

ECAC Responsibilities for Federal Preschool Expansion Grant (Excerpt from the Grant Proposal)

Staffing – Grant funds will support one full-time staff person to work at the Council on Children and Families to provide support for carrying out the responsibilities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). This staff person will work with the newly hired team from the State Education Department (SED) and the ECAC Project Manager to meet the project deliverables.

Prekindergarten Leadership Orientation Seminar - SED will collaborate with its ECAC State partners, such as New York State Association for the Education of Young Children (NYSAEYC), the Head Start Collaboration Office, New York State Prekindergarten to Third Grade Administrators Association, and Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies to develop a Prekindergarten Leadership Orientation Seminar that will be pilot-tested in the high-needs communities. Local school-community partnerships will work with SED to convene the orientation seminars for invited leaders such as district administrators, school principals, and leaders from community-based early childhood organizations. These seminars will take place prior to program implementation. A secondary goal of the orientation will be to invigorate a school-community partnership that can become a learning community and use the Early Development Indicator (EDI) to drive its work.

Annual Community Leaders Meeting - SED will work with the ECAC State partners to host an annual meeting of leaders from each community with a focus centered on problems of practice and collaborative problem solving.

School-Community Partnerships – SED will utilize the ECAC’s leadership, partnerships, and work groups members to facilitate specific strategies within the scope of work. The ECAC will work closely with SED and its other state and local support partners to develop the Prekindergarten Leadership seminars. The ECAC will also facilitate school-community partnerships in their use of the EDI. The ECAC will leverage resources for the analysis of the comprehensive assessment data. The analysis of the data is a critical innovation to provide a vision to the prekindergarten participants’ that school readiness is in all essential domains at kindergarten entry.

Administer the high quality implementation of contracts to carry out the State’s ambitious and achievable plans - The ECAC will oversee contracts to implement the EDI and the Common Metric in specific communities with the support of the project team including the new ECAC staff person. ECAC and work group members will be called on for advice and assistance where needed.

Early Development Instrument - The ECAC will also facilitate school-community partnerships in their use of the EDI. The ECAC will leverage resources for the analysis of the comprehensive assessment data. The analysis of the data is a critical innovation in providing a vision to the prekindergarten participants’ that school readiness is in all essential domains at kindergarten entry. The contractor will work with targeted high-needs communities to use the EDI, a research-based strategy that provides concrete data to inform local decision-making to improve young children’s outcomes. The EDI involves a two-step process: (1) the completion of an instrument that assesses kindergarten readiness and (2) a facilitated process to use the data to inform community decision-making. Each pilot site will receive technical

assistance from SED, the ECAC, and the contractor to support the community's response to vulnerabilities found in each domain of school readiness.

Common Metric - New York's plan includes assessing school readiness is to unite the formative child assessment tools in order to provide consistent resources to teachers and to support interactions with families. A statewide team of public agencies, the ECAC, and the Head Start Collaboration Project have joined with New York University (NYU) to build a Common Metric for four-year old child assessments. The primary goal of the Common Metric Project is to improve the skills that teachers have to assess the children in their classrooms so they can make effective decisions about curriculum design and implementation, while making it possible to compare findings across these most commonly-used online preschool authentic assessment tools.

All Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) programs are required to conduct some form of assessment to inform instruction. This project leverages the tools that are currently used by the majority of prekindergarten and many community-based early learning and development programs in the state: the Work Sampling System® (WSS), Teaching Strategies GOLD® or the High Scope Child Observation Record (COR) for child assessment and to inform individualized instruction.

Meeting the Needs of Eligible including those in need of additional supports – implementing QUALITYstarsNY - New York's ambitious and achievable plan to ensure program quality requires QUALITYstarsNY to enroll each of the classrooms participating in the Preschool Expansion project. All staff will create profiles in Aspire, the workforce registry, and this information on staff qualifications, education, experience and professional development contributes data to help determine each program's quality rating. In addition, programs will submit materials to document how each of the standards are met and independent raters assign points that contribute to the program's rating. And then programs are independently assessed using Environmental Rating Scales, which are also factored into the final quality rating. The CLASS is used to enhance professional development plans for staff in participating programs. Quality Improvement Specialists will visit each classroom and with staff, build Quality Improvement Plans based on the Pre-K protocol. Quality Improvement Specialists leverage community professional development resources, such as coaching from local resources and referral agencies, and help guide supplemental funding to move each classroom to a four or five star rating. The plan aims to move programs to the highest ratings within the first year of operation, an achievable goal given the 2014 Full-Day Pre-K's High-Quality standards are aligned with the QUALITYstarsNY framework and the continuous quality improvement support helps programs reach even higher levels of excellent teaching.

Membership - The ECAC will look to involve representatives of the CORE Initiative, SUNY Cradle-2-Career initiative, and the Campaign for Grade Level Reading. Furthermore, the ECAC will seek to engage additional representation from the public school sector: New York Association of Elementary School Principals and the New York State Parent Teacher Association. Although currently there is representative from District Superintendents and the Prekindergarten to Third Grade Administrators Association, the ECAC will encourage these groups to participate in implementation process.