

## Proposed Changes to the Request for Proposals

On May 20<sup>th</sup> the federal government issued proposed changes in the priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for the next round of the Early Learning Challenge Grant. A summary of the proposed changes follows below.

**Priorities** – It is proposed that Priority 3 ***“Understanding the Status of Children’s Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry”*** be revised to simplify scoring by requiring all applicants to address the Kindergarten Entry Assessment under Selection Criteria 1. To meet this priority a state must score at least 70 percent of the maximum points available which results in up to ten bonus points.

It is proposed that Priority 4 would be renamed ***“Creating Approaches to Sustain Improved Early Learning Outcomes through the Early Elementary Grades”*** and changed to put more emphasis on improving all transitions for children across the birth through third grade continuum. Within this priority states must now show how they will identify and address, health, behavioral, and developmental needs; implement teacher preparation and professional development programs for teachers serving children preschool through third grade; implement model systems of collaboration within and between early childhood education programs and elementary schools to improve transitions; and build and enhance data systems to monitor the status of learning and development from preschool to third grade; and other efforts designed to increase the percentage of children who are able to read and do mathematics by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

**Eligibility Criteria** – States will not be required to have an active early childhood advisory council to apply for funding, but must have an active council if they receive funding. It is proposed that states must have an active Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program to be eligible (we do).

**Selection Criteria** – In Selection Criteria A ***“Successful State Systems”*** it is proposed that changes in funding, enrollment, seat development and so forth will be limited to the last five program years. There were no changes in Selection Criteria B ***“High-Quality Accountable Programs”*** but we have received clarification that **all** programs must be included in the system. This will cause us to have to include all licensed and registered programs as enrolled in QUALITYstarsNY, moving away from it being a totally voluntary system. In Selection Criteria D ***“A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce”*** additional language was added requiring that proposed professional development opportunities be supported by evidence, aligned with the state’s workforce and competency framework, and tightly linked to professional development approaches such as coaching and mentoring. In addition, new language would require strong evidence as to why these policies and incentives will be effective in improving child outcomes. Another revision requires implementing effective policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) to promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned the state’s workforce knowledge and competency framework, tightly linked to training and professional development approaches including mentoring and coaching, and supported by a strong evidence as to why these policies and incentives will be effective in improving outcomes for high needs children.