Early Learning Challenge Grant:
Implications for Future Work of the ECAC

Bob Frawley and Sherry Cleary
Co-Chairs Early Childhood Advisory Council

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Key Areas of the Application – 5 Sections:

A. Successful State Systems

B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs

C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

D. A Great Early Childhood Workforce

E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

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Focus of Proposal

- The focus of the proposal is on increasing access for children with high needs to high quality early learning and development programs.

- Children with High Needs are defined as children in low-income families, English Language Learners, and children with disabilities.

- Consequently, the majority of activities proposed are focused on children with high needs as opposed to all children.

- High need communities were identified using an analysis of indicators and mapping software.

Section A: Successful State Systems. Areas to address in proposal are:

- Demonstrate the State's past commitment to early learning and development.

- Provide the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.

- Demonstrate alignment and coordination of early learning and development across the state.

- Develop a budget to implement and sustain the work of the RTTT-ELC.

State's Early Learning and Development Reform Agenda Goals

The State's goals are to:

- Increase the number of high-quality early learning and development programs for New York's children,

- Close the achievement gap by providing high-quality programs that prepare children for kindergarten entry and place them on track for successful early elementary outcomes, and

- Improve the quality of the early childhood workforce as the foundation to achieving program improvement.

Increase the Number of High-Quality Early Learning and Development Programs especially for Children with High Needs - Objectives:

- The majority of early learning and development programs serving children with high needs will be at least a 3 star program by 2015,

- Decrease number of 1 star programs through quality improvement, and

- Create "best practice" model programs (programs with 4 or 5 star ratings) that will share innovative techniques with lower star programs. Use NY Works for Children website and other websites to promote "best practice" techniques.

Closing the Achievement Gap - Objectives:

- Develop comprehensive assessment system and a Kindergarten Entry Assessment to inform kindergarten and early learning & development programs instructional practices and state policy.

- Align Early Learning Data System with SED's P-20 Longitudinal Data System.

- Increase the number of college and career ready students statewide.

Improve the Quality of the Early Childhood Workforce

- Build infrastructure through *New York Works for Children* to support early childhood educators in improving knowledge and skills.

- Align existing professional development resources to the *State Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework* and QSNY quality improvement plans.

NOTE: New York's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework is comprised of two documents: the *Core Body of Knowledge and the NYS State Teaching Standards.*

Improve Quality of the Early Childhood Workforce

- Align SUNY and CUNY teacher education programs with the Core Body of Knowledge and the NYS Early Learning and Development Standards.

Note: NYS Early Learning and Development Standards refers to the Early Learning Guidelines, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Prek Foundation for the Common Core.

Family Engagement

- The importance of connecting with families and our communities is integrated throughout our State's plan.

- Family engagement comprises an entire domain of the QSNY program standards.

- The vision of this application is to improve the early childhood programs in all communities, especially those with high-needs, and then ensure that families have the information and support needed to access those programs.

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Governance Structure

- Office of Children and Family Services is the lead and fiscal agent for this grant.

- SED will lead the development of the Early Learning Data System and linking it to the P-20 Longitudinal Data System and will develop a Kindergarten Entry Assessment.

- SED will also present to the Board of Regents the Early Learning Guidelines, and the Core Body of Knowledge for their endorsement.

Governance Structure (continued)

ECAC Responsibilities:

- Develop improved communication strategies with families across New York.

- Continue to provide advice and recommendations to OCFS and CCF on ways to improve program quality and access.

- Hold public hearings twice a year and provide on-going opportunities for public comment through its website, to be reviewed and recommended by the Co-Chairs quarterly.

Governance Structure (continued)

- ECAC will respond to the needs of the lead agency to develop, manage, and implement sections of the work as needed.

- In addition, all state agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction will cooperate with, provide assistance to, and review recommendations of the ECAC.

Demonstrating Sustainability

- The Governor will identify public/private partnerships in business and philanthropic communities to support quality early learning and development programs.

- Governor will include funding for ELCG priorities in the Executive Budget.

- State agencies will identify funding streams that can be used to support ELCG priorities.

- OCFS and Commissioners on the CCF will identify mechanisms for capturing savings from early investments to redirect into QSNY implementation.

Section B: High-Quality, Accountable Programs. Areas to be addressed in proposal are:

- Develop and adopt a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

- Promote participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

- Rate and monitor Early Learning and Development Programs.

- Promote access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs,. Validate the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

High-Quality, Accountable Programs

- By 2015, QUALITYstarsNY will include all UPK and child care programs serving at least 25 percent subsidized children, programs.

- To implement QUALITYstarsNY state will be divided into 10 regions.

- Online training tools and best practice videos for current and prospective participants will be developed.

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High-Quality, Accountable Programs (continued)

- Financial awards will be provided to incentivize high quality programs (4 or 5 stars) to enroll subsidized children.

- Environmental Rating Scales and other assessments will be completed every 3 years for programs at the three star level and higher.

- To supplement three-year ratings, programs will provide an annual report showing quality improvement efforts.

- The annual report or desk review, will increase the accountability of the rating system, ensure that rated programs continue to make progress, and provide the most up-to-date information related to a program's quality.

High-Quality, Accountable Programs (continued)

- The ratings of all providers licensed by OCFS and NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will be available on the QUALITYstarsNY.

- Programs will be encouraged to help publicize QUALITYstarsNY and will be required to post their four domain scores and overall Star rating.

- Independent evaluators will be used to validate QUALITYstarsNY standards and ratings.

Section C: Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children. Areas to be addressed in proposal are:

- Develop and use statewide, high-quality early learning and development standards.
- Support effective uses of comprehensive assessment systems.
- Identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of children with high needs to improve school readiness.

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Develop and Use Statewide, High-Quality Early Learning and Development Standards

- The NY Early Learning and Development Standards include Early Learning Guidelines, Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core.

- All are aligned with K-12 Common Core Learning Standards in ELA and Mathematics.

Implementation of Early Learning Standards include:

- Training modules will be developed and trainers will receive training on the Early Learning and Development Standards.

- The Early Learning and Development Standards will be embedded in all New York early learning program training and technical assistance systems.

- Web-based best practice videos will be developed to illustrate implementing the standards.

Comprehensive Child Assessment System

- A Comprehensive Child Assessment System will be developed to be used in all early learning and development programs.
- The system will include:
  - Engaging families,
  - Screening of child on entry to early learning & development program,
  - Establishment of developmental baseline,
  - Ongoing formative assessments,
  - Outcome assessments, and
  - Process to analyze results of assessment to inform instruction.

Implementation of the a Comprehensive Child Assessment System includes:

- The State Education Department's Assessment Guidance document will be finalized and disseminated.

- Training modules will be developed to strengthen early childhood educators' understanding of the purposes, selection, administration, interpretation of screenings and assessment, and in using results to improve and individualize instruction.

- A Common Metric will be established to compare results from different authentic assessments currently used in New York programs.

Implementation of Comprehensive Assessment System (continued)

- A collaborative interagency assessment data sharing policy will be developed to align assessments across settings, and reduce assessment duplication.

- Implementing comprehensive assessment systems will be supported by QUALITYstarsNY program standards.

Implementation of efforts to address health, behavioral, and developmental needs

- Expand QUALITYstarsNY 's health promotion standards by:
  - Developing an enhanced health and learning survey tool to incorporate into next iteration of QUALITYstarsNY.
  - DOH working with Quality Improvement Work Group to improve health promotion efforts in early learning and development programs.

- Increase the number of early childhood educators trained and supported in meeting health standards by:
  - Developing and implementing training and technical assistance and consultation resources to support program staff and administrators understand and implement health promotion standards.
  - Developing an on-line training of Child Care Health Consultants based on National Training Institute curriculum model.

Implementation of efforts to address health, behavioral, and developmental needs

- DOH to develop training curriculum on physical activity.

- Expand early learning and development programs participation in Child and Adult and Care Program.
  - DOH to survey programs and providers in communities with high needs to find barriers to participation.
  - Outreach campaign – focus groups, etc.
  - Targeted campaign to increase participation.

Implementation of efforts to address health, behavioral, and developmental needs

- DOH will seek to improve health care providers' adherence to AAP developmental screening standards though training pediatricians on screening and other activities.

- DOH will adopt a statewide quality assurance measure on developmental screening for Medicaid and Child Health Plus.

- DOH and OCFS will seek to increase children with high needs enrolled in health insurance and linked to medical home.

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Section D: A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce – Areas to address in proposal are:

- Implement a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework comprised of the Core Body of Knowledge and the NYS Teaching Standards and a progression of credentials.

- Support Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Develop a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a Progression of Credentials

New York Works for Children will:

- Roll out New York's Early Learning and Development Standards with the Core Body of Knowledge.

- Align pre-service preparation coursework and in-service professional development trainings with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

- Expand access to effective web-based professional development opportunities.

Develop a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a Progression of Credentials (continued)

New York Works for Children will:

- Expand access to professional development opportunities for legally-exempt child care providers.

- Develop a comprehensive web based training video library.

- Provide job-embedded training and technical assistance to build early childhood educators' capacity to address children's social emotional development needs using social-emotional consultants to programs.

Develop a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a Progression of Credentials (*continued*)

New York Works for Children will:

- Expand QUALITYScholars to support early childhood educators' professional advancement linked to QUALITYstarsNY.

- Increase ongoing professional development requirements for child care workers and require alignment with workforce competencies and professional development plans.

- Create a regional *New York Works for Children* presence to support early childhood educators in progressing along a career pathway.

- Establish a credit-bearing CDA and processes to enable current CDA holders to convert past training for college credits.

Support Early Childhood Educators in Improving Their Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

New York Works for Children will:

- Collaborate with professional development coordinators from CCR&Rs and independent training organizations to leverage resources and coordinate efforts.

- Partner with faculty from higher education institutions to address professional preparation.

- Oversee the Workforce Registry, including the collection of data, evaluation of professional development, and dissemination of a statewide training calendar.

- Publish materials and maintain online resources to support career development.

Section E: Measuring Outcomes and Progress. Areas to be addressed in proposal are:

- Understand the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.

- Build or enhance an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, and policies.

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Kindergarten Entry Assessment

- A system for conducting kindergarten entry assessments will be established to provide an individual developmental baseline and a better understanding of the level of skills, abilities and knowledge possessed by children at the time of kindergarten entry.

- In no circumstances will kindergarten entry assessments be used to keep a child from beginning kindergarten or to make funding decisions.

- The plan is to develop a single point-in-time measure of the five essential domains of school readiness, aligning with both the *NYS Early Learning Guidelines* and the *Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core.*

Kindergarten Entry Assessment (continued)

- The assessment will be administered to kindergarteners during the first quarter of their entry into kindergarten.

- Assessment results will be included in the NYS Early Learning Data System.

- Data will be analyzed to identify the most frequently occurring gaps in school readiness, either in particular developmental domains, or for particular populations and geographic areas in the State.

- Using this analysis, SED will work collaboratively with the OCFS to target professional development to early childhood educators serving children prior to kindergarten.

# *Kindergarten Entry Assessment (continued)*

- Particular attention will be paid to identifying and supporting early childhood educators who work with significant numbers of children with high needs.

- Based on these findings, professional development trainings will be created for early childhood educators.

- Trainings will be developed for kindergarten teachers on conducting the assessment and how to use the results to inform instruction.

- It is expected that the kindergarten entry assessment will be field tested in the fall of 2013 in a cross-section of school districts in the State.

NYS Early Learning Data System

- Data system will include child specific data.
- System will be hosted and maintained by NYSED in its P-20 longitudinal data system (which contains data from prekindergarten through college and into the workforce)
- Will link to the following systems through web services:
  - NYS & NYC program systems
  - NYS Works for Children registry
  - QUALITYstarsNY
  - NYS Comprehensive Assessment Data System (when created)
- Will have an early education reporting portal, which will allow access to stakeholders.

NYS Early Learning Data System (continued)

EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE GRANT
NYS EARLY LEARNING DATA SYSTEM DIAGRAM
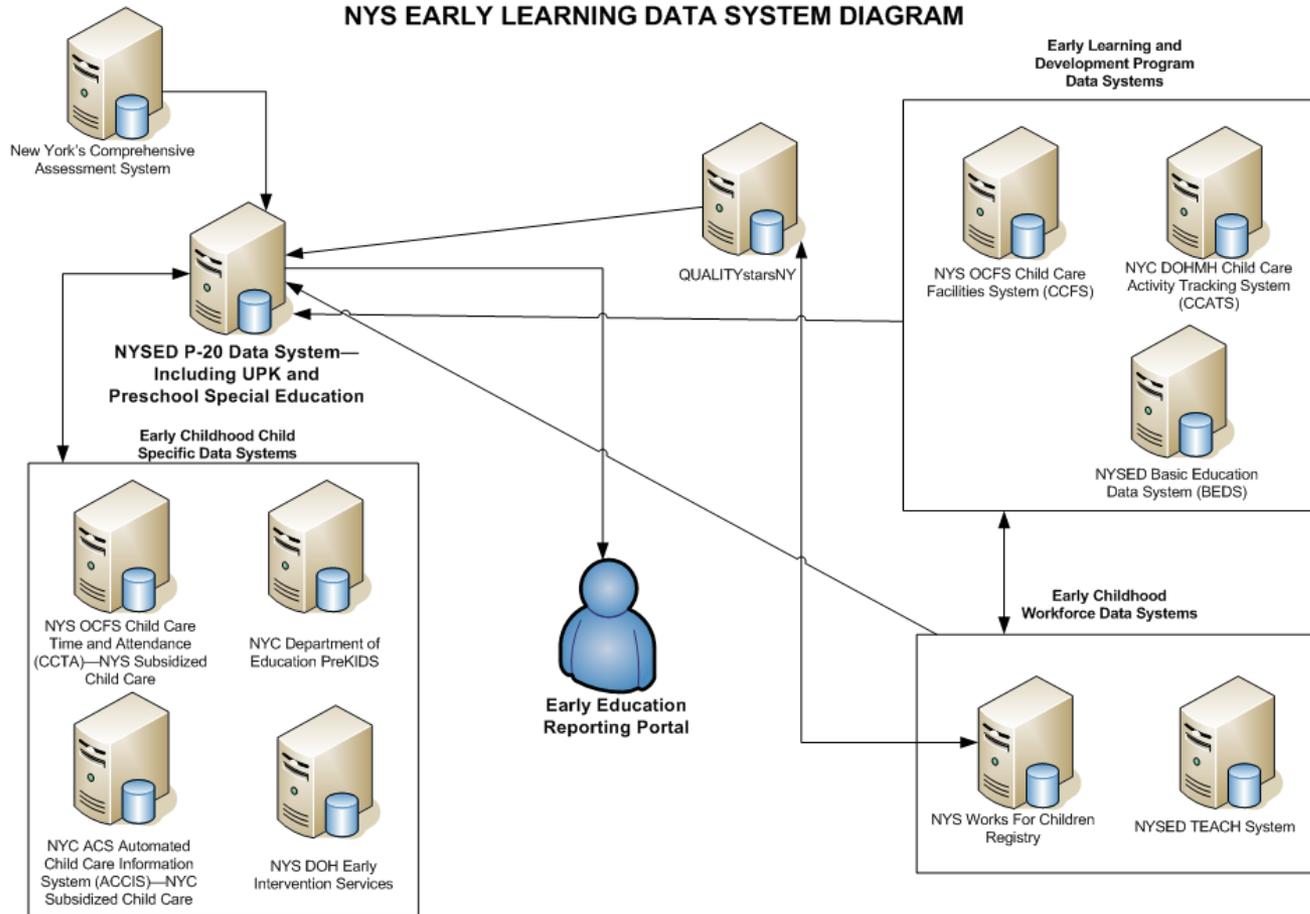
NYS Early Learning Data System (continued)

- Initially, the NYSED New York State Student Identification System (NYSSIS) Unique Statewide Identifier (ID) will be assigned to all children receiving publicly funded early childhood services:
  - Subsidized Child Care
  - Early Intervention
  - NYC ACS Funded Head Start
  - UPK
  - Pre School Special Education

- This ID will be used to follow these children through out their education and entry into the workforce.

- Long-term, we hope to assign a NYSSIS ID to all children receiving early childhood services.

Questions?