as well as school-based programs; slots in training for the broader early learning community will be provided as feasible.” [e82]

“*Centers for Preschool Excellence* will be created in the third grant year to serve as exemplars for their peers and share promising practices facilitated through VPI+. These regional Centers will broaden the impact of the Preschool Expansion Grant and leverage system-wide improvements in the State Preschool Program by serving as models of innovative practices in preparing children from High-Need communities for success, with particular attention on the needs of children with disabilities and English learners. Promising practices will be compiled and shared with other divisions that will benefit from both the pragmatic and proven strategies of their peers; ongoing shared professional development and learning communities will also provide opportunities for sharing and spreading promising innovations.”[e82]