STARTING STRONG: INCREASING PRESCHOOL QUALITY AND ACCESS

The Preschool Development Grants Program Summary Report

December 2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Preschool Development Grants (PDG) Program represents one of the largest investments the federal government has made to increase preschool access and program quality. The PDG Program's overall goal was to support the kindergarten readiness of four-year-old children. Approximately one billion dollars was awarded to 18 states in December of 2014 for a four-year period to expand access to quality preschool programs for children whose families' incomes were at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines and who reside in state designated "high-needs" communities. These PDG grant awards concluded in 2018.[1] The reach of the PDG grants went beyond creating and improving preschool "slots" to include comprehensive services for families, creating or enhancing states' infrastructure, and building the capacity of the early childhood workforce.

This report tells the story of the PDG Program and the experiences of the PDG State Grantees. It provides a summary of the PDG Grants Program, an overview of the State Grantees, a portrait of the children who participated, and highlights of grantees' successes, accomplishments, and the promising practices emerging from their work.

This report is organized into four main sections:

- Section I provides a brief description of the PDG Program and the grantees.
- Section II summarizes data from PDG grantees' Annual Performance Reports (APRs).
- Section III provides examples of PDG grantees' emerging promising practices that can inform policymakers, administrators, and educators at the federal, state, and local levels.

Collectively, the sections of this summary report document the journey, accomplishments, benefits, challenges, and the invaluable lessons learned by the first cohort of PDG Program grantees.

This summary report is intended for a range of audiences. Foremost, this report fulfills the purpose of program implementation accountability, in addition to informing federal, state and local policymakers of the outcomes of the Preschool Development Grants investments. Also, it is intended for the eighteen PDG grantees to celebrate their accomplishments, recognize the progress made, and learn from each other. The achievements and promising practices summarized here can inform the Birth to Five grantees, early learning advocates and stakeholders, and the early childhood field in general.

[1] Most grantees received a no-cost extension which enabled them to operate until December 2019.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Eighteen Preschool Development Grants were awarded in December 2014. The stated purpose of the PDG Grants Program was to support state and local efforts to create and expand preschool opportunities for four-year-old children from families with low and moderate incomes. The PDG grant identified evidence-based characteristics of ***quality preschool*** grantees were required to meet in order to increase quality as well as access. Two categories of PDG grants were awarded: Development grants for states with no or small state preschool programs, and Expansion grants for states with more robust state preschool programs and/or systems.

This report summarizes the progress the 18 PDG grantees made over the course of the four-year grant program and the impact they made on children, families, teachers and leaders, and their communities. Highlights of the PDG program's impacts are:

- A total of 167,725 four-year-old children attended a quality preschool program.
- Children with the greatest needs (e.g., migrant families, in the child welfare system, homeless, reside on Indian lands) were prioritized and served.
- A total of 30,581 children (18.2 percent) of enrolled children were identified as English learners.
- The overall percentage of children with disabilities served in inclusive PDG classrooms over the four years of the grant was approximately 8.5 percent which clearly exceeded the national percentage of 6.4 percent.
- State investments for quality preschool opportunities for four-year-old children were increased.

Families and their children benefitted from grantees' PDG implementation. Two of the criteria for quality directly addressed families. Grantees were required to provide comprehensive services to children and their families directly or through partnerships with community programs. In meeting this requirement, PDG subgrantees reached out to their Head Start partners and various organizations to provide comprehensive wraparound services that supported children and their families. PDG also required intentional, culturally, and linguistically appropriate efforts to engage families in their children's preschool programs.

The PDG built and strengthened the capacity of the states' early childhood workforce and systems by implementing various strategies. These included:

- Providing high quality professional development experiences (e.g., workshops, institutes, communities of practice (CoP));
- Providing onsite coaching to teachers and, in some cases, leaders or teams;
- Funding scholarships and coursework in early childhood education that led to a credential and/or degree;
- Developing workforce policies (e.g., pay parity with K-12 teachers, early childhood credentials); and
- Creating policies to align the 0-5 and K-3 early learning systems and ease transitions (e.g., aligned learning standards, developmentally appropriate practices).

The story of the PDG Program illustrates what a comprehensive approach to preschool education, a commitment to quality, and a substantial investment can accomplish. The PDG grant sparked several positive reforms grantees and subgrantees made at the classroom, program, and systems levels. Paramount among these accomplishments is serving children and families with the greatest need and the least access to a quality preschool program.

OVERVIEW OF THE PDG GRANTS PROGRAM AND GRANTEES

The PDG Grant Opportunity

In 2014, the Preschool Development Grants (PDG) program, a new initiative with the goals of expanding access to preschool and improving the quality of existing preschool programs, was launched. It called for providing federal funding to enable children from low- and moderate-income families to attend preschool. In the following year, Congress passed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-76) and appropriated $250 million to fund the new PDG program.[2] This action established the PDG competitive grant program to serve four-year-old children whose families were at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL) and who lived in a state designated "High-Needs Community" (HNC).

On August 18, 2014, the PDG Notice Inviting Applications (NIA)[3] was published in the Federal Register. The PDG grant program was to be jointly administered by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. All fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico were eligible to apply for PDG grants. The stated purpose of the PDG program was to "support State and local efforts to build, develop, and expand (quality) Preschool Programs so that more children from low- and moderate-income families enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life."[4] States were required to identify and target HNCs where they would develop or expand PDG funded preschool programs. Two categories of PDG grants were established: Development Grants for states with no or small state preschool programs, and Expansion Grants for states that had a robust state preschool program or had received a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant. The distinctions between the Development and the Expansion grants under each of the three Absolute Priority areas are summarized in Table 1 on the following page.

The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services received a total of 36 proposals, 35 from states and one from Puerto Rico. A peer review process was used to rate all PDG proposals according to the specified evaluation criteria in the NIA. The highest ranked proposals in each of the three Absolute Priority categories were awarded grants. Eighteen PDG grantees were announced in December of 2014. Five Development grants were awarded to Alabama, Arizona, Hawaii, Montana, and Nevada. The 13 Expansion grantees were Arkansas, Connecticut, Illinois, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Vermont, and Virginia.

Congress provided funding for the first year of the PDG grant program, but continuation funding for the PDG grantees for the second, third and fourth year of PDG implementation was contingent on two conditions: (1) PDG grantees demonstrating that they were making substantial progress towards meeting the goals and objectives of the program, and (2) Congress approving the funds needed for each of the remaining three years of the grant in its annual budget. Congress passed annual appropriations of $250 million for PDG through the U.S. Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2014 (Title III of Division H of Pub. L. 113-76, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014, 2015, 2016). The fiscal year (FY) 2017 appropriations were authorized under Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA), Title IX, Part B Miscellaneous; Other Laws, Section 9212. These appropriations were sufficient to fund all four years of the grant for the 18 PDG grantees.

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[2] Congressional Research Services, *Preschool Development Grants (FY2014-FY2016) and Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grants (FY2011-FY2013)* https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/20160907_R44008_5d813ffb87645fce1ff15092479f47428efee8a1.pdf

[3] Notice Inviting Applications: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2014-08-18/pdf/2014-19426.pdf

[4] Ibid.

Table 1. Types of Preschool Development Grants

Priority	Development Grants	Expansion Grants	
	Absolute Priority 1	Absolute Priority 2	Absolute Priority 3
Purpose	Build capacity to deliver and increase access to quality preschool programs in high need communities.	Increase access to quality preschool programs in high need communities.	Increase access to quality preschool programs in high need communities.
Eligibility Criteria	States that have no or small (serving less than 10 percent of state's four-year-olds) state preschool programs, and have not received a RTT-ELC* grant	States that had been awarded an RTT-ELC grant	States with state preschool programs serving more than 10 percent of the state's four-year-olds and were not awarded a RTT-ELC grant
% Funds for Implementation	At least 65 percent to subgrantees for implementation	At least 95 percent to subgrantees for implementation	At least 95 percent to subgrantees for implementation
% Funds for Infrastructure	No more than 35 percent for state-level infrastructure and improvements	No more than 5 percent for state-level infrastructure and improvements	No more than 5 percent for state-level infrastructure and improvements
Date Must Begin Serving Eligible Children	By December 2016; before the end of Year 2 of the grant	By December 2015; before the end of Year 1 of the grant	By December 2015; before the end of Year 1 of the grant
Number States Eligible/Applied Under Priority	15 states and Puerto Rico were eligible; eight states and Puerto Rico applied	20 states were eligible to apply under Absolute Priority 2; 18 states applied	15 states and the District of Columbia were eligible; nine states applied

** Note:* RTT-ELC was a competitive grant program administered jointly by the Departments of Education and Health & Human Services from 2011-2017. Twenty states were awarded grants "to build statewide systems that raise the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs and increase access to high-quality programs for children with high needs, so that all children enter kindergarten ready to succeed." https://elc.grads360.org/#program/about-rtt-elc

Source: Notice Inviting Applications: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2014-08-18/pdf/2014-19426.pdf

Essential Elements of All PDG Programs

The overall goal of the PDG grant was to increase access to quality preschool programs for four-year-old children from families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The underlying assumption was that attending a **quality** preschool program would result in these target children being ready for kindergarten. The PDG grant defined "quality" in the NIA. All PDG proposals were required to describe how the state met the definition of "high-quality preschool programs" or include a plan for meeting these evidence-based essential elements.[5] During the implementation phase, PDG grantees could only "count" children who participated in preschool programs that included all of the essential elements summarized below:

- *Staff qualifications:* PDG preschool teachers needed to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree (BA) in early childhood education or a BA in a field in a state-approved alternative pathway, and teaching assistants needed "appropriate credentials";
- *Professional development:* Available for all staff;
- *Staff ratio:* A child-to-staff ratio of no greater than 10 to 1;
- *Class size:* A maximum class size of 20 children;
- *Full-day program:* PDG preschools needed to follow the public school calendar, Monday-Friday schedule, and the preschool session had to be no fewer than five hours per day;
- *Instruction and Curriculum:* The instruction and preschool curriculum needed to be evidence-based, aligned with the state's early learning and development standards, and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate;
- *Individualized accommodations and supports:* These accommodations and supports would enable all eligible children, including those with disabilities, to access and participate in a quality preschool class;
- *Staff salaries:* Staff salaries had to be comparable to the salaries of K-12 teachers in local schools;

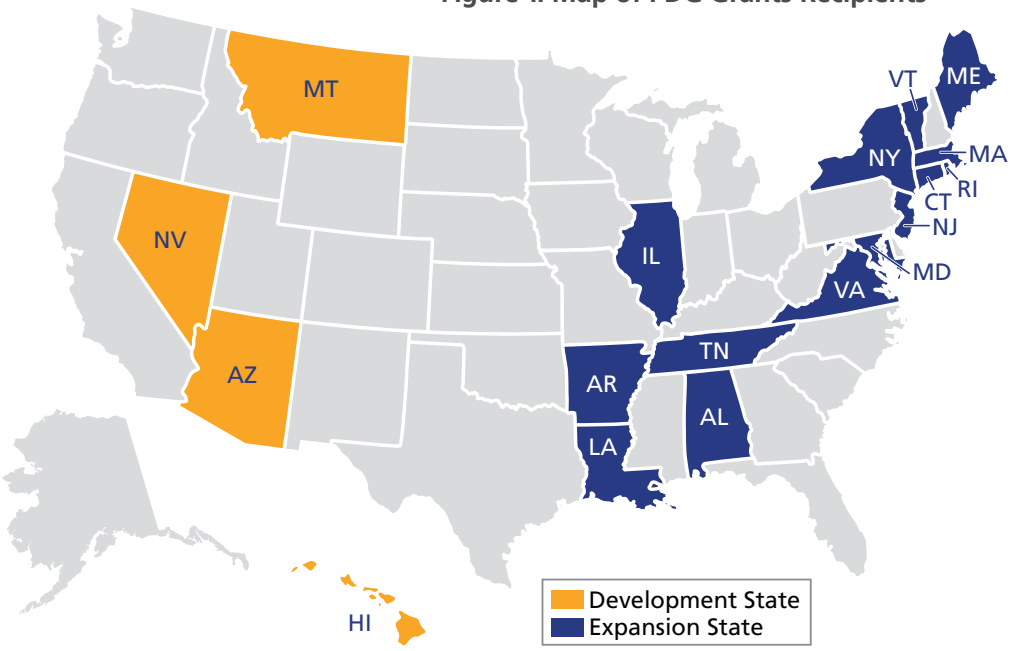
[5] Ibid.

- *Program evaluation:* An evaluation that could provide actionable data for continuous program improvement had to be implemented;
- *Comprehensive services for children:* Wraparound services that met children's learning and developmental needs across domains (e.g., health, mental health, nutrition) had to be offered onsite or through community partnerships;
- *Family Engagement:* Providing robust, culturally, and linguistically appropriate family engagement opportunities was part of a high-quality preschool program; and
- *Health and Safety:* Preschool programs should follow evidence-based health and safety standards.

PDG GRANTEES

The 18 PDG grantees are identified in the map below as either PDG Development or PDG Expansion states. Seventeen of the PDG grants were awarded to state agencies responsible for early childhood education. In the case of Hawaii, the State Public Charter School Commission was the grant recipient.

Figure 1: Map of PDG Grants Recipients



PDG GRANT AWARDS 2014–2018

DEVELOPMENT GRANTEES	
Alabama	$71,375,218
Arizona	$81,375,127
Hawaii	$16,256,586
Montana	$41,375,218
Nevada	$43,762,680
EXPANSION GRANTEES	
Arkansas	$61,347,218
Connecticut	$48,941,545
Illinois	$81,096,560
Louisiana	$33,281,953
Maine	$15,800,020
Maryland	$61,375,120
Massachusetts	$61,375,218
New Jersey	$71,363,396
New York	$100,453,326
Rhode Island	$19,761,049
Tennessee	$71,019,744
Vermont	$25,363,067
Virginia	$71,375,218
TOTAL PDG FUNDING: $976,698,263	

Note: Total includes Supplemental Funds
Source: U.S. Department of Education

When the PDG awards were made, 17 of the 18 recipients had prior experiences implementing state preschool (or Pre-Kindergarten) programs serving either three- and four-year-olds or just four-year-olds. These programs served as foundations for PDG grant implementation. Montana, which did not have a state preschool program, relied on its experience implementing a federally funded Striving Readers Project to serve as a basis for its PDG program. Table 2 summarizes key details of the state preschool programs that existed in PDG states when they began implementing PDG. The percentage of children in the state population who participated in these state preschool programs ranged from a low of 3 percent to a high of 84 percent. The quality ratings of the state preschool programs ranged from a high of meeting all 10 National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) benchmarks to a low of meeting only four benchmarks.

Table 2. Status of State Preschool in PDG States When Awarded Grant: SY2014-15

PDG Grantee	State's Preschool Program(s)	NIEER Quality Benchmarks Met in 2014–15 (Out of 10)	Year Program Established	Percentage of state's children enrolled by age	
				4-yrs-olds	3-yrs-olds
*Alabama	First Class Pre-K	10	2000	12%	NA
*Arizona	First Things First (FTF)†	3	2012	6%	3%
Arkansas	Arkansas Better Chance (ABC)	9	1991	39%	21%
Connecticut	School Readiness Program (SRP)	6	1997	18%	8%
	Child Day Care Contracts (CDCC)	6	1997	5%	1%

PDG Grantee	State's Preschool Program(s)	NIEER Quality Benchmarks Met in 2014–15 (Out of 10)	Year Program Established	Percentage of state's children enrolled by age	
				4-yrs-olds	3-yrs-olds
*Hawaii	HI Executive Office of Early Learning Public Pre-K Program	9	2014	2%	NA
Illinois	Preschool for All	8	2006	27%	20%
Louisiana	Cecil J. Picard LA4 Early Childhood Program	9	2001	26%	NA
	Non-Public Schools Early Childhood Development	10	2001	2%	NA
	8(g) Student Enhancement Block Grant	8	1986	4%	NA
Maine	Maine Public Preschool Program	5	2007	36%	NA
Maryland	Maryland Pre-Kindergarten Program	8	2002	36%	5%
Massachusetts	Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK)	6	2005	3%	5%
	Inclusive Preschool Learning Code 391	6	1985	4%	2%
*Montana	No state preschool at time of PDG award				
*Nevada	Nevada State Pre-Kindergarten Program	7	2001	3%	1%
New Jersey	Former Abbott Preschool Program	9	1998	22%	18%
	Non-Abbott Early Childhood Program Aid	8	2004	6%	1%
	Early Launch to Learning Initiative	8	2004	1%	NA
New York	Universal Pre-Kindergarten Program	7	1998	49%	NA
Rhode Island	Rhode Island State Pre-Kindergarten Program	10	2009	3%	NA
Tennessee	Tennessee Voluntary Pre-K	9	2005	19%	1%
Vermont	Vermont Pre-Kindergarten - Act 62	4	2007	79%	22%
	Early Education Initiative (EEI)	4	1987	5%	4%
Virginia	Virginia Preschool Initiative	6	1995	18%	NA

*PDG Development Grantee

†FTF is a non-profit agency that receives state funding for preschool scholarships and other community-determined activities

Source: *NIEER State of Preschool Yearbook 2015* http://nieer.org/state-preschool-yearbooks/the-state-of-preschool-2015

PDG Development Grantees

The PDG Development Grants were established specifically for states lacking a state preschool program or serving less than 10 percent of the state's population of four-year-olds. Several unique features were incorporated into the Development grants. First, grantees could use up to 35 percent of their grant for building their infrastructure in contrast to the Expansion grantees who were limited to spending only five percent on infrastructure. Additionally, Development grantees could wait up to one year before enrolling children; however, all five Development grantees elected to start enrolling children in the first year of their grants.[6] Brief summaries of the five Development grantees follow. For more detailed information about grantees' PDG implementation (e.g., goals, characteristics, major accomplishments, promising practices) and performance data, refer to the grantee's PDG profile in Appendix A.

PDG Impacts...

"Our experience has been absolutely amazing. I am sad he is having to leave the amazing teachers who have cared for him like their own. But they have done a wonderful job of preparing him to enter kindergarten. I fully believe he is ready. He is already recognizing and reading words. Wonderful program, I could not say enough great things about it! I am very excited this is offered. I know it will help many children in the future."

Alabama Parent

ALABAMA

Alabama's ***First Class Pre-K*** program was the platform for the state's PDG grant. Since the First Class and PDG quality standards were aligned, Alabama could directly incorporate its PDG subgrantees into its First Class Pre-K model. During the grant period, Alabama served over 37,000 children in 23

[6] Notice Inviting Applications: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2014-08-18/pdf/2014-19426.pdf

HNCs. Alabama was able to successfully scale up its state preschool program and maintain quality. Among the state's many accomplishments, two are especially noteworthy: (1) all First Class Pre-K teachers now have pay parity with K-12 teachers across all types of settings, and (2) all PDG funded preschool slots and quality elements were sustained after the grant funding ended.

ARIZONA

PDG Impacts...
"It's a great thing. I wish every kid could go to PreK. It helps them get prepared and work on skills. It's a big plus to be able to attend. They learn shapes and even shapes I don't know. And they learn colors and all the basic stuff."
Arizona Parent

The Arizona Department of Education (ADE) did not operate a state preschool program. However, some children in the state received scholarships to attend preschool through ***First Things First (FTF),*** a statewide non-profit organization. ADE worked in tandem with FTF to provide over 3,000 income eligible children access to quality, full-day preschool. Many of the children who attended PDG funded preschools were English learners (i.e., 1,307 children or 42.5 percent of the total enrollment) and children with disabilities (i.e., 356 children or 11.6 percent). Arizona used PDG funding to strengthen the state's early childhood workforce through multiple professional development opportunities and scholarships for early childhood education courses. PDG funds also were used to link preschool data to the state's K-12 longitudinal data system.

HAWAII

PDG Impacts...
"PDG is a game changer... an important step toward raising awareness regarding how important [Pre-K education] is for Hawaii's children."
Education Administrator from Hawaii

In 2014, Hawaii's state legislature allocated $3 million to create a state-funded preschool program that met all 10 NIEER quality standards. However, the state preschool program did not extend to the state's public charter schools. Hawaii's PDG grant, which was awarded to the Commission for Public Charter Schools, sought to balance this situation. Hawaii's implementation design called for setting up preschool classrooms in charter schools and enrolling children in stages. In the first grant year, only four charter schools opened preschool classes, but by the third year,18 preschool classes of which seven are in Hawaiian language immersion schools were enrolling eligible children. Throughout the grant, the PDG leadership worked on sustainability. They were rewarded when the state legislature approved state funding to continue the PDG funded preschool classrooms.

MONTANA

PDG Impacts...
"It was a great experience for our daughter to get her ready for kindergarten and she learned a lot."
"It has been an amazing jumpstart for our child who is special needs—astounding!"
"He improved as a person, problem solving skills, socializing was/is very important to us."
"Attending all day has helped him prepare for kindergarten; also helped his speech tremendously."
Montana PDG Parents

Montana was one of only seven states in the nation not offering any type of state-funded preschool; the PDG grant ushered in state preschool. The PDG grant was jointly administrated by the Governor's Office, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). Montana served over 3,000 children and families. Montana grouped its 24 subgrantees into three cohorts based on their level of readiness to meet PDG standards. Montana's Head Start programs located on Indian Reservations received targeted onsite coaching, financial support, and ongoing professional development that enabled them to meet the PDG quality standards and better serve children and families. All subgrantees received targeted onsite support in the development of system-wide infrastructure, family engagement and outreach, and goal setting for continuous improvement.

NEVADA

PDG Impacts...
"Because of PDG, we are involved in the Quality Rating and Improvement System and [get] lots of teacher professional development. We also have an instructional coach working with the teachers."
School Principal, Nevada

Over the four years of Nevada's PDG grant, more than 8,000 children and their families benefitted from PDG supported full-day preschool and comprehensive services. More children and families will continue to have access to preschool thanks to the Nevada legislature which, earlier this year, appropriated funding for ***Nevada Ready! Preschool.*** The PDG grant had other impacts as well. It supported development of a Birth-12th grade state longitudinal data system, established onsite instructional coaching, and promoted the inclusion of children with disabilities. Nevada's PDG preschools are located in public schools, Head Start, childcare centers, charter schools, and faith-based early childhood programs.

PDG Expansion Grantees

The main goals of the PDG Expansion grants were for states to expand their state preschool programs to reach more children in high needs communities, and to improve state preschool programs to meet PDG quality standards (e.g., full school-day, teacher with a BA, comprehensive services, family engagement strategies).

Brief summaries of the 13 Expansion grantees follow. To view more detailed information about grantees' PDG implementation (i.e., goals, characteristics, major accomplishments, promising practices, performance data), refer to grantees' PDG profiles in Appendix A.

PDG Impacts...

"The PDG funds...enabled Arkansas..to support partnerships across settings serving children birth to grade three, promote optimal professional development for preschool staff, enhance early childhood instruction, increase access to and number of high quality preschool, and support statewide infrastructure."

State Administrator in Arkansas

ARKANSAS

The foundation for Arkansas' PDG program was its ***Arkansas Better Chance (ABC)*** state preschool program for three- and four-year-old children. Arkansas' goals for the PDG grant were to increase access to the ABC program and to improve its quality. Arkansas' PDG supported programs enrolled over 11,000 income eligible four-year-olds in nine high-needs communities across the state. In addition to increasing preschool access and quality, Arkansas' PDG grant also supported development of the ***Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards Birth through 6o months.*** Family engagement was a special focus area of Arkansas' PDG efforts.

PDG Impacts...

"PDG has made a difference in how prepared our children are for kindergarten."

School Superintendent in Connecticut

CONNECTICUT

Connecticut used its PDG Expansion grant to add required PDG quality elements to its existing preschool program and to expand access to income eligible four-year-olds in 14 high-needs communities across the state. All PDG supported classroom teachers received individualized coaching, family engagement support, and professional development. Teachers participated in the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP), a mental health model consisting of three types of supports. Connecticut also implemented the Parent Teacher Home Visiting (PTHV) model, a research-based, high impact family engagement strategy.

PDG Impacts...

"The Preschool Expansion Program has made a tremendous impact on the Dolton 149 school community by allowing us to reach those hard to find children. We have been able to provide more children a high-quality learning experience and environment to ensure they are ready for Kindergarten."

Early Childhood Principal Illinois

ILLINOIS

Illinois' PDG grant was used to enhance and expand its part-day state preschool program into the full school-day ***Preschool for All Expansion*** program. The PDG supported programs served nearly 16,000 children over four years. They also provided comprehensive services to children and families. PDF funds helped Illinois develop a ***Family Engagement and Communication Tool*** and embed Instructional Leaders and Family Educators into subgrantees' staff structures. Illinois' PDG grant supported subgrantees' implementation of the Pyramid Model and Mental Health Consultation model in the hopes of reducing suspensions and expulsions in early childhood settings.[7]

LOUISIANA

Louisiana's PDG goals were to expand quality preschool opportunities in 17 high-needs communities and to provide families access to their choice of quality preschool programs. PDG funded "seats" were largely located in childcare centers working in partnership with local school districts or charter schools. In addition to expanding preschool access and choice, PDG supported the development of a ***Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway,*** shared professional development opportunities for preschool and kindergarten teachers, and ongoing job-embedded coaching. Louisiana also used PDG funding to support its

PDG Impacts...

"The Rapides Parish Early Childhood Community Network benefitted tremendously from the PDG opportunity afforded to us the past four years. The addition of 100 preschool seats allowed us to partner with early learning centers and Head Start to serve low-income children and their families in a diverse delivery setting."

Administrator, Early Childhood Community Network in Louisiana

[7] PDG Grantee Abstract – Illinois: https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/ilpdgabsfinal.pdf

Local Community Networks, a coordinated enrollment system, and an outcomes-based program "report card" that holds local leaders accountable.[8]

PDG Impacts...
"I really cannot believe the growth we've seen over the years of this grant. The longer days allow for children to have more exposure and get kindergarten ready. We see it in the fall Brigance scores but it's carried over into the classroom."
Kindergarten Teacher
Maine

MAINE

Maine's Public Preschool Program (PPP) requires teachers to have an early childhood teaching license and it provides instructional coaches to support preschool teachers. These elements and others were incorporated into the state's PDG Expansion preschool programs. Maine used its PDG funds to expand access to PPP in eleven high-needs communities. Interagency coordination and collaboration with key partners such as Head Start, local childcare programs, and the state's Home Visiting program are hallmarks of Maine's PPP and PDG programs.

MARYLAND

Maryland's ***Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Program*** was the appropriate foundation for its PDG Expansion grant since it included several components required by the PDG grant (e.g., teachers in public and nonpublic Pre-K programs have salary parity with K-3 teachers); however, the Pre-K program is only part-day. The full school-day PDG program became known as Pre-K Plus. Pre-K Plus provided preschool for a total of over 15,000 children and their families. These families received comprehensive services through a partnership with the Judy Centers. In 2018, the Maryland legislature signed HB 1415 into law, which provides state funding for preschool beginning in FY2020. It will sustain Pre-K Plus at the FY2019 level when the PDG grant ends.

PDG Impacts...
"I feel the Pre-K Plus program helped my son and was very beneficial in order to prepare him for Kindergarten. My son was able to attend school all day and learn math [and] literacy skills. He was also able to socialize with other children his age. The teachers were very supportive and did an amazing job."
Parent in Maryland

PDG Impacts...
"Our presence in the community became known for offering opportunities to children who would otherwise not have been in preschool. Many of our families were those that came from refuge families and would not qualify for services through a typical program. We became the stepping stone in getting them acclimated to formal education and...getting parents to feel secure in being active participants in their children's education."
Local PDG Lead
in Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts used an innovative approach to implement its PDG Expansion grant. It required school districts in the five high-needs communities – Boston, Holyoke, Lawrence, Lowell, and Springfield – to form partnerships with community early childhood programs (e.g., Head Start, childcare centers) in order for the community programs to provide PDG funded preschool programs and services. The goal of this model was to substantially increase public school-community partnerships. Massachusetts also opted to prioritize enrolling income eligible four-year-olds who had not previously attended any type of early childhood program. In FY2019, the state legislature passed the Community Preschool Partnership Initiative which is modeled on PDG and funds continuation of some of the PDG-funded preschool slots.

NEW JERSEY

New Jersey used its PDG grant to bring the state's high-quality preschool program model (i.e., the Abbott Preschool Program) to 19 high-needs communities. Many components of the state's preschool program were aligned with PDG requirements, including salary parity with K-3 salaries for teachers and teaching assistants across all preschool settings. PDG funded "master teachers" who provided onsite instructional coaching. Over the grant period, New Jersey's PDG program served more than 7,000 children and their families, and exceeded its enrollment targets every year of the grant. In the last year of the PDG grant, the state legislature appropriated funding to sustain the PDG preschool slots after the grant ends.

PDG Impacts...
"I have been a preschool special education teacher for 10 years and I always taught self-contained rooms. When I had the opportunity to teach a [PDG] classroom and saw my seven special education students' growth it changed my entire perspective on inclusion. I had never seen almost all my students be declassified before kindergarten."
Early Childhood Special Educator
New Jersey

[8] PDG Grantee Abstract – Louisiana: https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/lapdgabsfinal.pdf

PDG Impacts...
"Our Pre-Kindergarten program has grown from five half-day classrooms to 32 full-day three-year-old and four-year-old classrooms spread throughout the city under the direction of eight community-based organizations."
Pre-Kindergarten Administrator New York

NEW YORK

New York's PDG grant supported five high-need communities representing a mix of urban and rural communities to create new preschool opportunities and improve existing preschool programs. Over the four years of the PDG grant, New York served more than 9,500 children and their families. New York used its PDG funds to increase the inclusion of children with disabilities, and further the state's Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd Grade (P-3) initiatives such as aligning the state's P-3 standards and developing print and video resources for educators on developmentally appropriate P-3 instructional and assessment practices. New York has committed to sustaining the PDG-funded slots after the end of PDG grant funding.

RHODE ISLAND

Rhode Island braided PDG funding with its state Pre-K funding to substantially increase access to preschool in seven HNCs. The Pre-K/PDG program used a mixed delivery model of Head Start, public schools, and community early care and education programs. PDG funded onsite coaching support, the development of courses on the state's ***Early Learning Standards,*** a graduate certificate in Early Childhood Leadership, and piloted the ***Inclusive Classroom Profile.*** The PDG grant also enabled the state to extend its state longitudinal data system to include children 0-5 years of age. Rhode Island confirmed that the PDG-funded preschool slots will be sustained after the grant ends.

PDG Impacts...
"Preschool prepared Madison for kindergarten..She left preschool knowing how to write, count, spell, read and interact with her peers. She began kindergarten with a strong foundation..."
Parent in Rhode Island

PDG Impacts...
"[T]he Preschool Development Grant afforded 760 Shelby County families the opportunity to experience high quality Pre-K. Additionally, enhancing Pre-K classrooms in more than 30 childcare centers across the county was indeed beneficial to our community. Without PDG funds, many Shelby County four-year-olds would not have started kindergarten ready to learn."
Early Childhood Manager Tennessee

TENNESSEE

Tennessee's PDG grant served nearly 18,000 children and their families in two large high-need communities, Metropolitan Nashville and a consortium of school districts in Shelby County. PDG state level activities included onsite tiered practice-based coaching, a coach specifically for supporting English language learners, and hiring Family Involvement Specialists and Family Service Workers to support families directly. PDG funded Principal Early Learning Summer Institutes, conferences for Pre-K through second grade teachers, and a Family Enrichment Center.

VERMONT

Vermont's PDG program incorporated several features of its existing universal state Pre-K program (e.g., mixed delivery model, teacher with an early childhood educator license, alignment with the state's early learning standards, formative child assessments), but it expanded the 10-hour per week program to a five days per week, school-day schedule. Additionally, teachers in PDG subgrantee Head Start and childcare centers saw their salaries increased to bring them in line with the local public school P-3 teachers' salaries. PDG funds supported mapping early childhood data elements to the state's longitudinal data system. Some of Vermont's PDG grantees were able to sustain the full-day Pre-K slots PDG created.

PDG Impacts...
"With the assistance of the PDG over the four-year period, we are now able to offer eight full time preschool programs in our five schools. All schools can serve all preschool aged children -- we no longer have waiting lists or numerous families who cannot attend due to the limited hours."
School Administrator Vermont

PDG Impacts...
"We love the preschool program...I noticed the growth in her social skills and vocabulary almost immediately after beginning school. At her kindergarten orientation we were told the expectations for knowledge prior to starting and I felt so relieved when I saw that they are all the things she is already learning in her preschool!"
Parent, Virginia's VPI+ Program

VIRGINIA

Virginia based its PDG-funded preschools on its existing state preschool program, the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) program. However, since several enhancements were added, it was labeled VPI+. The VPI+ "add-ons" were to implement research-tested curriculum and professional development opportunities, establish community

partnerships to provide children and families with comprehensive services, and create "effective pathways" to engage families. The PDG grant supported improvements to the state's longitudinal data system and it supported subgrantees in the use of formative and summative assessments. Virginia served over a total of 13,000 children and families, and it exceeded its enrollment targets every year of the grant.

Common Implementation Strategies and Challenges Across PDG Grantees

Despite differences in scope, geography, funding amounts, and primarily urban or rural environments across the PDG Expansion and Development grantees, they tended to implement similar strategies. These common strategies included data-informed individualized coaching for preschool teachers and, in some cases, educational leaders; employing a "mixed delivery model"; requiring programs to participate in the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS); and adopting similar tools for assessing child progress and program quality. Table 3 below provides an overview of the characteristics of the PDG preschool programs, both the required PDG elements and promising practices some grantees opted to incorporate. Brief descriptions of these common strategies and practices, as well as some of the common implementation challenges grantees encountered are presented.

Table 3. Characteristics of PDG Preschool Programs: An Overview

Required PDG Quality Elements

Element	Characteristic of:
Teachers must have the minimum of a BA in early childhood education.	All 18 PDG Grantees
Quality professional development opportunities must be provided to staff.	
A staff-child ratio of no greater than 10 children per adult is required.	
The total number of children in a single class may not exceed 20 children.	
PDG supported preschools must follow the public school calendar, operate no fewer than five hours per day, and meet Monday-Friday.	
The instruction and curriculum should be evidence-based, aligned with the state's early learning standards, and developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate.	
Individualized accommodations and supports must be provided. Doing so will enable all children, including those with disabilities, to attend preschool.	
Salaries for staff in PDG supported preschools must be comparable to the salaries of K-12 teachers in local schools.	
Program evaluation that provides actionable data for continuous program improvement should be collected.	
Wraparound comprehensive services that meet children's needs have to be offered onsite or through partnerships with community programs.	
Programs must provide robust, culturally, and linguistically appropriate family engagement opportunities.	
Programs should follow evidence-based health and safety standards.	

Optional Features

Practice	Grantees:
Provided onsite coaching support to preschool educators	AL, AR, AZ, HI, LA, ME, MD, MA, MT, NV, NJ, NY, RI, TN, VT, VA
Provided professional learning opportunities specifically for leaders (e.g., school principals, Head Start directors, childcare center directors)	CT, HI, IL, MT, NJ, RI, TN, VA
Developed early childhood workforce competencies or other workforce policies	AL, AR, CT, LA
Funded early childhood courses to develop workforce	AZ, HI, MT
Developed or aligned the state's early learning standards, instructional practices, and/or assessments along the Birth-3rd Grade continuum	AR, MD, NV, NJ, NY, RI, TN, VT

Practice	Grantees:
Focused on supporting children's social and emotional development	AL, CT, IL, NJ, NV, MT, TN, VT
Developed policies and/or resources to facilitate preschool to kindergarten transitions	CT, LA, MD, NY, RI, VT, VA
Established family engagement staff positions	AR, CT, IL, MA, MT, TN, VA
Developed policies and/or resources to engage families in their children's learning, development, and preschool program	AR, IL, NJ, TN
Provided a home visiting program	CT, ME, VA
Established and/or maintained partnerships with Head Start to provide PDG supported preschool	AL, AR, IL, MD, ME, MA, NJ, VT
Supported efforts to integrate early childhood data into the K-12 State Longitudinal Data System	ME, NV, RI, VT, VA
Sustained PDG-funded slots or elements of PDG program	AL, AR, HI, MD, ME, NV, NJ, NY, RI, VT

Common Implementation Strategies

Coaching

Classroom-based coaching is an essential strategy in a broader professional development system that can have lasting impacts on teacher practices and the quality of instruction children receive. It is a relationship-based process in which talented coaches make teachers feel valued, cared for, and willing to take risks to change their practices. Coaches foster teachers' reflections on their practices and on their own learning.[9]

Nearly all PDG grantees established or enhanced a coaching system for preschool teachers and, in some cases, school leaders. In a PDG TA Promising Practices brief based on interviews with PDG program leaders, four themes on coaching emerged.[10] The themes were:

- Coaching strengthens preschool instruction
- Coaching supports educational leaders as well as teachers
- Data informs the focus and frequency of coaching interactions
- A tiered coaching model can heighten effectiveness

Alabama's Reflective Coaching (ARC) model encompasses several of the themes mentioned above. Montana's coaching model includes a team that provides onsite instructional coaching as well as supporting subgrantees' systems-wide infrastructure development, and family engagement and outreach efforts.

Providing a Mixed Delivery Model

The delivery model PDG grantees used typically followed their state preschool model. Many grantees offered preschool through a "mixed delivery model" encompassing public schools, Head Start, and faith-based and non-faith-based community early care and education programs. There were a few exceptions. For example, Hawaii limited its subgrantees to public charter schools, and Virginia's subgrantees were all school districts that could partner with Head Start and early childhood programs meeting the PDG and state preschool program standards.

Two examples of PDG grantees implementing a mixed delivery model for preschool are New Jersey and Vermont. New Jersey used its PDG Expansion grant to provide quality preschool based on its successful Abbott Preschool Program in 19 school districts. The model includes Head Start, and community early childhood programs as well as public school districts. Vermont's universal Pre-Kindergarten law, Act 166, stipulates that public schools, Head Start and community early childhood programs are all eligible to provide a preschool program if they meet the standards specified in the law.

Applying Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

Although not required by the PDG grant, many grantees' PDG-supported preschool programs participated in the state's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) or Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) if one existed (i.e.,

[9] Aguilar, E. (2013). How Coaching Can Impact Teachers, Principals, and Students. Edutopia: https://www.edutopia.org/blog/coaching-impact-teachers-principals-students-elena-aguilar

[10] PDG TA (2016). Promising Practices: Coaching: https://pdg.grads360.org/services/PDCService.svc/GetPDCDocumentFile?fileId=27121

Connecticut had not yet adopted a QRIS at the time of the PDG grant). As with other shared strategies discussed here, if the state preschool program required participation in QRIS, the PDG supported programs tended to follow suit. In some cases, the state preschool program did not require public schools to go through the QRIS process, only community early childhood programs and possibly Head Start participated in the QRIS process. The reason for excluding public schools was often that most QRIS systems were not developed to accommodate the unique features of preschool classrooms in public schools. With support from PDG, Nevada solved this issue by designing a QRIS tailored specifically for public schools.

Utilizing Child Assessment and Program Quality Measures

The themes of data and accountability run throughout the PDG-funded programs. All grantees adopted child assessments to measure progress and inform instruction, as well as tools to assess the quality of the preschool environment and teacher-child interactions. Many PDG states used ***Teaching Strategies GOLD*** (TS GOLD), a formative assessment based on observations and documentation, to measure child growth. A common measure of classroom quality across PDG grantees was the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale- Revised (ECERS-R) or the ECERS-3 version, and many PDG grantees used the ***Classroom Assessment Scoring System*** (CLASS) to measure the quality of the classroom climate and teacher-child interactions.

The PDG grant required grantees to assess and annually report on the kindergarten readiness of the children who participated in PDG supported programs. There was greater diversity among the assessments used to measure kindergarten readiness than in measuring child progress. Some grantees relied upon their TS GOLD data which could be used to produce a kindergarten readiness score. Others used different tools such as the ***Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning: Fourth Edition*** (DIAL-4). A few states developed their own kindergarten readiness assessments (e.g., Maryland, Virginia) or modified existing tools (e.g., Illinois, New Jersey).

Common Implementation Challenges

In addition to common implementation strategies, some PDG grantees faced similar challenges which often morphed into opportunities and promising practices. A sampling of these common challenges is provided here.

Hiring Teachers with a Baccalaureate Degree

Hawaii and Arizona were two PDG grantees that reported having challenges finding a sufficient number of appropriately qualified preschool teachers. This situation was more prevalent in, but not exclusive to, rural areas. In response to this situation, Hawaii and Arizona used a portion of their PDG infrastructure and Supplemental funds to invest in the education of the state's early childhood workforce by providing tuition-free courses leading to degrees and/or teaching certificates.

Enrolling Children with Disabilities

The PDG grant stipulated that children with disabilities should be included in the quality preschool classes supported by the grant. The percentage of children on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) had to be equal to or exceed the state's overall percentage of children identified with disabilities or the national average of 6.4 percent, whichever was greater. PDG grantees were held accountable for demonstrating inclusion using this metric across all its subgrantees, and each subgrantee was required to match or exceed these rates as well. The income eligibility requirement of families' income at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level was not waived for children with disabilities. Some PDG grant managers found this requirement difficult to achieve.

To support PDG Grantees, the federal team and/or PDG TA specialists facilitated several conference calls with PDG state leadership teams, including the state's Part B 619 coordinator, to explain the inclusion requirement, answer questions, and strategize how grantees could meet the requirement. At an Inclusion Peer Learning Exchange, Arizona shared how it is collecting and using data on inclusion to advocate for greater inclusion with school districts. In a PDG Grantee Quarterly Meeting webinar, Nevada shared the approach one of its subgrantees used to increase the inclusion of preschoolers with disabilities through collaboration, programming, and braiding funding streams.

Recruiting and Reaching Target Enrollment Numbers

Some PDG grantees were unable to reach the overall enrollment targets they established in their proposals;[11] the reasons for this varied across programs. Getting the word out about the availability of full-day PDG-supported preschool took some time. An uptick in the number of eligible children enrolled since the first year of the grant gives credence to this explanation. The

[11] 2018 PDG Annual Performance Report Workbook Data: Unpublished

grant manager from Hawaii attributed its slow progress in filling all preschool slots to cultural beliefs; some parents believe their young children should be home rather than attending school. A couple of grant managers reported that some families preferred a half-day rather than the full-day PDG program for their four-year-olds.

On the other hand, five states – Arkansas, Illinois, Nevada, New Jersey, and Virginia – consistently met and exceeded their enrollment targets. This result was either from setting realistic targets in their PDG proposals and/or by using innovative and multifaceted outreach efforts. One example of a grantee being innovative is Virginia. The leadership team shared some of the innovative strategies they used to recruit and enroll eligible children in a PDG Grantee Quarterly Meeting webinar.

Scaling Up and Maintaining Quality

When Rhode Island and Alabama received their PDG grant awards, both were implementing small but high-quality state preschool programs. Although the infusion of PDG funds into their state preschool programs was certainly welcome, these grantees were faced with the challenge of scaling up and simultaneously maintaining the quality they had established. The accelerated growth resulting from the infusion of federal funding required careful planning. There was a need to build up the infrastructure that supported small state preschool programs (e.g., coaches, professional development, monitoring, recruitment of programs and of families). Both grantees were able to meet this challenge and maintain quality as evidenced by the 10 out of 10 benchmarks both states earned in the 2018 NIEER State of Preschool Yearbook.[12]

Striving for Sustainability

As part of the PDG proposal, applicants were required to discuss how they planned to sustain their work once the four-year grant funding ended. Despite grantees' efforts at the start of the grant process and their sustainability work in subsequent years of the grant, sustainability challenged some grantees. PDG grantees spoke with state legislators, advocates and champions of state preschool programs to sustain PDG preschool quality and "slots." However, the results of these efforts were mixed.

Some specific areas that the PDG grant supported, and which proved challenging to sustain, were:

- a full-day preschool when the state preschool program was only part-time,
- compensation comparable to K-3 teachers for PDG preschool teachers who worked in non-public school settings (e.g., Head Start, childcare centers, and private preschools), and
- comprehensive services for children and families.

This overview of the 18 PDG grantees serves as a backdrop to the essential questions surrounding any grant program. Was the PDG investment effective? Did the PDG program meet its goals of increased access and quality improvements for state funded preschool programs? What were the results? Did families and children benefit? Will this initiative have lasting impacts? Some of these questions are directly addressed in the following section which focuses on the degree PDG grantees increased families' access to quality preschool and the characteristics of the children who benefitted. It also examines the kindergarten readiness data of children who attended PDG-supported preschools.

[12] 2018 NIEER State Preschool Yearbook: http://nieer.org/state-preschool-yearbooks/2018-2

FULFILLING THE PDG GRANTS PROGRAM GOALS

The primary goal of the PDG grant was to increase children's access to a quality preschool education. It targeted four-year-old children from families with low- and moderate incomes (i.e., at or below 200 percent poverty) living in state-designated "high-needs communities." According to data reported in the Annual Performance Reports (APRs) submitted by PDG grantees during the grant performance periods of 2015-2018, this PDG goal was fulfilled. The evidence for this conclusion is presented below.

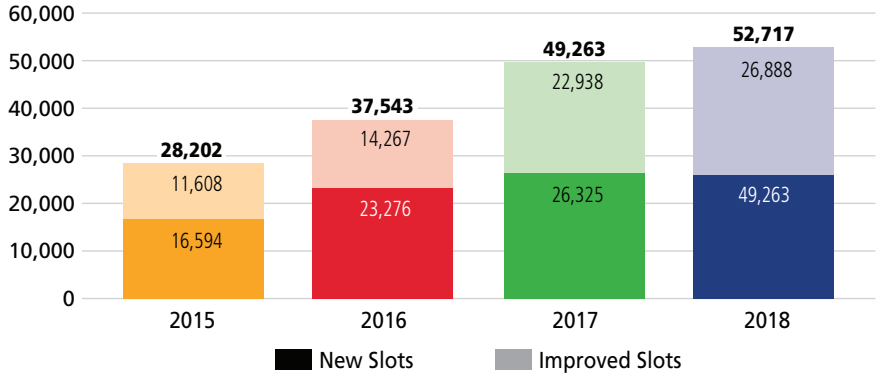
Increasing Access to Quality Preschool

Over the four years of the PDG grant, a total of **167,725** four-year-old children whose families had incomes at or below 200 percent poverty and who were living in high-need communities attended PDG-supported quality preschool classrooms in 18 states. Enrollment numbers grew gradually but steadily over the four-year PDG grant period. In 2015, the first year of the PDG grants, 28,202 children were enrolled in a PDG class, but by the end of the fourth year, the enrollment was 52,717. Between the first and fourth year of the grant, 2015 and 2018 respectively, the annual enrollment increased by 24,515 children. The increase indicates that the total PDG enrollment nearly doubled (i.e., an increase of 87 percent). Thus, nearly twice as many children and families had access to quality preschool in year four of the grant as they did in the first grant year. Figure 2 depicts the total number of children served in PDG-supported programs by grant year and whether the slots were "new" or "improved." "New slots" are designated as preschool seats funded by PDG, Head Start and PDG, or PDG and other funds, and which meet all PDG quality criteria. "Improved slots" are existing preschool seats funded by PDG and state preschool funds, and which meet all PDG quality criteria.

Beyond the Numbers...

"In the past, we always had children on a waiting list for Pre-K, maybe a dozen children or more. For the first time ever, thanks to PDG, we do not have any children on the waiting list. Every child who wants Pre-K has been able to participate. We are extremely excited about that!" *Alabama Director of Instruction and Assessment*

Figure 2. Number of New and Improved Preschool Slots Supported by PDG Funds: 2015-2018



Sources: Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2015, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2016, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2017, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2018

Enrollment Targets

In addition to reporting the number of new and improved slots and eligible children served each year, PDG grantees compared their actual enrollment numbers to the annual targets they established. The importance of grantees meeting or exceeding their enrollment targets cannot be overstated since this statistic translates into the number of eligible children served. For example, Virginia exceeded its target by 20 percent in 2018 and served 2,917 children more than projected. Grantees' success in meeting their targets varied. New Jersey and Virginia exceeded their targets all four grant years. Table 4 presents the PDG grantees who met or exceeded their enrollment targets by grant year.

Beyond the Numbers...

"With our PDG funds and the work our Director of Early Childhood is doing, we are not just serving nearly 200 more four-year-old children; we are ensuring that they are all receiving a high-quality Pre-K education. We want identical high-quality services for all of our Pre-K students." *School Superintendent, Arizona*

"You cannot over emphasize the importance [of PDG. It provides] everything that it takes to do a high-quality program, from assessments to professional development to retrofitting the classrooms to supplies, let alone the staff. Without PDG funding, some of the neediest schools would not have been able to establish well-supplied Pre-K classrooms." *Education Administrator, Hawaii*

Table 4. PDG Grantees That Met or Exceeded Their Enrollment Targets

PDG Grantee	2015	2016	2017	2018
Alabama	✓			
Arkansas			✓	✓
Illinois		✓	✓	✓
Louisiana	✓			
Maine			✓	
Maryland		✓		
Massachusetts			✓	
Nevada		✓		✓
New Jersey	✓	✓	✓	✓
New York	✓	✓		
Rhode Island	✓		✓	✓
Virginia	✓	✓	✓	✓

✓ = Met or Exceeded Enrollment Target

Sources: Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2015, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2016, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2017, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2018

Serving Priority Groups of Children and Families

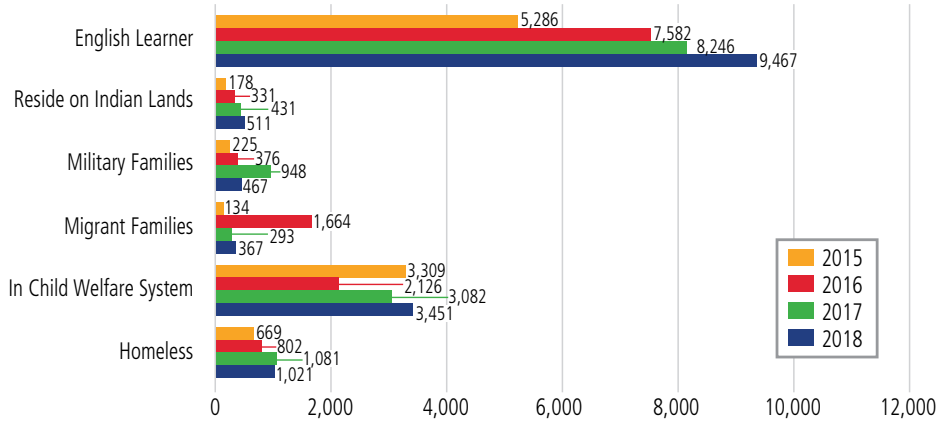
PDG programs prioritized serving children with the greatest need and possibly the least access to a quality preschool program. The children who benefited from PDG supported preschool included children with disabilities, children involved in the welfare system, and children whose families were homeless. Children who resided on Indian lands or whose families were migrants or in the military were given preference to PDG supported "slots." English learners (or dual language learners) was the largest group of children enrolled under the high-needs categories (i.e., a total of 30,581 or 18.2 percent). Please refer to Figure 3 showing the number of children by high-needs categories served in PDG supported programs over the four years of the grant.

Beyond the Numbers...

"[PDG] has had a particularly powerful impact on our families through the years, as the full-day program has allowed... families to...obtain full-time employment [and] provide stronger financial support to the family."
Principal, Illinois

"PDG has made a difference in how prepared our children are for kindergarten."
School Superintendent, Connecticut

Figure 3. Number of Eligible Children Served in PDG Programs by High Needs Category: 2015-18



Note: Duplicated counts: a child may be counted in more than one category.

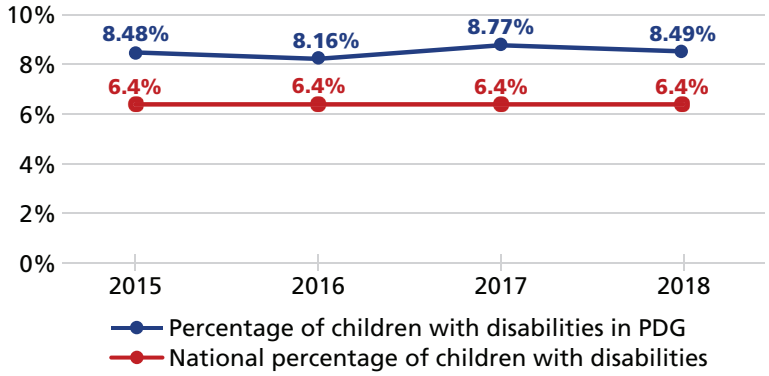
Sources: Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2015, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2016, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2017, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2018

Children with Disabilities

The PDG grant emphasized strengthening subgrantees' capacity to support children with disabilities in inclusive preschool classrooms. PDG grantees were held accountable at the state and subgrantee levels for enrolling PDG eligible children who have disabilities. The PDG Grantees were required to meet the national level of 6.4 percent, or their state's average of young children with disabilities, whichever was higher.

Over the duration of the PDG program, the percentage of eligible children with disabilities enrolled in PDG supported settings significantly exceeded the national percentage. Figure 4 (below) depicts the overall percentage of children with disabilities across all grantees compared to the national percentage of young children identified as having a disability. It shows that PDG grantees exceeded the federal rate by a relatively consistent two percentage points each of the four years of the program.

Figure 4. Percentage of Eligible Children with Disabilities Enrolled in PDG Inclusive Settings Compared to the National Average 2015-18



Sources: Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2015, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2016, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2017, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2018

Beyond the Numbers...

"My child [has a special needs diagnosis]. Her Pre-K classroom is full-day, five days a week and she loves it. She is doing great. We are working on a lot of different skills because even though she is smarter than a lot of kids her age, she is behind in other areas like language and social skills. There is a lot of support to meet her needs at the school. The teachers and even the principal work with us and her therapy takes place at the school."

Montana Parent

While the overall percentage of children with disabilities in inclusive PDG classrooms exceeded the national average, there was a good deal of variance across PDG grantees. The PDG states with the highest average rates of including children with disabilities in their PDG programs from 2015-2018 were: Vermont (24.9 percent), Maine (16.1 percent), New Jersey (14.2 percent), Arkansas (12.6 percent), and Nevada (12.2 percent). However, not all grantees were able to meet the national average or their state's average. The number of grantees that met or exceeded the national average of 6.4 percent was: 12 grantees in 2015, 11 in 2016, 14 in 2017, and 13 in 2018.

Increasing Children's Kindergarten Readiness

Research indicates that children who have one or two years of a quality preschool program are more ready for kindergarten.[13] Did children who attended PDG supported quality preschool programs demonstrate higher levels of kindergarten readiness than their peers? This is a reasonable question to ask; however, the answer is incomplete due to several data-related issues.

PDG grantees were required to report the kindergarten readiness of children who attended their PDG grant programs in the 2017 and 2018 Annual Performance Reports (APRs). Grantees were not required to use any specific measure of kindergarten readiness. They used the state's kindergarten entry assessment (KEA) or a comparable measure if the state had not adopted a KEA. Consequently, many different measures were used to assess kindergarten readiness which makes cross-state comparisons impossible. Additionally, the timing of the kindergarten readiness assessment varied with some children assessed at the start of their kindergarten year, while others were assessed at the end of preschool by their preschool teacher.

[13] Meloy, B., Gardner, M., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). Untangling the evidence on preschool effectiveness: Insights for policymakers. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Grantees were not required to collect and report KEA results for children who did not attend their PDG programs. Hence, comparisons of PDG attendees with comparable peers (i.e., a control group) are not available. Furthermore, the quality and reliability of the data cannot be verified. The only reasonable comparisons that can be made are between the 2017 and 2018 data of each grantee.

The kindergarten readiness data for PDG grantees is presented in Table 5. Some grantees assessed all eligible children they served, while others only assessed a sample of the children they served. The method of data collection – all children or a sampling – is indicated in Table 5 along with the number of children assessed and the percentage of children identified as "ready" per the data reported in grantees' 2017 and 2018 APRs. The caveats and data limitations presented above should be kept in mind when interpreting these data.

Beyond the Numbers...

"I can definitely see a difference in the cognitive and social readiness of the children who went to [PDG supported] preschool."
New Jersey Kindergarten Teacher

"The [PDG] grant has had an incredibly positive impact...Our Kindergarten Screening data show a 20 percent increase in the number of letters students can identify and a 16 percent reduction in the number of students we are flagging for immediate intervention."
School Administrator in Maine

Table 5. Percentage of Children Served in PDG Programs Who Are Ready for Kindergarten

PDG Grantees That Assessed All Children They Served by Reporting Year

Grantee	2017 APR			2018 APR		
	Actual number of children served	Number who are ready for kindergarten	Percent of children served who are ready	Actual number of children served	Number who are ready for kindergarten	Percent of children served who are ready
Alabama	13,327	9,996	75.0%	15,240	9,621	63.1%
Arizona	2,262	2,066	91.3%	2,872	2,364	82.3%
Arkansas	2,671	2,670	100.0%	2,785	2,785	100.0%
Connecticut[1]						
Hawaii	117	101	86.3%	241	216	89.6%
Illinois	4,029	3,413	84.7%	4,029	804	20.0%
Maine	303	274	90.4%	464	284	61.2%
New Jersey	1,338	1,208	90.3%	1,929	1,236	64.1%
New York	2,371	1,472	62.1	Used	Sampling	
Rhode Island[2]				1,080	952	88.1%
Tennessee	4,228	1,989	47.0%	3,740	1,689	45.2%

PDG Grantees That Used Sampling by Reporting Year

Grantee	2017 APR			2018 APR		
	Actual number of children served	Number who are ready for kindergarten	Percent of children served who are ready	Actual number of children served	Number who are ready for kindergarten	Percent of children served who are ready
Louisiana[3]				1,275	525	53.7%
Maryland	3,530	1,367	39.1%	4,263	1,676	46.0%
Massachusetts	752	575	78.6%	763	488	76.2%
Montana	763	668	72.9%	1,000	783	74.5%
Nevada	953	794	59.7%	2,588	2,711	67.5%
New York	Assessed	All		2,371	1,991	72.1%
Vermont	341	148	70.9%	448	283	79.5%
Virginia	3,029	1,325	66.9%	3,454	1,398	63.3%

NOTES: [1] The Connecticut State Department of Education has not field tested its new KEA; therefore, data are not available.
[2] Rhode Island did not report kindergarten readiness data in its 2017 APR.
[3] Louisiana did not report kindergarten readiness data in its 2017 APR.

SOURCES: Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2018; Grantee 2017 APR Workbooks

PDG GRANTEES' PROMISING PRACTICES

The PDG Grants Program increased children's access to quality preschool opportunities and families' access to comprehensive services. PDG funding also enabled grantees to develop or enhance policies and practices that have the potential to inform and advance the work of states, communities, and the early childhood field. A sampling of these "promising practices" is presented in this section of the report and organized around six categories:

- Professional Development which includes coaching, cultivating leaders, and workforce policies;
- Inclusion of children with disabilities, and social and emotional supports provided all children;
- Partnerships with families and with early childhood education programs;
- Initiatives to support the Birth-Third Grade continuum;
- Program Evaluation; and
- Sustainability.

It should be noted that the examples presented do not in any way constitute a complete list of all the accomplishments PDG grantees had, nor are they limited to efforts supported solely with PDG funding. For a more complete listing of PDG grantees' accomplishments and promising practices, please refer to the individual PDG State Profiles in Appendix A.

Professional Development

Providing quality professional development opportunities was a key component of grantees' PDG implementation. Professional development is a strategy used to enhance the knowledge and skills of teachers and leaders and, ultimately, promote children's learning and kindergarten readiness skills. PDG grantees provided various types of professional development opportunities ranging from summer institutes and coursework, to CoPs. Coaching was one strategy nearly all PDG grantees provided. Coaching "capitalizes on a teacher's growing expertise by providing [the teacher] opportunities to reflect on current practices and identify new areas of development."[14] PDG grantees implemented different coaching models although these diverse models included common elements such as:

- Enhancing teacher effectiveness as a goal,
- Implementing coaching interactions informed by child progress and program quality data,
- Incorporating and nurturing reflective practice, and
- Supporting subgrantee leaders as well as teachers.

The coaching models Alabama, the Tennessee Metro Nashville Public Schools, and Montana employed are highlighted here.

> "The coaching program is right on target. The teachers have resources coming into their classroom every month, a different set of eyes, a different view on things. It is a very positive [process] and the teachers gain a lot from the Coaches. If we could replicate anything, I would love to replicate the coaching."
> *Community Agency Director, Alabam*

Alabama's ***Reflective Coaching (ARC) Model*** was developed nearly 20 years ago. It is a tiered coaching system with three levels of intensity and support: full coaching, modified coaching, and supplemental coaching. The level of coaching support teachers receive is dependent on their individual needs. The Reflective Coaching Cycle includes joint planning, focused observations, consensus/action, reflection, and feedback. Each coach provides onsite coaching for up to 15 teachers. Coaches use an adapted version of the ***Devereau Reflective Checklist for Teaching Practices*** (DECA-P) to observe teachers (N.B., The DECA-P aligns well with the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale or ECERS). ARC relies on data from observations, data from formative assessments of child progress, and data from CLASS to focus teachers' and coaches' joint goal setting. While data are important in the ARC model, building relationships is considered paramount to successful coaching interactions. Alabama has made large investments in coaching and the ARC model. As of 2018, there were 91 coaches serving 18,756 children statewide. An additional 14 coaches, specialized in supporting the implementation of the Pyramid Model for children's social and emotional development are part of the statewide ARC system.

14 PDG TA Center (2016). Promising Practices: Coaching. Promising Practices: Coaching

Tennessee's Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) developed the Reflective Coaching Framework. ***The Reflective Coaching Framework*** relies on three frameworks:

- My Teaching Partner (Teachstone)
- Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (Teachstone)
- Professional Learning Communities

> "The training and skills received during their training made my preschool teachers second to none in their knowledge of early childhood development."
> *School Principal, New Jersey*

As with Alabama's coaching model, the ***Reflective Coaching Framework*** is informed by data collected from CLASS and Teaching Strategies GOLD child progress assessments. Additionally, MNPS utilizes ECERS and the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) to assess classroom environment and adult-child interactions. The results of these assessments guide observations.

Montana's coaching model adopted a more systems approach. Montana implemented a three-part coaching model that included a team of content-specific regional specialists, consultants, and instructional coaches. Members of the team focused on three broad areas: (1) supporting subgrantees' development of leadership teams, (2) coaching to enhance instructional practices and classroom environments, and (3) supporting programs' family engagement coordinators. This systems approach was designed to nurture the development of leaders, teachers, and key family engagement staff. The implementation of Montana's model was made possible through the collaboration of the state's PDG co-leads; the Office of Public Instruction provided the teacher and leadership coaching and the Department of Public Health and Human Services provided the family engagement coaches.

> "Our PD and coaching is based on the concept of 'connection before correction' and the importance of establishing relationships before change is possible…teachers are beginning to feel they have more tools in their toolbox for hard-to-handle behaviors and have seen behaviors decrease throughout the year."
> *Coach, Virginia*

PDG professional development opportunities were not limited to teachers. Several PDG grantees provided leaders with coaching, institutes, and trainings. For example, **Tennessee** MNPS principals of schools with PDG classrooms attended a summer Early Learning Institute two consecutive years to learn about child development, developmentally appropriate teaching, early childhood environments, early learning standards, etc. These MNPS school principals established their own Professional Learning Community. To further support school principals' understanding of early learning practices, MNPS developed a Walkthrough Tool aligned with the state's Pre-K Expectations for principals to use at the start of the school year.

Connecticut's *PK-3 Leadership Program* is a credit-bearing leadership program that was collaboratively developed by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC), the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education, and the State Department of Education. OEC provided initial funding for this leadership program. The PK-3 Leadership Program is intended for school principals and superintendents, program coordinators including childcare directors, and teacher leaders. The PK-3 Leadership Program brochure[15] for the 2020-2021 session provides additional details about this professional development opportunity.

> "Over the past four years, the staff… have had..a variety of professional development workshops ranging from topics in social emotional development (Pyramid Model), classroom environment, DAP instruction, and the Intentional Teaching series."
> *Principal, New York*

Hawaii's annual P-3 Symposium for leadership teams from all PDG subgrantee charter schools employed a different approach to cultivating early learning leaders. Each charter school identified and sent a team that included the charter school's principal/director, charter school governing board member, teacher leaders, family members, and community leaders to a one- or two-day session. Inviting a charter school's leadership team as well as members of the community, faculty, and children's families enables team members to learn jointly, support and learn from each other, share their perspectives, and raise any questions or concerns they have. The specific topics of each symposium varied to some degree. For example, the April 2016 symposium focused on the Family Partnership Framework. However, several symposia were devoted to understanding the P-3 approach, providing a review of relevant research, and fostering learning about P-3 implementation strategies.

15 Connecticut's PK-3 Leadership Program brochure is available at https://pk3leadership.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1258/2019/11/Brochure-2020-2021.pdf

Several PDG states enacted policies to strengthen their early childhood workforce. The workforce policies Alabama and Louisiana developed and/or implemented are spotlighted here. The **Alabama** legislature established pay parity for all First Class Pre-K preschool teachers, regardless of their teaching settings (i.e., private and public schools, Head Start, and childcare centers). Alabama credits the PDG grant with its pay parity requirement that preschool teachers are paid salaries comparable to K-12 teachers as the impetus for its new policy.

> "The [PDG] grant has given me the opportunity and incentive to further my education and to become a licensed teacher, which in turn has benefited the children enrolled in the program and the program itself."
> *Teacher, Vermont*

Louisiana developed a *Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway* to unify, align, and strengthen the birth to kindergarten (B2K) early childhood workforce system. In many states, the credentials required for teachers vary depending on the early childhood setting in which they teach. In Louisiana, teachers in childcare centers weren't required to have any credentials to be a teacher. Louisiana developed a step-by-step career pathway[16] which includes stackable courses that lead to a certificate, an associate degree, and a baccalaureate degree (BA). The first rung on the new career ladder is an Ancillary Teaching Certificate which is based on a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. With additional coursework and experience, teachers can obtain a B2K associate degree and then a B2K BA and teaching certificate after passing early childhood content and pedagogy exams. The courses are stackable so that the three CDA courses count towards the 10 associate and BA courses. Louisiana proposed requiring all childcare teachers in licensed, publicly funded programs to obtain a B2K Ancillary Teaching Certificate or higher.

Inclusion and Supports

One of the PDG elements of preschool quality is the inclusion of children with disabilities in PDG-supported classrooms. Federal and state laws protect the rights of young children with disabilities to participate in programs that are the child's "least restrictive environment." In 2015, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Education (the Departments) issued a joint policy statement[17] on increasing the inclusion of children with disabilities in ***quality*** early childhood programs. Beyond compliance with federal and state laws, including children with disabilities in quality preschool programs produces positive outcomes for children with and without disabilities.

> "The grant impacted our special education preschool population. In our PDG classrooms we were allowed up to seven special education students. These students were previously in 2.5-hour self-contained programs. With the..PDG classrooms we were able to ensure [these] students were in their least restrictive environment and [could] socialize with their…peers.."
> *School Administrator, New Jersey*

Overall, PDG grantees met the PDG criterion for inclusion by enrolling children with disabilities at the national average rate (i.e., 6.4 percent) or the state's average, whichever was greater across all four years of their grant. Some PDG states far exceeded this criterion (e.g., Vermont at 24.9 percent, Maine at 16.1 percent, New Jersey at 14.2 percent). The strategies three PDG states – Nevada, Illinois, and Arizona – used to increase inclusion in high quality early childhood programs is discussed in this section.

> "I have been extremely pleased with the preschool program. My child, who is high functioning autistic, has blossomed in so many ways. She is more social, has more language skills, pursues more interests (like coloring and dress up) and is following directions more often than not. I feel very supported by the staff and feel that my child is a priority to all involved.."
> *Parent, Virginia*

Equipping teachers and administrators with knowledge of the research on inclusion and of quality inclusionary practices is a common thread among the professional development opportunities for subgrantees in Nevada and in many PDG states. **Nevada** established a statewide Community of Practice (CoP) on inclusion following a statewide conference on the topic. The CoP explored the Itinerant Special Education model which brings specialized services to children attending preschool with other children rather than requiring the child to attend a self-contained classroom. Funding can be a huge barrier to including children with disabilities in quality preschool classes. Nevada supported its subgrantees to appropriately braid special education funds and demonstrated the strategy to other PDG grantees. The state showed how to appropriately braid special education funds with PDG funds and other funding

[16] Louisiana Believes, Early Childhood Teaching Policies https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/ecce-ac---12-8-presentation-on-proposed-teacher-policies.pdf?sfvrsn=2

[17] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education, 2015. Policy Statement on Inclusion of Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood Programs. https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/earlylearning/joint-statement-full-text.pdf

sources to enable PDG eligible children with disabilities to receive the services they need while participating in a quality preschool program with their typically developing peers.

> "Our children are socially as well as academically prepared for entering school."
> *Preschool Teacher, Alabama*

Illinois established the Award of Excellence (AoE) for the Inclusion of Children with Special Needs as a strategy for promoting inclusion and recognizing the quality inclusionary practices of early childhood programs. The state used PDG funds to support programs to meet the AoE requirements. To achieve the AoE, program administrators must demonstrate that they utilize practices which lead to the successful inclusion of children in natural environments and which engage families. They must also provide staff with professional development on high-quality inclusionary practices and collaborate with community partners. Early childhood programs benefit by the recognition the AoE bestows, but more importantly, children with disabilities and their families reap the benefits of participating in an inclusive, quality early childhood program.

Arizona implemented various strategies for increasing the inclusion of young children with disabilities in early childhood programs (e.g., professional development, onsite coaching and supports). Their efforts translated into an 11.6 percent inclusion rate in PDG supported programs in Year 4 of the grant. Arizona analyzed and reported statewide data on inclusive preschool classrooms. The results of these reports led to the creation of an Early Childhood Task Force on Inclusion involving a broad stakeholder group to collaboratively work on the goal of increasing the number of children with disabilities who receive services in inclusion classrooms. The Task Force worked on four strategies: (1) support school and family partnerships, (2) braid funding streams, (3) build awareness of inclusion through partnerships, and (4) offer professional development opportunities. The Task Force developed a practice profile tool designed to improve partnerships between families and educators.

> "Students were in classrooms that were receiving a substantial amount of support. Coaches, and behavior specialists helped children be successful in the classroom and helped teachers create trauma sensitive classrooms that supported many at-risk children."
> *Local PDG Lead, Massachusetts*

While inclusion strategies seek to expand access, expulsion, and suspension policies seek to remove children who are already enrolled in early childhood programs. In 2014, the Departments issued a policy statement on ***Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings.***[18] To support families and programs, some PDG state grantees implemented policies and practices to keep children in preschool. Preschoolers are expelled at three times the rate of children in grades K-12 and the preschoolers who are expelled are overwhelmingly African-American and male.[19] Expulsion has a disproportionately adverse effect on young children since the "early years set the trajectory for the relationships and success [children] will experience for the rest of their lives."[20] The root cause of many preschoolers' expulsions is challenging behaviors. PDG grantees have sought to address expulsion in early childhood by developing policies designed to reduce or eliminate preschool expulsions and/or by implementing initiatives which support children's social and emotional development and equip them to use appropriate behaviors.

> "The [PDG supported] learning center teaches my daughter more than her ABCs and 123s. They teach her how to interact with other students. My daughter has learned how to behave, how to stand up for herself when something isn't okay."
> *Parent, Nevada*

Both Illinois and Connecticut passed legislation related to expulsions in early childhood. In 2017, the **Illinois'** legislature passed a law prohibiting the expulsion of children from state-funded programs for children from birth to age five. The law requires developing a plan for children exhibiting challenging behaviors, as well as a tracking system to gather information on the transitions children with challenging behaviors make. **Connecticut's** 2015 law prohibits out-of-school suspension for preschoolers attending state-funded preschool programs, and only allows out-of-school suspensions for children in kindergarten to second grade in "rare situations." Prohibiting expulsions is only a first step; the child, the child's family, and the early childhood program staff need to be supported. Connecticut provided the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) to its PDG subgrantees. ECCP is an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation program that includes consultation and training for teachers, engagement with the child's family, capacity building, and treatment planning for individual children and their families.

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[18] U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, (2014). Policy statement on expulsion and suspension policies in early childhood settings. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/policy-statement-ece-expulsions-suspensions.pdf

[19] Gilliam, W. S. (2005). Prekindergartners left behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten systems. Foundation for Child Development. Retrieved from http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/explore/policy_docs/prek_expulsion.pdf

[20] U.S. Department of Education/U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014, ***Op. cit.***

Vermont employed a systems approach to reducing children's challenging behaviors through its Early Multi-Tiered System of Supports (eMTSS). The key components of the Early MTSS are: (1) strong system support, (2) provision of a high-quality inclusive setting, (3) well-designed professional development, (4) and a comprehensive and functional data system. Vermont collected data on the implementation of Early MTSS and reported it has had a positive impact on children, teachers, and early childhood programs.

> "Through the [PDG] grant we have been able to employ two part-time contracted coaches skilled in eMTSS, TPOT, and other best practices, along with building capacity in our program by training other teachers and special educators to also be eMTSS coaches."
> *Early Childhood Coordinator, Vermont*

Partnerships with Families and Early Childhood Programs

Collaboration and partnership are key elements of any well-designed system of early childhood programs and services. Two categories of partnership were evident among PDG grantees and their subgrantees. The first type was supportive partnerships with families, and the second type was the collaborative cross-sector relationships most PDG programs cultivated with other early childhood programs.

The saying that "the parent is the child's first teacher" encapsulates the important role families have in their children's early learning and development. In recognition of the importance of family engagement, the Departments issued a policy statement, ***Family Engagement from the Early Years to the Early Grades.***[21] Grantees took different approaches in partnering with and engaging families, but all reflected the prominent role families play in their children's lives. The approaches Arkansas and Connecticut used are highlighted here.

Arkansas' approach to establishing partnerships with families included three interrelated efforts: (1) completing the Arkansas Family Engagement Framework guide in January 2016 and providing professional development on the guide; (2) employing ten qualified Family Engagement Specialists to strengthen subgrantees' family engagement work, offer home visits, and support transition to kindergarten planning; and (3) creating pathways to the national Family Service Manager and Family Service Train the Trainer credentials. Arkansas' multi-pronged family engagement approach addressed the current needs of PDG subgrantees and built the state's capacity to fulfill the future needs of Arkansas' Better Chance state preschool programs to support and authentically engage families. The value the Family Engagement Specialists added was verified by the results of a survey Arkansas conducted asking subgrantees to indicate which PDG-funded components they would sustain beyond the grant. Eight subgrantees said they had found ways to fund their family engagement specialist position; the other eight subgrantees indicated that they wanted to sustain the family specialist but were unable to find other funding sources at the time of the survey.

> "I've been able to help rural, low income families overcome previous negative feelings about school and become more open with their child's teacher, relaxed in the school building, and more supportive of their child's education."
> *VPI+ Family Engagement Coordinator, Virginia*

Connecticut's strategy for enhancing partnerships with families was two-fold. First, the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood created a state level Family Engagement Specialist position to support subgrantees' family engagement work. The Family Engagement Specialist convened quarterly meetings with all PDG subgrantees to share resources, provide TA, and enable subgrantees to learn from each other. Secondly, Connecticut adopted and promoted the ***Parent Teacher Home Visits*** (PTHV)[22] model among its PDG subgrantees. The PTHV model consists of voluntary home visits teachers conduct twice a year. The first teacher visit is held in the summer or fall and focuses on the teacher getting to know the child and the family sharing its experiences, dreams and hopes for the child. The second visit occurs in the winter or spring and focuses on supporting the child academically. In between the two visits, the teacher and family engage in ongoing communications. Prior to going on any home visits, teachers receive three hours of training on conducting home visits in accordance with the PTHV model. Connecticut provided training to both preschool and kindergarten teachers. Research on the model indicates that it is a "transformative high-impact family engagement strategy." In order to build capacity and sustainability, some educators completed the Train-the-Trainer sequence so they could provide PTHV trainings. Feedback from PDG subgrantees implementing PTHV were very positive and indicated they planned to

[21] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education, 2016. *Policy Statement on Family Engagement: From the Early Years to the Early Grades.* Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/files/policy-statement-on-family-engagement.pdf

[22] For more information on the model, visit the PTHV http://www.pthvp.org/what-we-do/pthv-model/

continue using the model to build partnerships with families after the end of PDG funding.

> "[With PDG support] an overall total of 107 additional early childhood staff have earned the Family Service Credential (FSC) certification in the state of Arkansas…Others have completed the Train-the-Trainer (TTT) FSC certification and are now certified trainers for this initiative enabling sustainability of this work for years to come."
> *PDG Grant Manager, Arkansas*

The aim of the PDG Grants Program was to supplement and not supplant existing early childhood programs. Many of the states utilized a mixed delivery preschool model that included partnerships with Head Start, child care centers, public, and private schools. At the local level, these partnerships led to greater coordination, more efficiencies by building on existing programs, and opportunities for sharing resources and expertise. Additionally, the mixed delivery model provided PDG eligible families with more choice of programs that could better serve their individual needs. A brief overview of Maine's public school/Head Start partnerships and of Massachusetts' community collaborations is provided to illustrate some promising practices in this area of partnerships.

When **Maine** developed standards for its state preschool program, it required public schools seeking to open or expand a preschool classroom to first demonstrate they had coordinated with Head Start and other early childhood programs in the community and considered the needs of working families. This policy incentivized public schools to establish partnerships with local Head Start programs. These partnerships tend to be successful when the leadership of both partners "gets it" and there is regular and open communication, respect for what each entity brings to the table, and knowledge of braiding Head Start funding with state preschool and PDG dollars. A Memorandum of Understanding ensures all partners are aware and have agreed to the terms of the partnership. Local communities implement the partnership model that works for them; some are co-located, some share staff, and most share comprehensive wraparound services and their unique expertise. Maine's PDG grant not only funded the expansion of preschool "seats" among the partners, it also supported the capacity of both partners through joint professional development. Participants in Maine's Head Start and school district partnerships have identified numerous benefits derived from their partnerships such as: (1) creating more heterogeneous social and economic classes; (2) increasing mental health and special education support; (3) targeting and serving more at-risk children and families; (4) establishing district-wide alignment of screenings, assessments, and curricula; and (5) improving transition to kindergarten. Partnerships also have challenges, often because of the differences between the Head Start and public school systems (e.g., conflicting regulations, staff compensation levels, values). Partners are able to successfully address these challenges when they have trusting relationships and faced the issues openly.

The approach **Massachusetts** used to implement its PDG grant sought to cultivate partnerships between public schools and community early childhood programs. The subgrantees in the five high need communities the state targeted were required to partner with local child care centers or Head Start programs in order to expand PDG eligible families' access to preschool. These partnerships employed a collaborative approach to planning, decision-making, and program management, and built upon the strengths of each partner (e.g., comprehensive services, data collection and analysis, family engagement, curriculum). The partnerships also increased communication and shared resources such as PDG funded professional development opportunities.

Birth-Third Grade Continuum

> "The [PDG] changed the way we view early childhood education and created a district initiative to become developmentally appropriate."
> *Director of Curriculum, New Jersey*

An aligned, coherent Birth through Third Grade (B-3) system reduces achievement gaps; focuses on the whole child; facilitates successful transitions; results in aligned learning standards, curriculum, instruction and assessments; facilitates communication and data sharing; and engages families as partners throughout the B-3 continuum. PDG grantees engaged in various B-3 efforts from aligning learning standards and practices along the B-3 continuum (e.g., Arkansas, Vermont, Rhode Island, Montana, New York) to developing B-3 leaders (e.g., Alabama, Hawaii, New Jersey). The B-3 work New Jersey, New York, and Rhode Island accomplished is spotlighted in this section.

New Jersey is committed to promoting and supporting a B-3 approach to early learning. The B-3 approach is seen as an effective strategy for preventing fadeout of the gains children make in a quality preschool program. New Jersey was an early proponent of B-3. In 2015, it developed the ***First through Third Grade Implementation Guidelines.*** Previously, the state had

developed practice guidelines for preschool and kindergarten. New Jersey used PDG funding to concentrate on preschool to kindergarten transition and on aligning kindergarten and preschool practices through three strategies: (1) hiring a Kindergarten Specialist to support kindergarten teachers in using the ***New Jersey Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines***, (2) purchasing developmentally appropriate materials for kindergarten classes, and (3) funding six kindergarten coaches to provide onsite, ongoing support to kindergarten teachers.

New York has embraced a Pre-Kindergarten to third grade (P-3) approach to early education and launched several initiatives to align standards, instruction, curriculum and assessment practices. It developed a video series titled, ***NYSED Office of Early Learning Video Series: A Guide for Educators Serving Children in Pre-Kindergarten through 2nd Grade*** to show quality learning environments and the instructional cycle. The state developed training manuals to support these videos. New York also created a ***P-3 Instructional Toolkit*** designed to help build capacity and strengthen effective P-3 instruction by using the standards and instructional cycle, while ensuring developmentally appropriate, responsive and effective teaching and leadership. New York defined three goals to guide its P-3 efforts: (1) alignment with a clear path to embrace P-3 work; (2) connection of systems; and (3) collaboration to develop a P-3 plan. The P-3 approach and the ***Framework for Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating P-3 Approaches*** were first introduced at a Leadership Institute in 2016, and continues to be a main topic throughout professional development offerings. District leaders were asked to review their current P-3 practices and identify areas for growth and develop goals in one of several areas (e.g., transition across grades, joint professional development, developmentally appropriate instruction, etc.).

> **"We were surprised by the enthusiasm of the administrators and…teachers about…bringing back play to our P-3 classrooms."**
> *Prekindergarten Administrator after attending New York P-3 Conference*

Rhode Island's B-3 efforts focused on the junction between preschool and kindergarten. Rhode Island provided joint professional development to teachers at the preschool and kindergarten levels on the Boston Public School curriculum model to introduce and enhance developmentally appropriate practices in both kindergarten and preschool. Aligned curriculum and instructional and assessment practices between preschool and kindergarten facilitates children's transition to kindergarten and makes for a smoother and more successful experience in kindergarten and across the elementary years.

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation can be used for a variety of purposes including describing progress made, identifying opportunities for improvement, informing future strategies and activities, and documenting outcomes to share with stakeholders, policymakers, and funders. The evaluation requirements for the PDG Grants Program were relatively minimal. Grantees were required to monitor state-level and subgrantee activities, the number and characteristics of the children and families served, and collect some implementation data. All PDG grantees complied with these evaluation requirements; however, some grantees exceeded the minimum and supported more robust implementation, outcomes, impact, and cost-benefit evaluations. Examples of the different types of program evaluations PDG grantees conducted are presented here.

> **"The [PDG] evaluation and its multitude of assessment tools, various collectors, and data collected, shows that Maine's Preschool Expansion Grant project works. Children clearly improved their school readiness skills."**
> *Linda Warren, President, Early Childhood Associates*

Montana engaged in ongoing, formative evaluations that could yield actionable data to inform instruction and continuous program improvement. These data included results from child progress assessments, assessments of classroom quality and teacher interactions, and observational data. Montana promoted and supported PDG subgrantees to implement Continuous Improvement goal setting practices that led to the intentional use of program-wide data-based decision making. These practices resulted in the alignment of program-wide goals, teacher professional learning, and child outcome goals. Montana also contracted with outside experts to complete more in-depth implementation and outcomes evaluations.

Some PDG states (e.g., Maine, Rhode Island, Virginia) contracted with an independent research firm to conduct a comprehensive external evaluation to measure the impacts of their PDG program on children's school readiness and later academic outcomes. For example, the **Virginia** Department of Education worked with an outside evaluator to conduct both

a formative and summative evaluation of its PDG program, the Virginia Preschool Initiative Plus (VPI+). The VPI+ evaluation included implementation, outcome, and cost analysis evaluations. A few of the findings[23] from these evaluations are:

- Children who attended VPI+ demonstrated a gain of 20.8 months in early literacy skill development and 15.4 months in math skill development within a 12-month timeframe
- VPI+ participation increased kindergarten readiness skills
- VPI+ benefited children in high-needs communities across all school readiness domains including approaches to learning and social and emotional development

> "[Results showed] most VPI+ programs met Virginia Quality thresholds for teacher-child interactions...with a higher proportion of VPI+ classrooms meeting the thresholds...in Year 3 than in Year 1."
> *Independent Evaluator, Virginia*

A spotlight on **Louisiana's** development of "performance profiles" to inform families as they consider where to enroll their children, and to inform communities to guide program improvement goes beyond the PDG programs, but mention of this innovative strategy is warranted. The performance profiles are the product of the state's new early childhood program unified rating system. The rating system has two components: (1) ratings that relate to positive child outcomes (i.e., adult-child interactions as measured by CLASS), and (2) information on classroom best practices (e.g., curriculum implementation, child assessments of learning, teacher credentials). Each program's rating is converted to a specific number of stars. Louisiana's online ***School and Center Finder*** helps families make informed decisions about education and care programs for their children. The Finder provides an overview of schools and centers within a geographic area and the number of stars each program has based on its performance profile.

Sustaining the Promise of PDG

The PDG Grants Program funded four-year grants. Many of the states had enough PDG funding available at the end of Year 4 to secure no-cost extensions and extend their work into a fifth year. Still, the challenge of sustaining the increased preschool slots and the PDG quality elements after the funding ended was somewhat abated though not eliminated. A few PDG grantees were able to sustain all or most of the preschool slots PDG funding created along with all or most of the PDG quality elements intact (e.g., Alabama. Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Rhode Island). However, many PDG grantees were not as fortunate. They needed to identify which PDG quality elements had the greatest impacts, prioritize them, and plan how to sustain them. For example, was onsite coaching the most potent strategy for increasing teacher effectiveness? Or, did providing comprehensive services result in the greatest gains for children? Sustainability is always challenging, but some PDG grantees were able to implement strategies that yielded positive results. A few of these sustainability strategies are summarized here.

> "Our school-based programs which housed the [PDG] grant program for all 4 years, will continue to have a full day, full week program for 4-year old's. There are limited full day, full week options in this community."
> *School Administrator, Vermont*

Alabama built sustainability into the proposal it submitted to the PDG Grants Program. Alabama's plan was to use PDG funds to expand access to its ***First Class Pre-K*** state preschool program. The federal funds supported the creation of new slots in the first year or two of the grant and then those slots transitioned to state and local funding the follow year. PDG funds were then used to create more new preschool slots. At the end of the PDG grant period, Alabama's new slots were all funded with state and local dollars. Also, since many of the PDG quality elements were part of the First Class Pre-K model, these were sustained as well. Alabama's success was dependent on the state legislature increasing its annual appropriation for First Class. Alabama garnered support for First Class and the PDG expansion through a multi-tiered approach to communication that brings business and advocacy leaders together to promote preschool growth and quality. The critical components of Alabama's communications include informational videos, a statewide conference, longitudinal preschool to third grade outcome data, and community mapping to understand saturation levels.

The approach **Rhode Island** took to sustain the new slots PDG funding added to its state preschool program (known as State Pre-K) was comparable to Alabama's approach and equally successful. The Rhode Island legislature gradually increased its appropriation for State Pre-K to cover the costs of the PDG supported expansion and to support continuation of the PDG quality elements.

[23] The VPI+ evaluation report can be accessed at http://vpiplus.org/report/annual.php

Leaders of **Hawaii's** PDG program began work on sustainability from the very start of their PDG grant. They used a variety of strategies to get the word out about the PDG-funded preschools and the benefits of quality early education to two key audiences, the general public and policymakers. The strategies included one-page information sheets with program data and research citations, brief videos featuring families of enrolled children talking about the program, and a publicity and media campaign. Perhaps the most effective strategy Hawaii used was to build ongoing relationships with key state policymakers. Hawaii's efforts were effective. In 2019 the state legislature approved a bill to fund all the preschool classrooms the PDG grant had established in public charter schools.

> "The PDG grant has been the impetus for change in Washington County. It was the beginning of our expansion to full-day Pre-K services and has been the encouragement for our leadership to support full-day, universal Pre-K within our county."
> *Dr. Stacy Henson, Coordinator for Early Learning, Maryland*

Maryland was successful in getting legislative support to sustain the increased access to quality preschool programs the PDG grant created. In 2018, HB 1415 was passed by the Maryland legislature and signed into law. HB 1415 provides state funding for preschool beginning in FY2020 at the PDG grant's FY2019 level thereby filling the void left when the PDG grant sunsets. In addition, **Nevada** used its success in implementing the PDG-funded ***Nevada Ready! Preschool*** program to leverage state funding and continue many of the preschool slots created by the PDG grant and maintain some of the PDG quality elements.

Some PDG states were not able to sustain their PDG work at the state level, but their subgrantees might have been able to sustain the preschool slots and/or PDG quality elements at the local level. For example, two **Vermont** school districts are using local funds to continue offering a full-day quality preschool program instead of the 10 hour per week state funded preschool program. The districts made this decision after administrators saw the positive impacts and learning outcomes for children in preschool five full days a week.

> "As Arkansas had hoped, the state was able to share some good news with PDG subgrantees in moving forward beyond the end of the PDG funding period and into the 2019-2020 program year. Additional funding through the Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program and Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) will help to sustain 1268 of the 1381 expansion slots."
> *PDG Grant Manager, Arkansas*

Over the course of the PDG Grants Program, grantees developed, implemented, and enhanced numerous innovative and promising practices, too many to delve into within this summary report. Among these promising practices are **Maryland's** partnership with the Judy Centers to provide comprehensive services to families, and the state's ***Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework: Maryland's Vision for Engaging Families with Young Children.*** In addition, the story of the efforts Virginia, New York, and other PDG states undertook to increase their rates for including children with disabilities in quality preschools offer valuable lessons. This brief Promising Practices section does not do adequate justice to all of the PDG grantees' accomplishments. It is hoped that the "promising practices" that were presented will prompt conversations, investigation, and more innovative practices.

CONCLUSION

The PDG Grants Program provided thousands of four-year-old children whose families' incomes were at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines the opportunity to attend a quality preschool program. These families lived in high-needs communities where quality preschool opportunities are sparse. PDG also defined what quality preschool is. Quality preschool means class sizes of 20 or fewer children, teacher-child ratios of at least one adult per 10 children, and curriculum aligned with state early learning standards that is culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate. Quality also means including children with disabilities, engaging families, providing comprehensive services to children and their families, supporting children's social and emotional development, and their physical and mental well-being. The results of program evaluations grantees conducted attest to the positive impacts these quality PDG preschool experiences have had on children's readiness for kindergarten and beyond.

The 18 PDG grantees also reaped the benefits of the PDG Grants Program. PDG funding helped grantees build the infrastructure and develop policies states need to provide quality preschool programs. Grantees aligned and enhanced their early learning and development standards and worked on facilitating preschool to kindergarten transitions through joint professional development and other strategies. PDG contributed to building the capacity of states' early childhood workforce through quality professional development, scholarships, and workforce policies (e.g., pay parity with K-12 teachers, aligned career pathways). PDG promoted the inclusion of children with disabilities in PDG classrooms; the programmatic, partnership, and financial strategies grantees used to pave the way to greater inclusion have now been established. PDG also fostered a culture of data collection and analysis to inform practice and continuous improvement. It supported aligning early childhood data with states' K-12 longitudinal data systems. These accomplishments and many others will continue long after the PDG sunsets.

In conclusion, the PDG Grants Program met its goals of increasing preschool access and program quality, and of supporting the kindergarten readiness of four-year-old children. The federal investment of nearly $1 billion produced several advances in state system development and capacity. PDG grantees' implementation of evidence-based criteria for quality preschool programs (e.g., class size, adult-child ratios, inclusion, comprehensive services, family engagement) demonstrated the value of these policies and practices. Additionally, the PDG investments enabled grantees to develop and professionalize their states' early childhood workforce, and to reach out to children and families with the highest needs.

APPENDIX A: PDG PROGRAM STATE PROFILES

Two-page profiles highlighting salient data and project features for each State Grantee arranged alphabetically.

ALABAMA

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 37,266

Total number of preschool slots* created: **10,578**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **26,688**

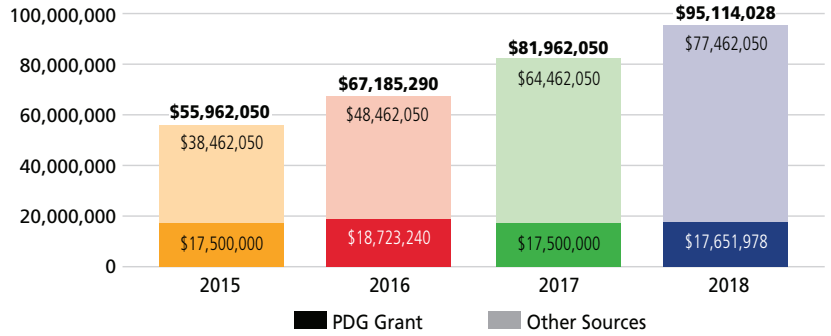
PDG grant supported **67** "high-need" Alabama counties

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"The PDG grant was a powerful factor in the tremendous growth of high-quality Pre-K in Alabama…The 'Alabama story of Pre-K' with the help of the Preschool Development Grant and support from the Governor and State Legislature is that of a highly sought-after early childhood program of excellence and truly beneficial investment with short- and long-term benefits."

Jeana Ross, Secretary, Department of Early Childhood EducationState Team

Alabama's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,375,218
Source: Alabama 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$71,375,218

ALABAMA'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$228,848,200

"I would highly recommend this program to friends/family because the kids are treated like kids and are able to explore and learn age appropriate skills and lessons… The classroom is fun and engaging, and the teachers are positive and supportive. The kids in this program will be better prepared for kindergarten."

PDG Parent

ALABAMA'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Increase access to quality Pre-K programs in high-need communities by adding **400 new classrooms** to serve an additional **7,200 children** over the course of the grant, and
- Further **develop and enhance infrastructure and capacity** attained through continued State allocations for preschool and the addition of PDG funds for the highest quality program of excellence.

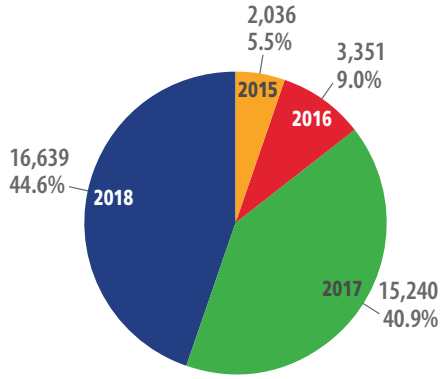
CHARACTERISTICS OF ALABAMA'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Built on existing state-funded preschool program, **First Class Pre-K (FCPK)**
- Used a diverse Pre-K delivery model
- Children's progress and readiness for kindergarten are measured by Teaching Strategies (TS) GOLD; CLASS measures **classroom quality** and **instructional effectiveness**
- **Eighteen** is the **recommended class size** with two adults, a teacher, and an assistant teacher
- Families complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3) **developmental screening tool**
- Partnership with **Help Me Grow** across the state

[1] Abstract – Alabama's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/alpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

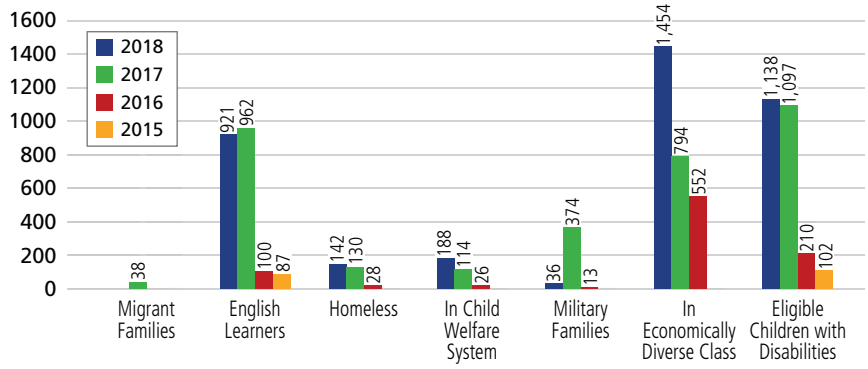
Total Number Enrolled = 37,266



Source: Alabama 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Alabama's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

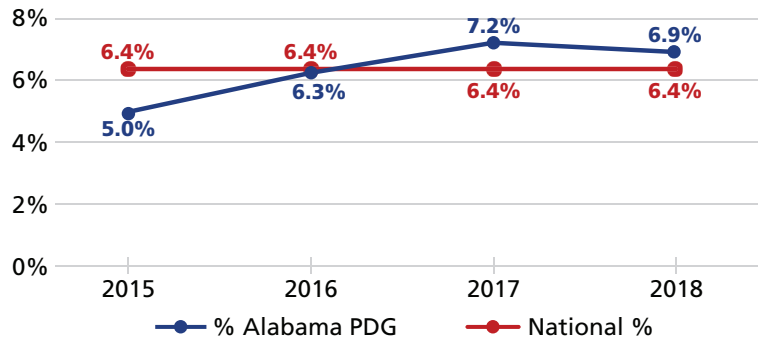
Alabama's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Alabama reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category is omitted in this chart. In 2015 APR, No Response (NR) was given for all categories ***except*** "English learners" and "Children with Disabilities." NR in 2016 & 2018 for "Migrant Families."

Source: Alabama 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Additionally, grantees needed to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Alabama made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Achieved pay parity with K–12 teachers** for all preschool teachers in First Class Pre-K's diverse delivery system (e.g., Head Start, childcare)
- **Maintained quality** as measured by meeting all 10 NIEER benchmarks **while scaling up FCPK** from serving 9% of the state's four-year-olds in 2013–2014 to 28.4% in 2018
- **Established two new options** for educators to **earn a Pre-K teaching certificate** (Birth to age 4)

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Sustainability Planning:** PDG funds were used to create new preschool slots and improve existing slots in the first year or two, then they transitioned from federal to state and local funding in the following year. The PDG grant leveraged state funding.
- **Alabama Reflective Coaching Model (ARC):** An onsite tiered coaching system for teachers that relies on data to inform practice. ARC includes: shared planning, observations by and of the teacher, and promotion of learners' reflections on practice. The state maintains a ratio of one Coach for every 15 classrooms.

PDG funds supported the expansion of *First Class Pre-K (FCPK)*. A rigorous evaluation of FCPK found children who participated in FCPK were MORE likely to be proficient in reading and math, and LESS likely to be retained in grade or chronically absent compared to comparable children who did not attend FCPK.

ARIZONA

A PDG DEVELOPMENT STATE

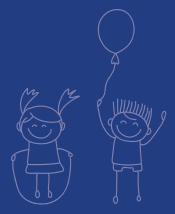
Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Arizona Department of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 9,505

Total number of preschool slots* created: **9,505**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **0**[1]

PDG grant supported **89** "high-need" Arizona communities

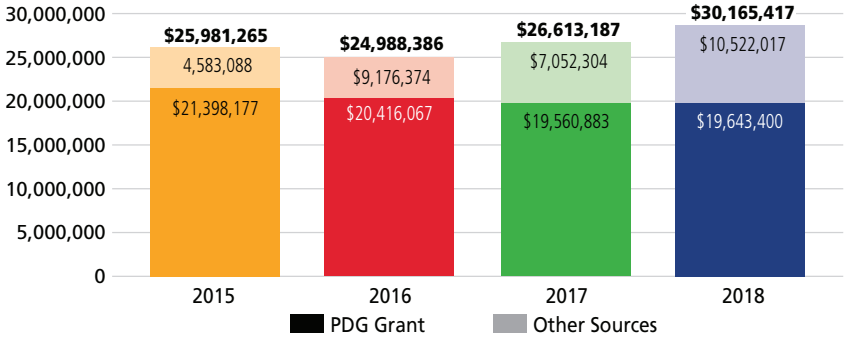


*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"[PDG has] led to the improvement of Arizona's early childhood care and education mixed delivery system…It is my belief Arizona's youngest citizens, their families, and the professionals supporting [them have] benefitted."

Governor Doug Ducey

Arizona's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: Year 4 PDG amount includes Supplemental Funds of $1,375,127
Source: Arizona 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$81,375,127

ARIZONA'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$26,729,728

"This is a development grant, and it allows us to do a lot of the infrastructure work that has to be in place before we can really start expanding the number of kids that are getting into these programs. So, it is a game-changer in that sense."

Kelly Murphy, Children's Action Alliance

ARIZONA'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[2]:

- Make **high-quality preschool programs more accessible** in high-needs communities (HNCs)
- **Increase** the access early childhood programs in HNCs have to Arizona's ***Quality First* system of early childhood supports** (e.g., inclusion coaching, mental health consultation, childcare health consultation)
- **Advance the collaborative, statewide Early Childhood Educator Professional Development System**, including improving the capacity within colleges and universities to offer robust early childhood education and early childhood special education programs
- **Align preschool data** with the State K-12 Longitudinal Data System (SLDS)

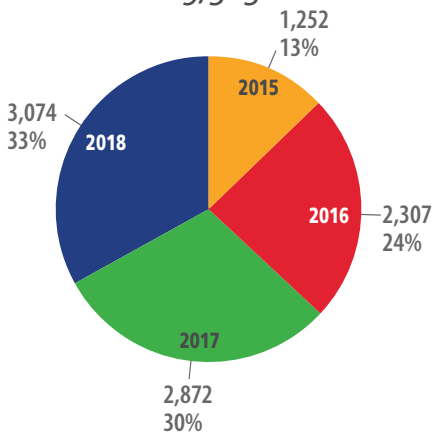
CHARACTERISTICS OF ARIZONA'S PDG PROGRAM:

- **Partnered with *First Things First*** (FTF), to improve the quality and scope of early learning in Arizona
- Offered a **mixed delivery model** (e.g., school districts, Head Start, childcare programs, charter schools)
- The **inclusion of children with disabilities in PDG classrooms** was a major goal. Subgrantees were required to enroll two children with disabilities for every 18 children they enrolled.
- **Measured children's progress** and readiness for kindergarten using Teaching Strategies (TS) GOLD
- Subgrantees used Arizona's ***Program Guidelines for High-quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten (PGHQ)***

[1] Arizona's PDG slots are all new slots since the state agency did not operate a state preschool program during the grant period.
[2] Abstract – Arizona's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/azpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

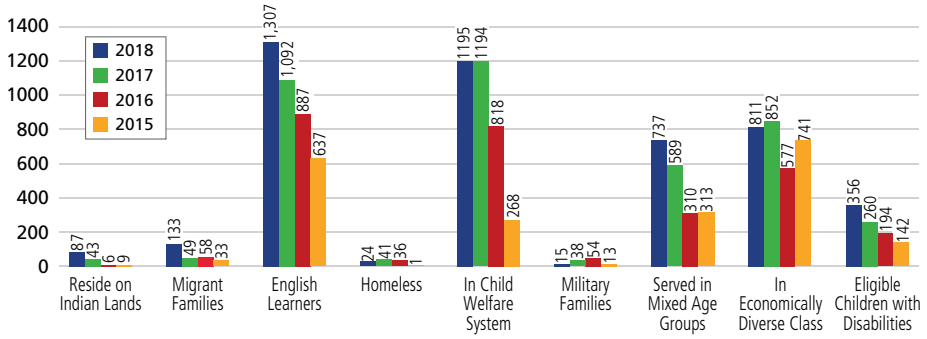
Total Number Enrolled = 9,505



Source: Arizona 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

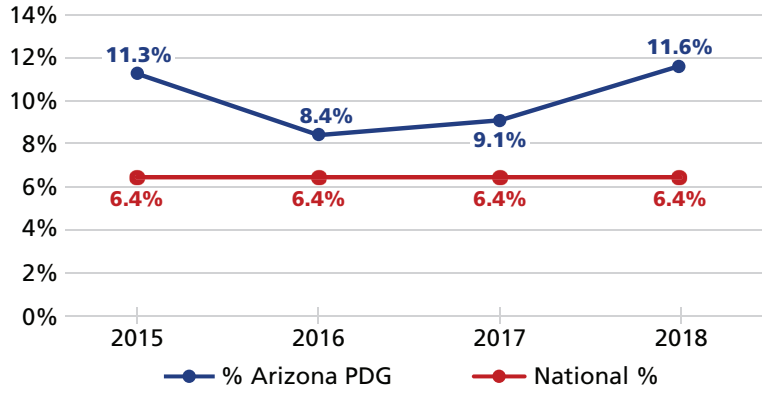
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Arizona's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Arizona's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Source: Arizona 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Arizona 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever is higher. The progress Arizona made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Increased access to quality preschool for a total of 9,505 eligible children and served a **large percentage of English learners**
- Strengthened the capacity of the state's early childhood workforce through **Professional Scholarships** and **targeted professional development**

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Inclusion of Children with Disabilities:** Convened an Early Childhood Task Force on Inclusion involving a broad range of stakeholder groups to jointly work on increasing inclusion in the state's preschool settings. The group developed a practice profile on improving partnerships between educators and families.
- **Qualitive Program Evaluation Process:** Partnered with a videographer to record participants' stories, and used photos and video recordings of conversations and interviews to evaluate their PDG program. This more culturally responsive process of documentation yielded valuable data.

Arizona made concerted and intentional efforts to increase the access children with disabilities had to quality preschool. These efforts included policies, professional development, convening an Inclusion Task Force, and providing educators with coaching and supports. The result was an 11.6% inclusion rate in PDG programs in Year 4 of the grant.

ARKANSAS

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Arkansas Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 11,155

Total number of preschool slots* created: **5,257**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **5,898**

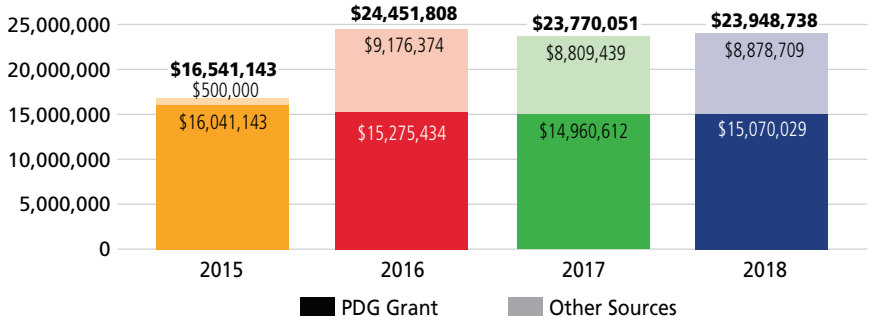
PDG grant supported **13** "high-need" Arkansas communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"Arkansas seized the opportunity to jumpstart the expansion of high-quality preschool services for four-year-old children and staff throughout the state. The early childhood community will continue to support preschool services and trainings through other funding sources."

Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) State Team

Arkansas' Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,375,218
Source: Arkansas 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$61,347,218

ARKANSAS' INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$27,364,522

"My child is eager to get to school and excited about new experiences for the day. I feel more encouraged about future opportunities for my family and community."

PDG Parent

ARKANSAS' MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Primary goal is to **expand access to high-quality preschool**…for eligible children in 13 high-need communities
- **Improve the quality** of **Arkansas Better Chance** (ABC) [state] preschool program
- Revise the state's *Early Learning and Development Standards* and *Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework*
- Revise the state's *Child Development and Early Learning Standards*
- **Improve qualifications** of ABC lead teachers, classroom quality, enrollment diversity, and child outcomes

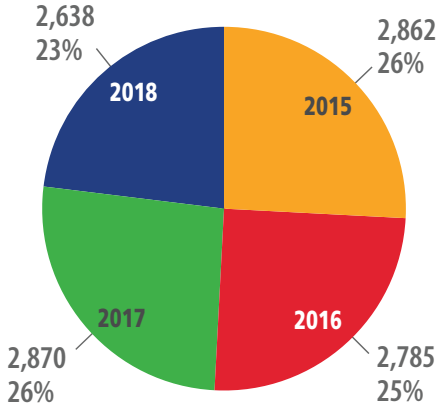
CHARACTERISTICS OF ARKANSAS' PDG PROGRAM:

- Built on **Arkansas Better Chance** state preschool program
- **Partnered with school districts and Head Start programs** to provide PDG-funded preschool
- Provided **professional development** on new aligned state early learning standards
- Supported dedicated staff positions in each program to **enhance family engagement**
- Provided **inclusive PDG-funded classrooms** for children with disabilities

[1] Abstract – Arkansas' PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/arpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

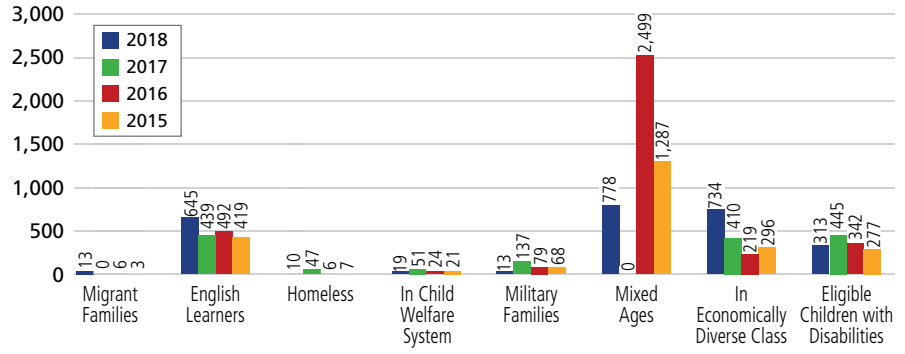
Total Number Enrolled = 11,155



Source: Akansas 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Arkansas' PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

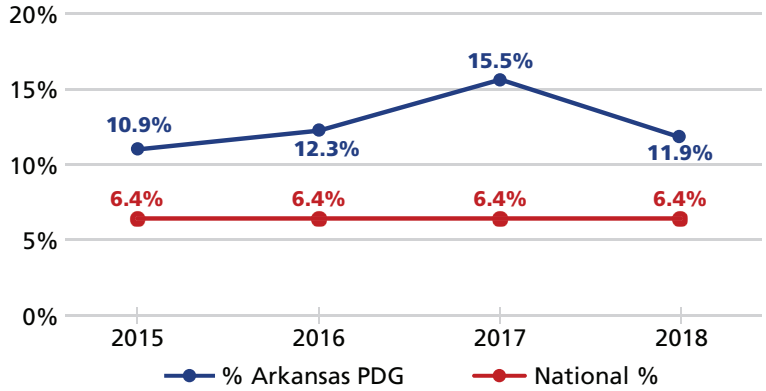
Arkansas' PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Arkansas reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category was omitted in this chart.

Source: Arkansas 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Arkansas 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever is higher. The progress Arkansas made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Developed the **Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 months** (CDELS) and connected the state Kindergarten Readiness Indicators to the CDELS
- Held **CDELS Train-the-Trainer sessions** for professional development providers
- Supported families by creating the **Family Service Manager** and **Family Engagement Specialists** positions
- Developed **Arkansas Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals**
- Completed a **guide** to the **Arkansas Family Engagement Framework**

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Family Engagement:** Arkansas developed and implemented various strategies to connect families with their child's preschool and to increase family engagement. The strategies include: (1) cultivating and hiring credentialed Family Service professionals, (2) developing resources (e.g., guide to Family Engagement Framework), and (3) supporting family service managers and family engagement specialists.

One of the areas Arkansas has focused on in its PDG grant is promoting family engagement. In addition to hiring staff dedicated to facilitating family engagement, all program staff committed to the goal of building relationships with families.

CONNECTICUT

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Connecticut Office of Early Childhood

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 2,776

Total number of preschool slots* created: **1,648**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **1,128**

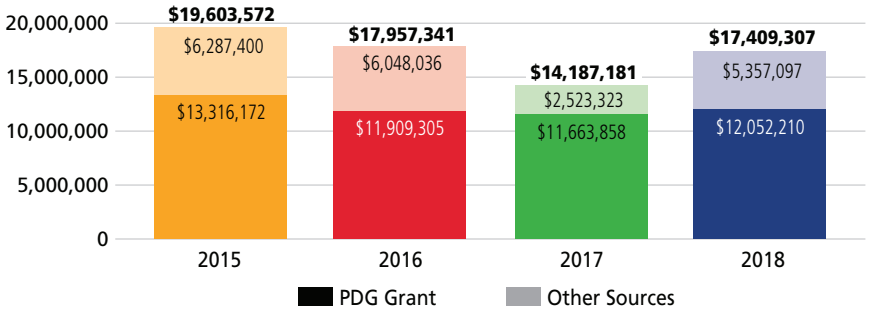
PDG grant supported **13** "high-need" Connecticut communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"The Preschool Development Grant provided critical funding to demonstrate the impact of high-quality early childhood experiences for children and families. As an early childhood system, we are looking at lessons learned from PDG to enhance quality, increase impact and support families. With these lessons we are building a more impactful ECE system in Connecticut."

Beth Bye, Commissioner of the CT Office of Early Childhood

Connecticut's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,375,218
Source: Connecticut 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$48,941,545

CONNECTICUT'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$20,215,856

"In a semi-rural community, providing access to high-quality preschool experience is critical for our most at-risk children. The PDG grant was the spark our community needed to provide new classrooms spaces for our youngest learners, offer free transportation, and strengthen family connections through Parent Teacher Home Visits. Killingly continues to prioritize and sustain [these] investments…PDG initiated. Our ongoing goal is free access for all!"

Steven Rioux, Superintendent, Killingly Public School, CT

CONNECTICUT'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Build on existing, strong state preschool infrastructure to **expand access to high-quality state preschool programs**
- **Enhance quality** in areas the state has longed to improve, these are: offering comprehensive services, offering teacher compensation equal to K-12 teachers, deepening family engagement practices, forging a seamless birth-through-third grade continuum, and offering more targeted and individualized coaching, mentoring, and consultation

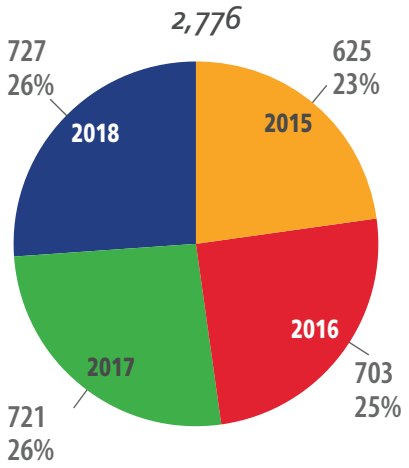
CHARACTERISTICS OF CONNECTICUT'S PDG PROGRAM:

- All PDG staff received **professional development focused on five areas**: the state's Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), social emotional development, Response to Intervention, dual language learners, and the special education referral process
- PDG-supported classrooms received **individualized coaching**, **family engagement support**, and participated in the **Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP)**
- Subgrantees used the **Continuous Quality Improvement process** the state initiated
- PDG programs had to be **NAEYC accredited** or obtain accreditation within three years

[1] Abstract – Connecticut's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschoColdevelopmentgrants/abstracts/ctpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

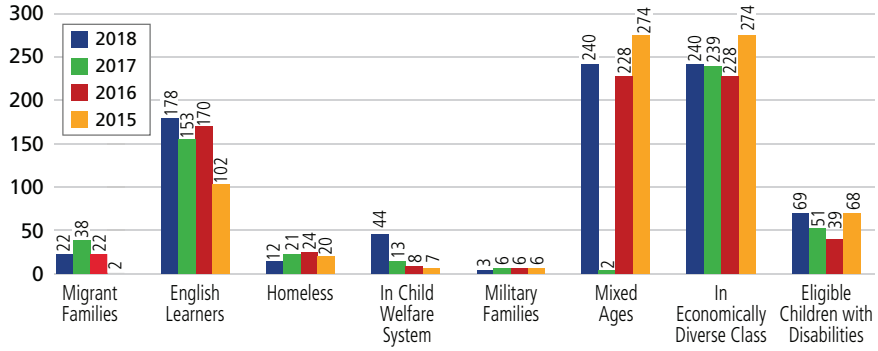
Total Number Enrolled = 2,776



Source: Connecticut 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Connecticut's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

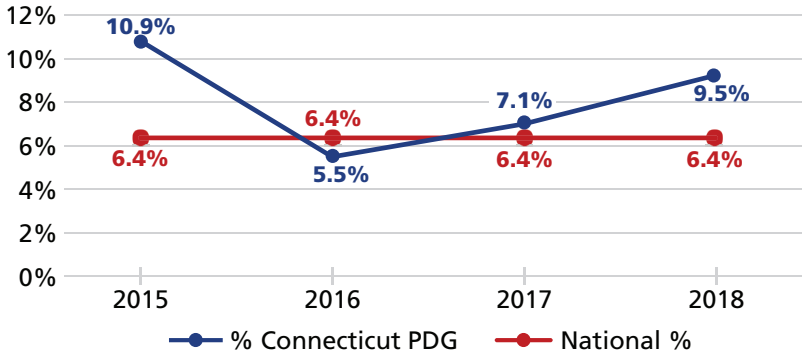
Connecticut's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Connecticut reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category was omitted in the chart.

Source: Connecticut 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Connecticut 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever is higher. The progress Connecticut made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Published the *Core Knowledge and Competency Frameworks for Professionals Working with Children and Their Families (CKC)*
- Successfully implemented the **Parent Teacher Home Visiting (PTHV) program**
- **Strengthened CT's Birth-Third Grade work** by focusing on the transition to kindergarten using the following strategies: (1) co-trained PDG Pre-K teachers and kindergarten teachers in Parent Teacher Home Visits and high impact family engagement strategies, (2) with critical input from educators and families, developed and launched **Hello Kindergarten!**, PDG's online toolkit for transition to kindergarten
- Completed work on the **Early Childhood Information System (ECE-ECIS)**, an online data system to collect and monitor data from all early childhood programs receiving public funds

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Suspensions and Expulsions:** Connecticut has reduced the number of suspensions and expulsions in prekindergarten to second grade by enacting policies and providing supports such as the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP). The ECCP is an evidence-based early childhood mental health model consisting of three types of supports: Core Classroom, Child Specific, and Community presence.

Connecticut implemented the Parent Teacher Home Visiting (PTHV) model, a "transformative high-impact family engagement strategy." This statement regarding PTHV impacts is supported by research.

HAWAII

A PDG DEVELOPMENT STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 655

Total number of preschool slots* created: **551**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **104**

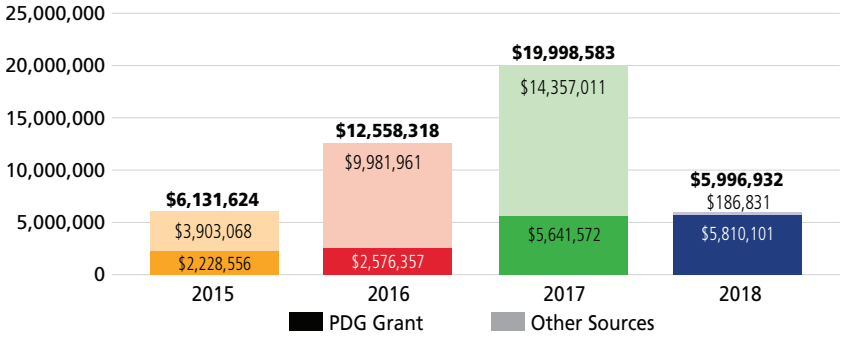
PDG grant supported **11** "high-need" Hawaiian communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"The Preschool Development Grant has been instrumental in establishing a much-needed foundation for high-quality preschools in our charter schools and communities with the highest need in Hawaii. (W)e are most grateful to our federal partners for helping to pave the road towards our Pre-K through third grade journey and to improve student learning outcomes for our youngest students. Mahalo nui loa!"

Sione Thompson, Executive Director, Hawaii State Public Charter School Commission

Hawaii's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,375,218
Source: Hawaii 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$16,256,586

HAWAII'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$28,428,871

"The preschool program at Wai'alae School exceeds expectations in quality of learning programs on every level. It is truly amazing to see the children grow and flourish socially, emotionally, and academically. Many of our families would not be able to afford to provide preschool to our children otherwise and I truly believe there will be a lifelong positive impact."

PDG Parent

HAWAII'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- **Establish 18 new preschool classrooms** in the state's public charter schools, including preschool classrooms in Native Hawaiian language immersion schools
- Provide **individual teacher coaching**…reliable and valid program assessments, and professional development opportunities

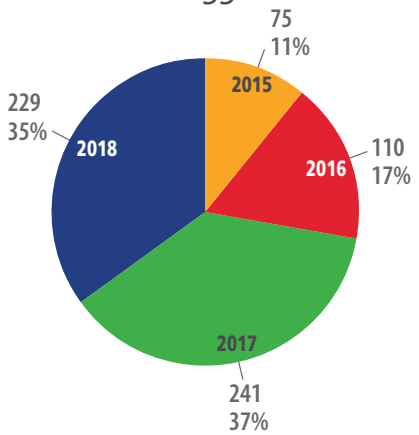
CHARACTERISTICS OF HAWAII'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Gradually **established preschool classrooms in public charter schools** over three years
- **All subgrantees** were identified in the PDG proposal and **participated in PDG-sponsored events** (e.g., P-3 Institute) throughout the grant period
- Provided **data-driven professional development** and **onsite coaching**
- Used **child-level data** (Teaching Strategies GOLD) and **classroom data** from ECERS-R and CLASS to inform a cycle of continuous program improvement
- **Seven** of the 18 PDG-funded classrooms are in **Native Hawaiian language immersion schools**

[1] Abstract – Hawaii's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/hipdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

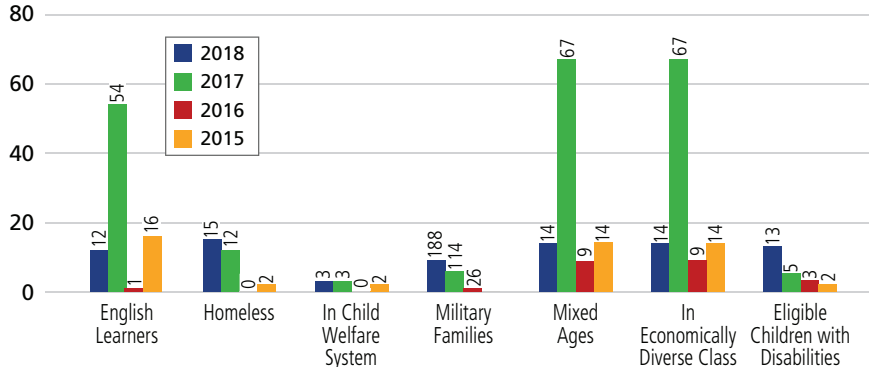
Total Number Enrolled = 655



Source: Hawaii 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Hawaii's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

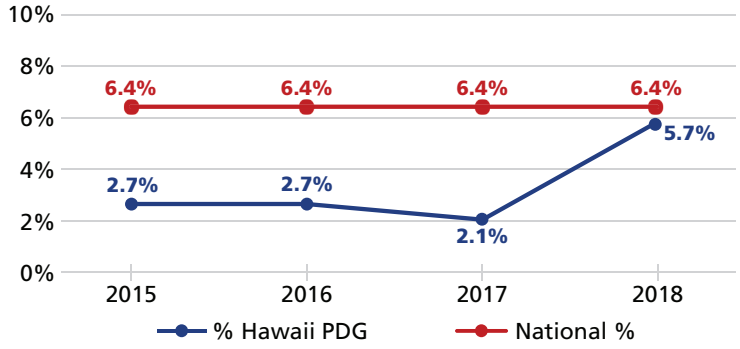
Hawaii's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Hawaii reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" and "migrant families" in all four APRs; those categories are not included in this chart.

Source: Hawaii 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Hawaii 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Hawaii made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- In 2019, Hawaii's **state legislature approved funding** the preschool classrooms in the charter schools that were established with PDG funding
- Afforded charter school leaders **P-3 professional learning opportunities**
- Built the capacity of the state's early childhood workforce by offering free college courses and enabling **early childhood educators to complete degrees and certification requirements**
- Contracted with the Hawaii Children's Action Network to develop a professional media campaign to **educate the public and the legislature about the value of preschool**

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Communicating Effectively:** Hawaii's PDG program leadership used a variety of strategies to get the word out about the PDG-funded preschool classrooms and the benefits of early education. These included one-page information sheets with program data and research citations, brief videos with families of enrolled children, and a media campaign. But perhaps the most effective communication strategy for sustainability was building ongoing relationships with key policymakers.

Leaders of Hawaii's PDG program began work on sustaining the PDG-funded preschool classrooms from the very start of the grant through frequent communications about the program. They also built relationships with legislators who could speak about the importance of preschool and the need to fund it. The Legislature heard and approved funding the preschool classrooms the PDG funds started.

ILLINOIS

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Office of the Governor – Illinois

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 15,988

Total number of preschool slots* created: **14,615**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **1,373**

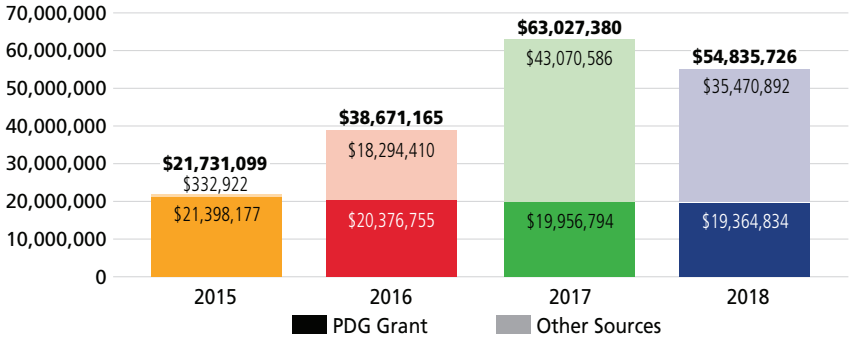
PDG grant supported **19** "high-need" Illinois communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"The Preschool Development Grant was essential in supporting Illinois to take the next steps to build off of our Preschool for All Program to higher quality. This investment allowed Illinois to add state funding for the Preschool for All Expansion Model as a program option. PDG will have lasting impacts for Illinois' children in kindergarten and beyond."

Dr. Cynthia L. Tate, Executive Director, Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development

Illinois' Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,096,5604
Source: Illinois 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$81,096,560

ILLINOIS' INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$97,168,810

"The PDG Expansion Grant has allowed us to reach a fragile group of families and give them access to equitable and high-quality education during one of the most critical years of their child's education. It has brought the staff, district, families, and community together [to] focus on school readiness in a new context. It has been a gift to us!"

Early Childhood Administrator

ILLINOIS' MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Reach an additional **13,760 eligible children by the end of 2018** through a new program option in the *Preschool for All* state-funded preschool program, *Preschool for All Expansion*. It added full school day, comprehensive services, intensive parent engagement services, universal and targeted supports for positive behavioral and social-emotional development, 60 minutes per day of physical activity, and instructional leaders with specific expertise…to provide embedded professional development
- Support a Birth-Third Grade Continuity Project to advance the **alignment** and **integration of curriculum** and **comprehensive services** among preschool providers and K-3 schools

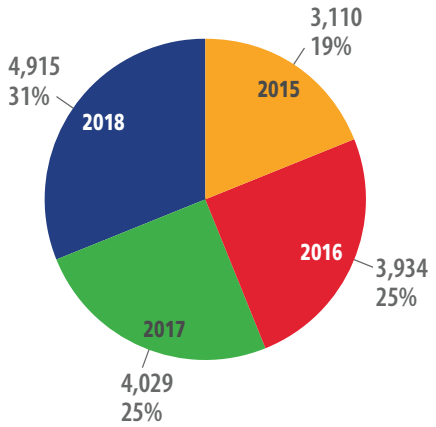
CHARACTERISTICS OF ILLINOIS' PDG PROGRAM:

- Used a **mixed delivery model**
- Provided **onsite leadership support** in addition to other professional learning opportunities
- Used the **Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS),** as its observation-based school readiness assessment to be completed by a kindergarten teacher within the first 40 days of kindergarten
- Provided strategies and tools for subgrantees to **build and sustain community partnerships**
- Embedded **Instructional Leaders** and **Family Educators** into the staffing structure

[1] Abstract – Illinois' PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/ilpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

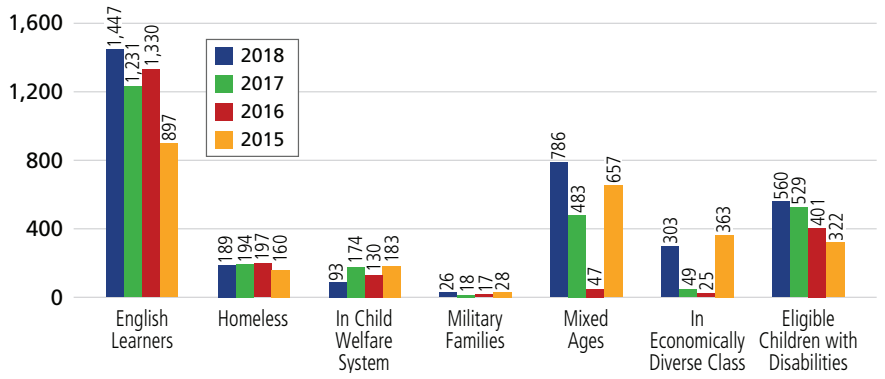
Total Number Enrolled = 15,988



Source: Illinois 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Illinois' PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

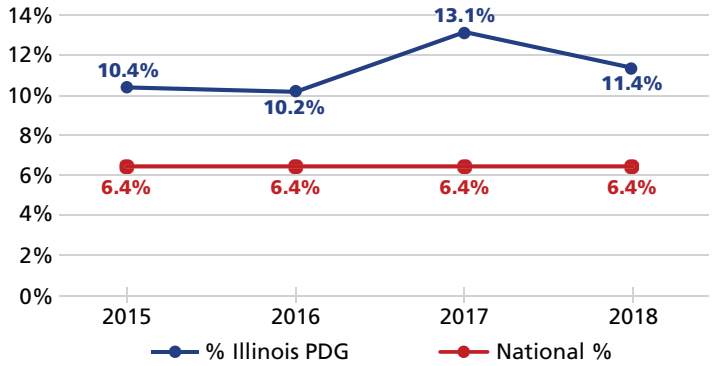
Illinois's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Illinois reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" and "migrant families" in all four APRs; those categories are not included in this chart.

Source: Illinois 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Illinois 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Illinois made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Developed the **Family Engagement and Communication Tool** in partnership with the Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership
- Created a **publicly accessible website** to provide PDG program administrators and staff instant access to resources, policies, and guidance
- Created a **weighted eligibility system that prioritized enrolling children with the highest needs** (i.e., experiencing homelessness, involved in the child welfare system, family in deep poverty, children with IEPs)

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Inclusion of Children with Disabilities:** Illinois provided various strategies and supports for PDG supported early childhood settings to increase the inclusion of young children with disabilities.
- **Reducing Suspension and Expulsion in Early Childhood Settings:** Through the adoption of state policies, provision of resources and supports to build capacity and professional knowledge, and strategies for engaging families, Illinois reduced the rate of preschool expulsions.

Illinois passed a law in 2017 making the expulsion of children 0–5 from an early childhood setting for behavior the last resort. Illinois provided PDG subgrantees support in implementing the Pyramid Model and Mental Health Consultation.

LOUISIANA

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

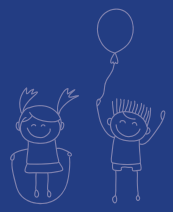
Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Louisiana Department of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 6,047

Total number of preschool slots* created: **3,474**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **2,573**

PDG grant supported **17** "high-need" Louisiana communities

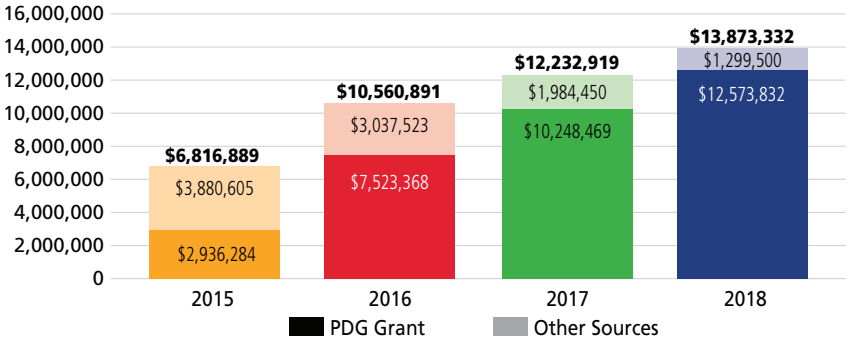


*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"In recent years, Louisiana has worked diligently to create an integrated, efficient early childhood education system through policies that better serve our children and families. The Preschool Development Grant validated the state's approach and enabled us to take ambitious next steps. Among those efforts, Louisiana has developed models called Ready Start Networks…These models are invaluable as education leaders continue to make the case for expanded state investment in early learning."

John White, Louisiana Superintendent of Education

Louisiana's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,274,722
Source: Louisiana 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$33,281,953

LOUISIANA'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$10,202,078

"[We] benefitted tremendously from the PDG opportunity afforded to us the past four years. The addition of 100 preschool seats allowed us to partner with early learning centers and Head Start to serve low-income children and their families in a diverse delivery setting…[We] provided comprehensive services for children and their families, job-embedded coaching, a rigorous curriculum, and classroom materials."

Cindy Rushing, Rapides Parish Early Childhood Community Network Lead Agency

LOUISIANA'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- **Expand the state's existing high-quality preschool programs** in high-need communities
- **Provide families with access to their choice of high-quality programs** including Head Start, childcare, nonpublic and public schools
- Unify early childhood system by empowering local leaders to **coordinate efforts to improve child outcomes**
- **Transition to sustainable funding**
- Measure success with **outcomes-based program report cards,** and hold local leaders accountable

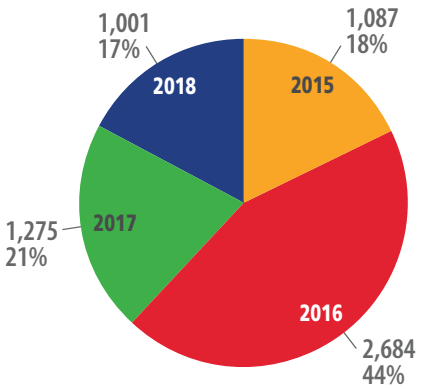
CHARACTERISTICS OF LOUISIANA'S PDG PROGRAM:

- PDG-funded Pre-K "slots" were largely offered in **childcare centers** in **partnership with local school districts or charter schools**
- Subgrantees ensured **ongoing, job-embedded coaching** around teacher-child interactions
- **Child progress assessed** by formative Teaching Strategies GOLD
- **Program quality measures** included the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

[1] Abstract – Louisiana's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/lapdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

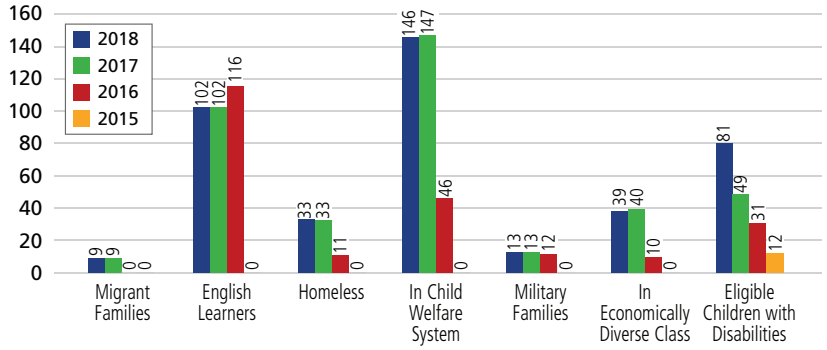
Total Number Enrolled = 6,047



Source: Louisiana 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

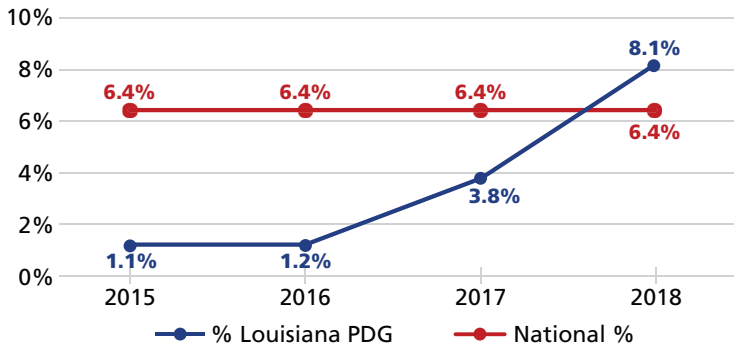
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Louisiana's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Louisiana's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Louisiana reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" and "Mixed Ages" in all four APRs. These categories are not included in this chart.
Source: Louisiana 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Louisiana 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Louisiana made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Developed a **Birth to Kindergarten Career Pathway** that starts with an Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate and ends with a Birth to Kindergarten teaching license
- **Implemented Coordinated Enrollment** so families can make informed decisions about the best placement for their children
- Provided professional development on **Conscious Discipline** and **CLASS** to teachers in PDG programs
- Offered **shared professional development for Pre-K and kindergarten teachers** four times a year

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Performance Profiles:** Louisiana's performance profiles provide information about the quality of publicly funded early childhood programs to families to inform choice, and to communities to guide improvement. This unified rating system has two components: (1) ratings that relate to positive child outcomes (i.e., adult-child interactions and instruction, as measured by CLASS) and (2) information on classroom best practices (e.g., using curriculum, assessing children for learning, credentialing of teachers).

Louisiana's online *School and Center Finder* is for families to make informed decisions about education and care for their child. It provides an overview of each school and center within a geographic location and includes the number of stars based on the program's Performance Profile.

MAINE

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

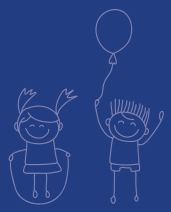
Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Maine Department of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 1,783

Total number of preschool slots* created: **1,246**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **537**

PDG grant supported **10** "high-need" Maine communities

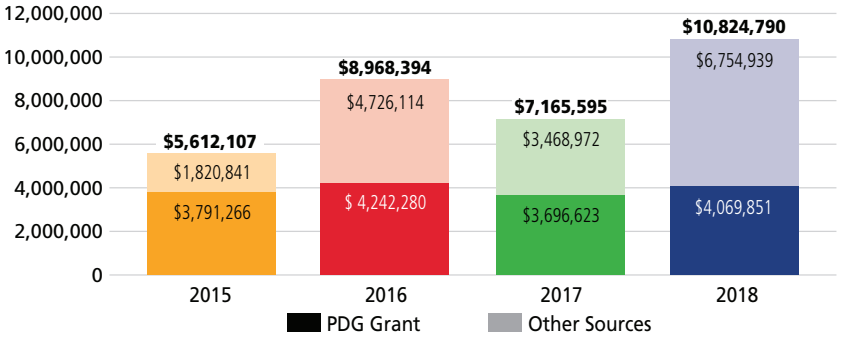


*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"The [PDG] grant was a game changer for Maine's public preschool landscape. It enabled school districts to provide high-quality, full-day preschool for hundreds of children who would not otherwise have had access…It set a state standard of excellence for model Head Start partnerships with public schools, comprehensive services for all families, and exemplary training and coaching for teachers."

Sue Reed, PDG Director

Maine's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $982,200
Source: Maine 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$15,800,020

MAINE'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$16,770,866

"[PDG] has allowed for expanded learning opportunities for children and families…The support provided… has allowed for more individualization for the children… Social groups and ELL groups…receive services they need… while being part of their classroom community."

PDG Coordinator and Coach

MAINE'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Use *Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards* across all early childhood sectors to guide curriculum and assessment
- Require all public preschool programs to meet *Maine's Public Preschool Program Standards*
- **Improve linkages of data from birth-third grade** in Maine's Longitudinal Data System
- Measure and achieve **outcomes that predict school readiness**
- Create new and expand **high-quality preschool programs in high need communities**

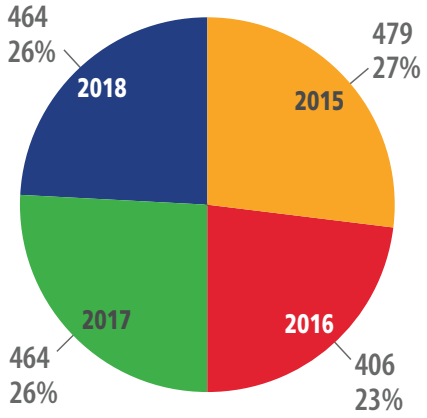
CHARACTERISTICS OF MAINE'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Classroom **child:staff ratio is 8:1**
- PDG-funded programs to use *Teaching Strategies GOLD* or the *Child Observation Record (COR)* to **track child progress**
- **Program quality assessed** with the *Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)* and the *Early Language and Literacy Observation (ELLCO)* tools
- Most subgrantees provide **onsite comprehensive services** through their Head Start partnership
- All **subgrantees provide transportation**
- Teachers receive a minimum of one hour per month of **onsite coaching** and a **monthly Community of Practice call** with their coach

[1] Abstract – Maine's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/mepdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

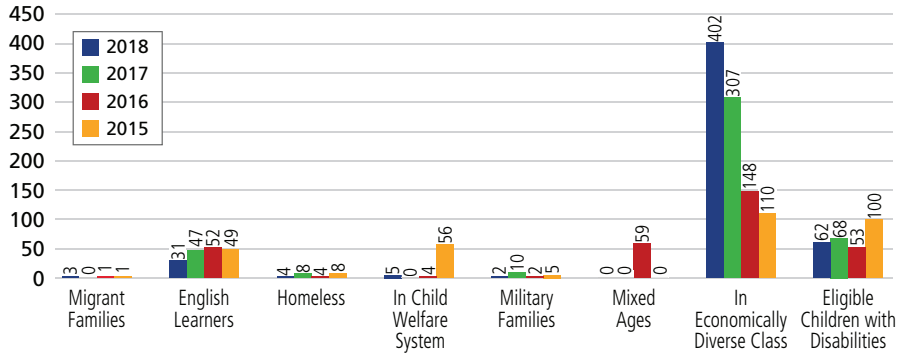
Total Number Enrolled = 1,783



Source: Maine 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

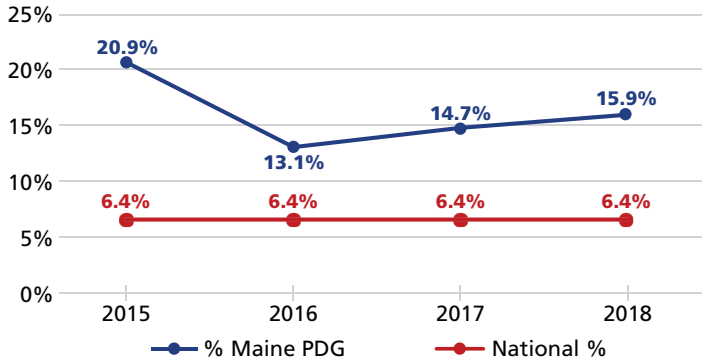
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Maine's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Maine's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Maine reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; this category was omitted in the chart.
Source: Maine 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Maine 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Maine made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- All districts plan to **continue their PDG-funded programs at the same level** after the PDG grant funding ends
- Every district has created a **B-3 Professional Learning Community** implementation plan
- **Building capacity** to include **data on all the state's four-year-olds** in the State Longitudinal Data System. The Maine Education Policy institute coordinated data from the entire early childhood system
- Is building an **interactive website to provide best practices** aligned with Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards
- The **Early Childhood Monitor state-level position** funded by PDG will become a **permanent** state position

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **School District and Head Start Partnerships:** Successful partnerships between school districts and Head Start programs can be found across the state of Maine. The PDG grant helped create and expand some of these partnerships. The PDG subgrantees have found that the ingredients needed for success include regular and open communication, respect for what each brings to the table, and the leadership from each entity understanding the value of the partnership.

Maine has committed fully to supporting the Birth through third grade (B-3) continuum. All districts have created B-3 teams and they are working on developing B-3 plans. There is now a B-3 team at the Maine Department of Education too.

MARYLAND

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Maryland State Department of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 15,010

Total number of preschool slots* created: **5,857**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **9,153**

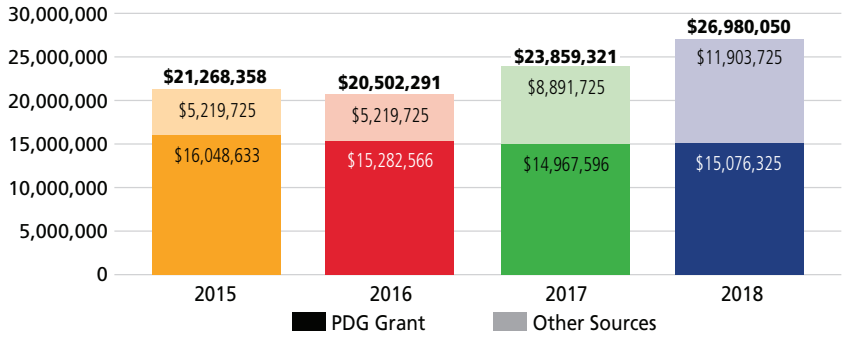
PDG grant supported **21** "high-need" Maryland communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"Early learning programs provide a strong educational foundation for our state's youngest learners. These [PDG] grants are a much-needed investment in Maryland's future generation and will allow for increased access to these programs for youth across the state."

Governor Larry Hogan

Maryland's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,375,120
Source: Maryland 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$61,375,120

MARYLAND'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$31,234,900

"Providing quality early learning opportunities for students will establish a strong foundation to help accelerate learning. Strong early education programs help our children refine the skills they need to be successful both in and out of the classroom."

Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools

MARYLAND'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- **Expand and improve the quality of prekindergarten** (Pre-K) for families with household incomes at or below 200% poverty in Years 1 and 2
- Appropriate state funds to **enable access to high quality Pre-K for an additional 1,000 four-year-olds** from families with incomes above 200% and below 300% poverty (i.e., aligned with current State policy)
- **Expand Pre-K to community-based programs** such as childcare, Head Start, and nursery schools
- **[Pre-K is] a critical keystone** in Maryland's efforts in reducing achievement gaps

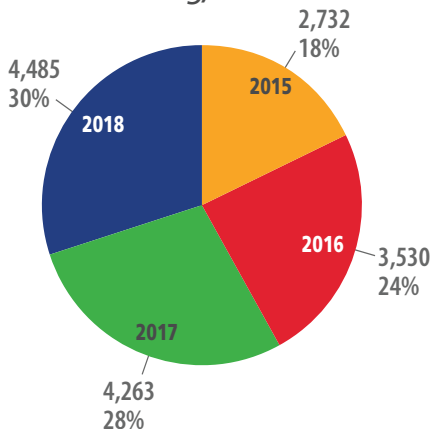
CHARACTERISTICS OF MARYLAND'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Built on well-developed early childhood education infrastructure including **consolidated governance** and a **long-standing Pre-K track record**
- In accordance with state's Pre-K Expansion Act of 2014, used a **mixed Pre-K delivery model** (childcare, Head Start, public and charter schools, nursery schools)
- **Partnered with the Judy Centers** to provide families with comprehensive services
- Used **multiple recruitment strategies** such as distributing Pre-K flyers to local departments of social services staff to guide eligible children to PDG programs

[1] Abstract – Maryland's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/mdpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

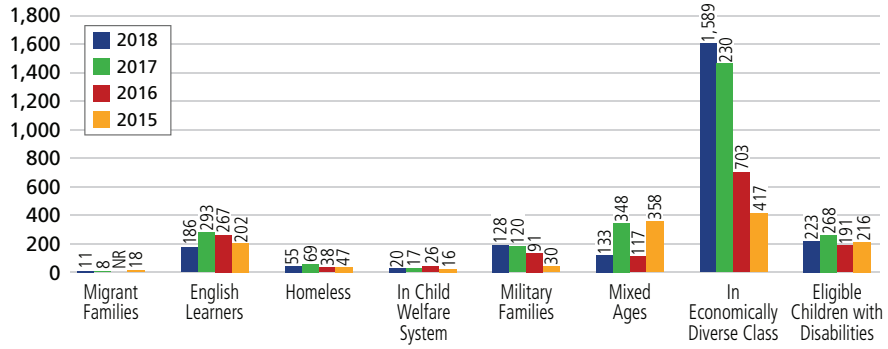
Total Number Enrolled = 15,010



Source: Maryland 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

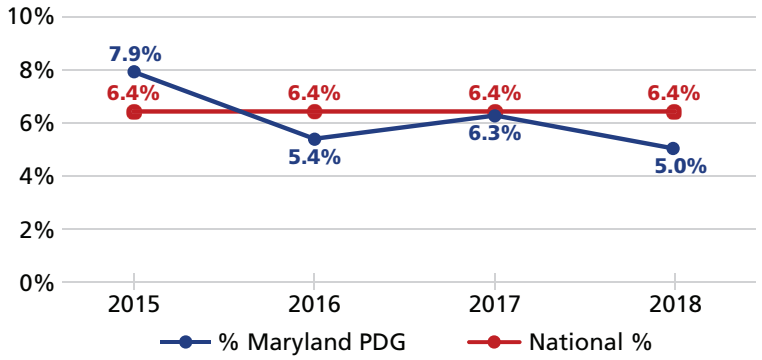
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Maryland's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Maryland's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Maryland reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs. That category is not included in this chart. The number of "migrant families" was not reported in 2016.
Source: Maryland 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Maryland 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Maryland made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Developed an age 4 Pre-K curriculum** aligned with state four-year old MD College and Career Ready Standards
- Provided **Summer professional development series** followed up by coaching support
- Offered fall and spring **School Readiness Symposia**; the 2018 Fall Symposium was: *The Surprising Importance of Math*
- Provided webinars and meetings to **support subgrantees' PDG implementation**
- **Exceeded PDG enrollment targets**

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Comprehensive Services:** Maryland partnered with the Judy Center Early Learning Hubs to provide comprehensive services. The Judy Center has a two-generation approach: quality early childhood education, and comprehensive family support services. Judy Centers have 12 components (e.g., health related services, meals, adult education, case management). Judy Centers require the involvement of the following partners: kindergarten, Pre-K, early intervention and preschool special education, and at least one childcare provider.

In 2018, HB 1415, "Education – Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education" was passed by the Maryland legislature and signed into law. This Bill provides state funding beginning in FY2020 for the Pre-K expansion grant at the FY2019 level when the Federal grant expires.

MASSACHUSETTS

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 2,960

Total number of preschool slots* created: **2,960**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **0**[1]

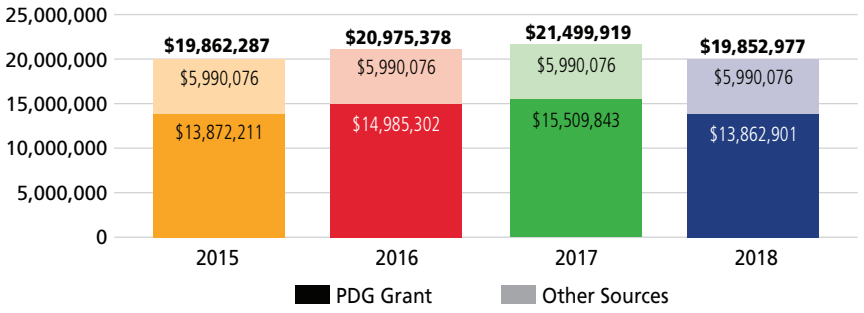
PDG grant supported **5** "high-need" Massachusetts communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"This [PDG] public/private partnership model leveraged the unique strengths of the school districts and community-based organizations to provide preschool experiences that were highly beneficial for children. I applaud the educators, administrators, and communities who made the Preschool [Development and] Expansion Grant a success through their joint vision of improving the lives of children and families in need."

Jocelyn Bowne, Director of Preschool Expansion Grant Administration.

Massachusetts' Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,374,906
Source: Massachusetts 2018 Annual Performance Report and U.S. Department of Education unpublished document

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$58,230,218

MASSACHUSETTS' INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$23,960,304

"The Preschool Expansion Grant programs really are working. Even coming into it, you don't know what to expect and you're not sure you're going to reach the families you hope to reach, but we have. And we've made such an impact."

Subgrantee PDG Program Director

MASSACHUSETTS' MAJOR PDG GOALS[2]:

- **Expand preschool access to families without prior experiences**
- **Expand development of mixed-service partnerships** in the five high needs communities, and access to preschool
- Support **strong family engagement** and **delivery of comprehensive services**
- **Improve program quality, child outcomes, data development, and use**
- Invest in a **competent and stable early education workforce**

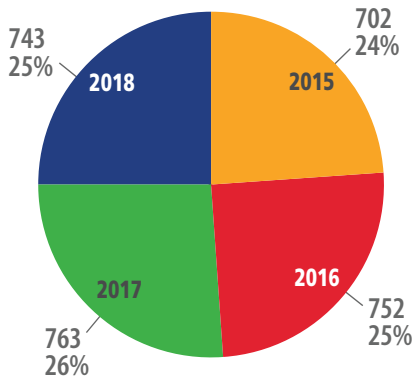
CHARACTERISTICS OF MASSACHUSETTS' PDG PROGRAM:

- PDG funds **47 classrooms in five high needs communities**
- **Child-teacher ratios are 6:1** with three educators per classroom in most classrooms
- Implementation model based on **collaboration between school district and early learning programs** (e.g., Head Start, childcare)
- All grantees hired at least one **family engagement staff** to work directly with families
- LEA provides ongoing individualized **coaching support to partner educators**
- **All LEA partnerships include a Head Start partner** and many include components of the Head Start family engagement and comprehensive services model

[1] Massachusetts PDG proposal was to serve eligible children who had not participated in any type of preschool education including early childhood special education.
[2] Abstract – Massachusetts' PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/mapdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

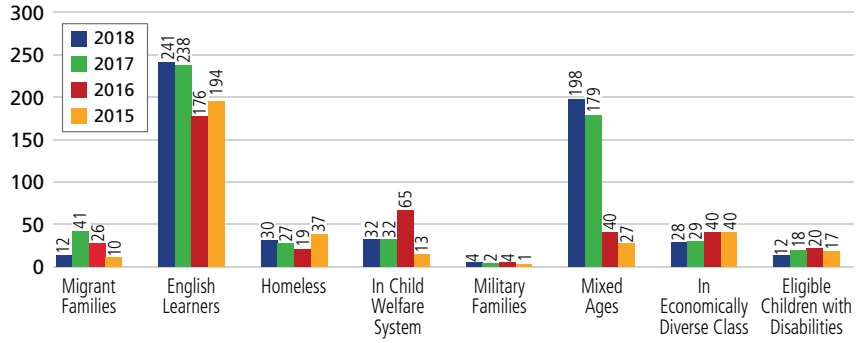
Total Number Enrolled = 2,960



Source: Massachusetts 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

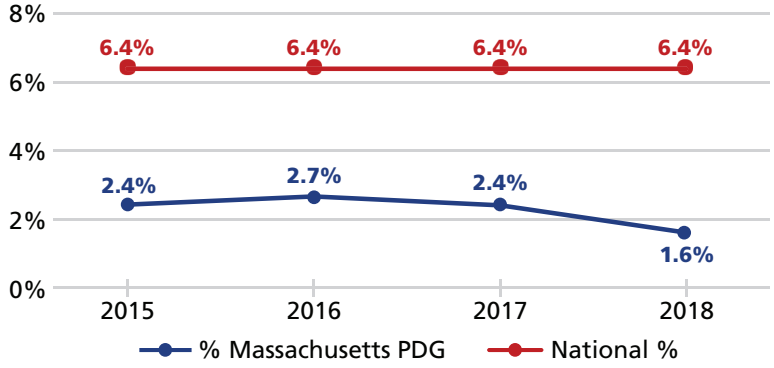
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Massachusetts' PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Massachusetts' PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Massachusetts reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category is not included in this chart.
Source: Massachusetts 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Massachusetts 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Massachusetts made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- In FY19, the **state legislature passed the Community Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI)** modeled on the PDG program. The CPPI supports continuation of the PDG-funded slots and expands the model to other communities
- Increased the consistency and intensity of **comprehensive services** (e.g., mental health consultation)
- Subgrantees enrolled hard-to-reach families experiencing homelessness through extensive outreach
- Worked with the **Birth to Grade 3 Advisory Committee**
- Created an **aligned public-private model** that developed new quality full-day, full-year classrooms
- Targeted children without prior early education experiences to expand access to an uptake of early education in four of the five communities

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Comprehensive Services:** The model Massachusetts' PDG program used consisted of three components:
  1. **Direct services and supports to families,** including family needs assessments, home visits, referrals
  2. **Family engagement activities** such as monthly family events, family workshops
  3. **Additional supports** such as onsite health screening, mental health support, meals, and transportation

Massachusetts' PDG program created public-private partnerships between the school districts and community early learning programs. These public-private partnerships used collaborative decision making and shared the goals of investing in early childhood educators and vulnerable families as well as increasing access to quality preschool in high need communities.

MONTANA

A PDG DEVELOPMENT STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Montana Office of Public Instruction

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 3,240

Total number of preschool slots* created: **3,240**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **0**[1]

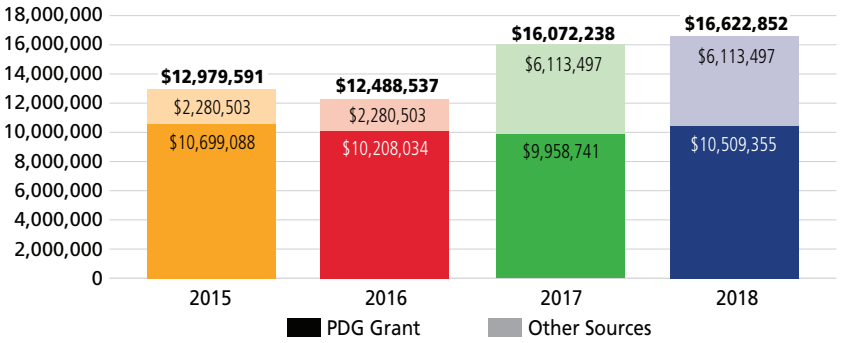
PDG grant supported **46** "high-need" Montana communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"The Preschool Development Grant increased access to high-quality early learning for preschool aged children in many of Montana's highest need communities. Nearly 50 percent of the children receiving high-quality preschool education through the PDG project were American Indian."

Tara Ferriter-Smith, PDG Grant Director

Montana's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,375,218
Source: Montana 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$41,375,218

MONTANA'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$16,788,000

"An important outcome [of the PDG grant] has been ongoing intensive learning for Montana's early childhood workforce. Educational leaders, educators, and support staff engaged in ongoing professional learning…Participating early learning professionals now consistently use data to inform daily decisions to optimize child learning and provide invaluable support to families."

Tara Ferriter-Smith, PDG Grant Director

MONTANA'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[2]:

- Increase the number of **high-quality preschool options** for children throughout the state
- **Expand the number and percentage of eligible children in high-need communities** served by high-quality preschool programs and who are ready for kindergarten
- **Implement the Montana Preschool Program standards** within each high-need community
- Expand a **comprehensive assessment system**
- Align program standards [program and content] from **birth to grade three**

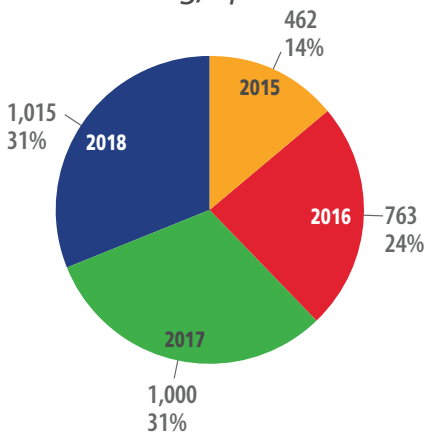
CHARACTERISTICS OF MONTANA'S PDG PROGRAM:

- **PDG grant collaboratively implemented** by the Office of Instruction and the Department of Health and Human Services
- **Partnered** with school districts and Head Start programs
- **Categorized subgrantees into three cohorts** based on level of readiness to meet PDG standards
- All subgrantees received targeted onsite support in the development of **system-wide infrastructure, family engagement and outreach,** and goal setting for continuous improvement

[1] All of Montana's PDG slots were new since the state did not have a state preschool program.
[2] Abstract – Montana's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/mtpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

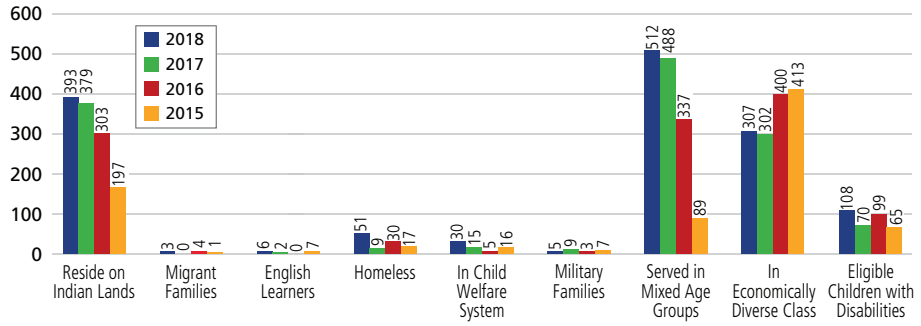
Total Number Enrolled = 3,240



Source: Montana 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

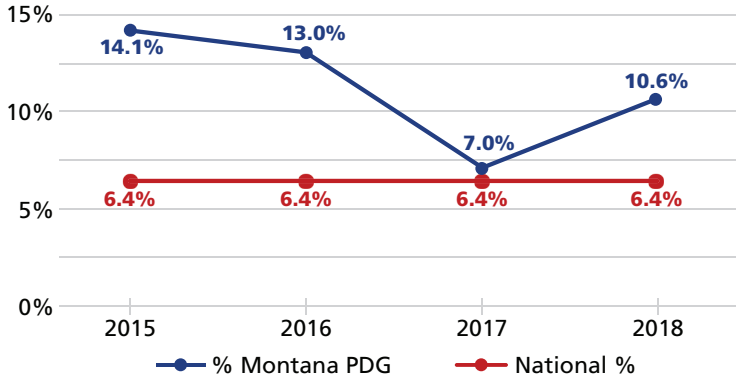
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Montana's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Montana's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Source: Montana 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Montana 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Montana made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- All subgrantees were required to have a **full-time Family Engagement Coordinator** to meaningfully engage with and build relationships with families through home visits and networking with community organizations to address families' needs (e.g., before- and after-care)
- **Strengthened the early childhood workforce** with onsite and regional trainings, onsite coaching, the annual Montana PDG (MPDG) Summer Institute, and by offering financial help for Early Childhood higher education courses
- Developed **online learning modules** for school administrators and early learning providers to learn about the **Montana Preschool Program Guidelines**

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Continuous Improvement Process:** Montana promoted and supported PDG subgrantees to implement Continuous Improvement goal setting practices that led to the intentional use of program-wide data-based decision making resulting in the alignment of program-wide goals, teacher professional learning, and child outcome goals.
- **Coaching Model:** Montana's coaching model targeted three areas critical to successful implementation: onsite instructional coaching, systems-wide infrastructure, and family engagement and outreach.

Montana grouped subgrantees into three cohorts, including a cohort comprised of Head Start programs on Indian Reservations that initially did not meet the PDG quality standards. The coaching, financial, and other PDG supports provided led to these Head Start programs' ability to meet the PDG quality standards and better serve children and families.

NEVADA

A PDG DEVELOPMENT STATE

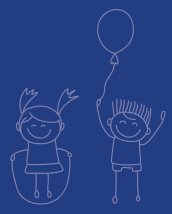
Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Nevada Department of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 8,058

Total number of preschool slots* created: **5,112**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **2,946**

PDG grant supported **11** "high-need" Nevada communities

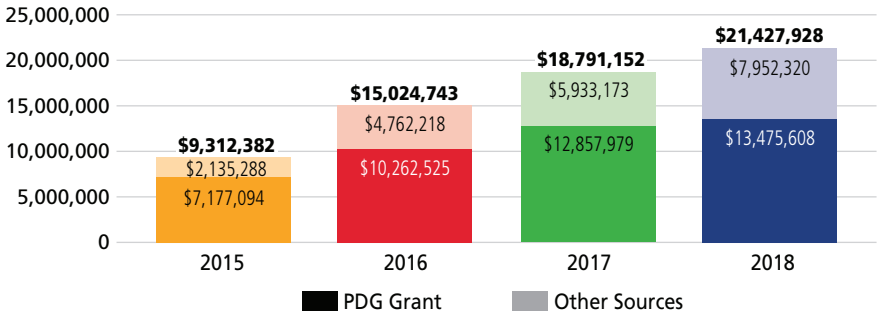


*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"With the PDG grant, not only was Nevada able to increase the number of high-quality Pre-k seats but it is now able to sustain these seats with state funding. Nevada continues to serve over 3,000 children in our full-day Nevada Ready! State Pre-K program. Recent regulation was passed that defines high-quality Pre-k programs as established by the PDG criteria."

Jhone Ebert, Nevada's Superintendent of Public Instruction

Nevada's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Source: Nevada 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$43,773,206

NEVADA'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$20,782,999

"Just knowing children are getting the support they need and the school readiness they need to be accomplished… I don't think you could ask for anything better."

Nevada Preschool Director

NEVADA'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Improve and expand Pre-K programs in **High-Need Communities**
- Provide **critical wraparound supports for vulnerable families**
- **Enhance state capacity to implement and sustain high-quality Pre-K programs** [including] workforce development, outreach, standardized assessments, enhanced Early Learning and Development Standards, parent engagement, and coordinated linkage for all sites into the State's Longitudinal Data System

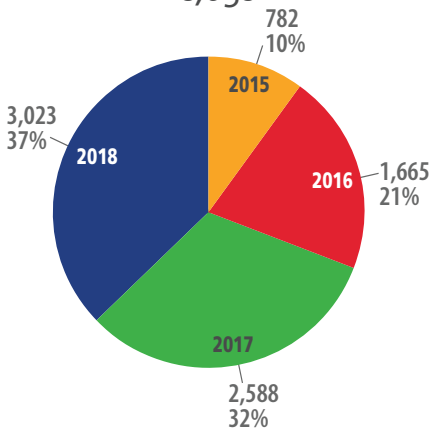
CHARACTERISTICS OF NEVADA'S PDG PROGRAM:

- PDG-funded programs **required to participate in the** *Nevada Silver Stars* **QRIS** that includes assessing quality with the ECERS-3 and CLASS
- Subgrantees required to hire an **internal coach to support instruction and address classroom environment issues**
- **Children's Cabinet** contracted to provide **wraparound services** to families
- **Comprehensive assessment to measure child progress and inform instruction**
- **Kindergarten readiness assessed** with a pre-post *Brigance Early Childhood Screener III*

[1] Abstract – Nevada' PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/nvpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

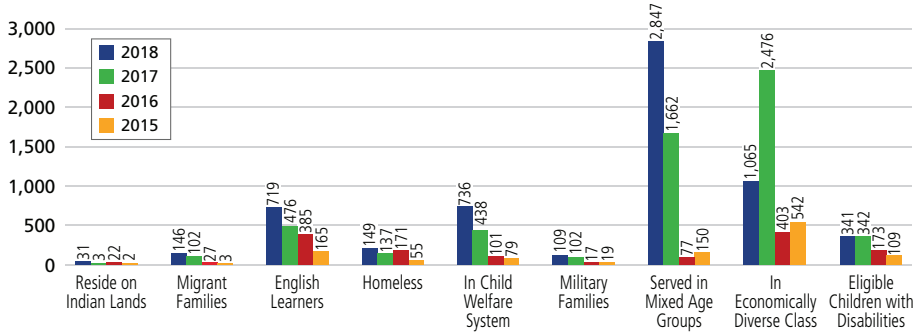
Total Number Enrolled = 8,058



Source: Nevada 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

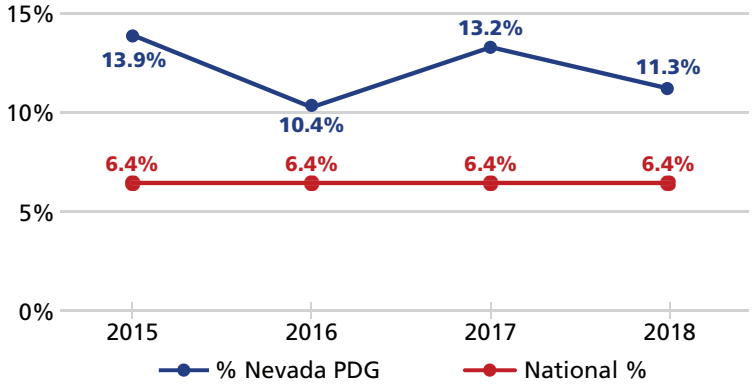
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Nevada's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Nevada's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Source: Nevada 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Nevada 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Nevada made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Secured state preschool funding from Nevada legislature** to continue *Nevada Ready! Preschool,* the PDG supported state preschool program
- **Aligned child assessments** used in publicly funded early childhood programs **with screening tools used in kindergarten**. Kindergarten screening tools are aligned with *Nevada's Ready* by Grade 3 Initiative
- Worked to **align Nevada's B-12 State Longitudinal Data System**. *Nevada Ready! Preschoolers* now have unique identifiers
- Developed and implemented a **QRIS model for preschool classes in public schools**
- Established a **statewide Community of Practice on Inclusion** and itinerant special education delivery model

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Inclusion of Children with Disabilities:** Nevada provided extensive professional development (e.g., Community of Practice on itinerant model) to leaders and educators on including children with disabilities in preschool classrooms. The state worked on successfully braiding funding streams to finance the inclusion of children with disabilities.

Nevada used its success in implementing the PDG-funded *Nevada Ready! Preschool* to leverage state funding to continue the new and improved slots PDG funding established.

NEW JERSEY

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

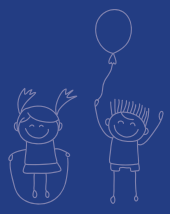
Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
New Jersey Education Department

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 7,439

Total number of preschool slots* created: **4,578**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **2,861**

PDG grant supported **16** "high-need" New Jersey communities

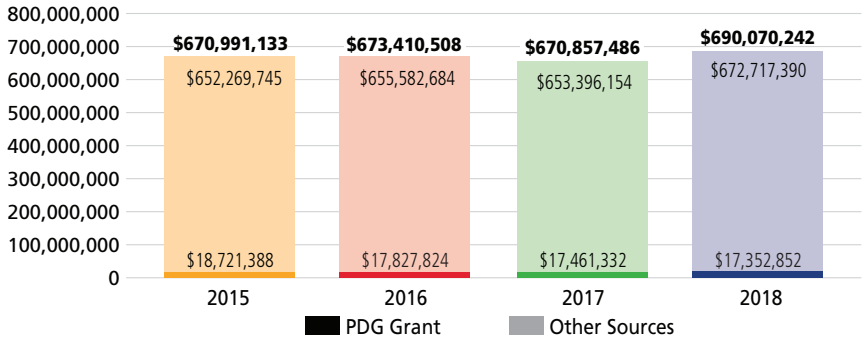


*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"Preschool has been a real positive experience and we have been fortunate to be a part of the [PDG] expansion. Our parents, families, and community are extremely thankful that their children have been provided this amazing opportunity."

Dr. James D. Roselli, Superintendent of Schools

New Jersey's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: Year 4 includes Supplemental Funding of $1,368,904
Source: New Jersey 2018 Annual Performance Report, U.S. Department of Education unpublished document

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$71,363,396

NEW JERSEY'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$2,705,329,369

"Not all preschool programs are alike. The [PDG] features that led to our success include a well-implemented, evidence-based curriculum and an emphasis on the quality and continuous training of our teachers. A love of education – for reading, learning, discovery, nature – takes root in preschool."

Marissa Papamarkos, Preschool Program Assistant Principal

NEW JERSEY'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Use the model that has worked so well for high-quality state preschool program to **expand access to preschool in 16 High-Need Communities**
- Increase the **number of children on Individualized Education Plans** in general [early childhood] settings
- Require all preschool teachers in all settings to be appropriately certified
- Implement a **sustainability plan** to maintain new and improved slots
- Implement the **New Jersey Kindergarten Entry Assessment** and have teachers enroll in the Kindergarten Seminar
- Implement the **First through Third Grade Guidelines**

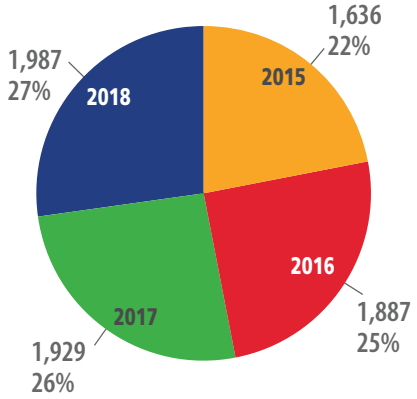
CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW JERSEY'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Implemented a **mixed delivery system** of school-based, private provider and Head Start programs
- Provided comprehensive services through **Central Intake and County Councils**
- Used the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) to **assess and improve children's learning environments and classroom behavior strategies**
- **Home language surveys distributed** to families upon enrollment; supports provided to dual language learners
- Subgrantees are required to have **active parent advisory groups**

[1] Abstract – New Jersey's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/njpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

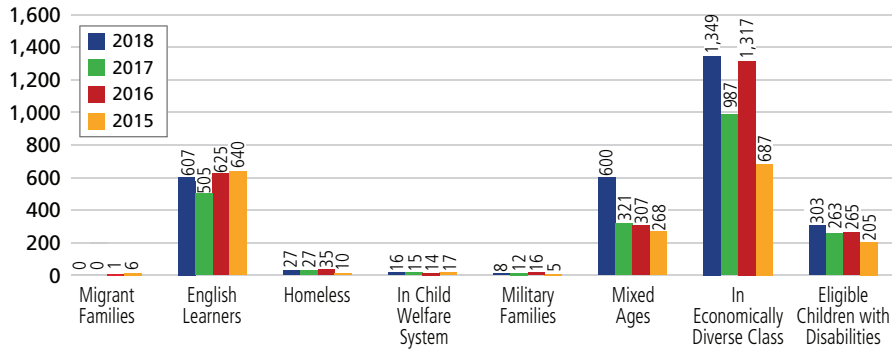
Total Number Enrolled = 7,439



Source: New Jersey 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children New Jersey's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

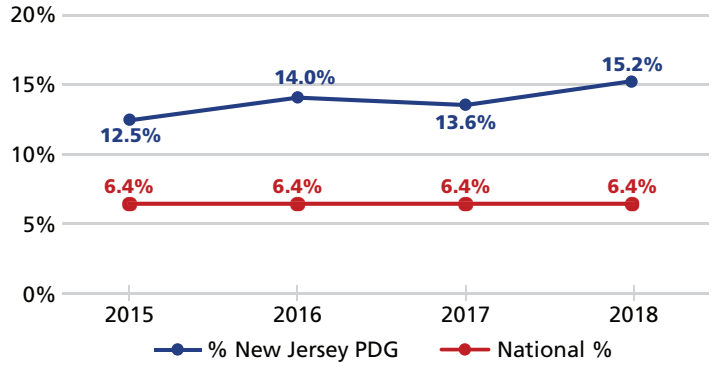
New Jersey's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: New Jersey reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category was omitted in the chart.

Source: New Jersey 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: New Jersey 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress New Jersey made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- The PDG and state Pre-K programs served a combined **70% of the state's high-need four-year-olds**
- **Secured state funding to sustain** the PDG preschool slots after the PDG grant ends
- Developed professional **learning opportunities for program administrators**
- **Exceeded PDG enrollment targets** in each of the four years of the grant
- Offered a **family engagement literacy program;** included bilingual books for Latino families

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- New Jersey has committed to **promoting and supporting a preschool to third grade continuum** and to **preventing fadeout** of the gains children make in preschool. In this effort, New Jersey used three strategies with PDG districts: (1) hired a Kindergarten Specialist to support kindergarten teachers to use the New Jersey Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines, (2) funded purchase of developmentally appropriate materials for kindergarten classes, and (3) PDG funded six kindergarten coaches to provide onsite, ongoing support for kindergarten teachers.

New Jersey strongly supports a preschool to third grade continuum as a strategy for preventing fadeout of the gains children make in quality preschool programs. The state launched several initiatives including supporting more developmentally appropriate instructional practices in kindergarten.

NEW YORK

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
New York Education Department

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 9,572

Total number of preschool slots* created: **7,362**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **2,210**

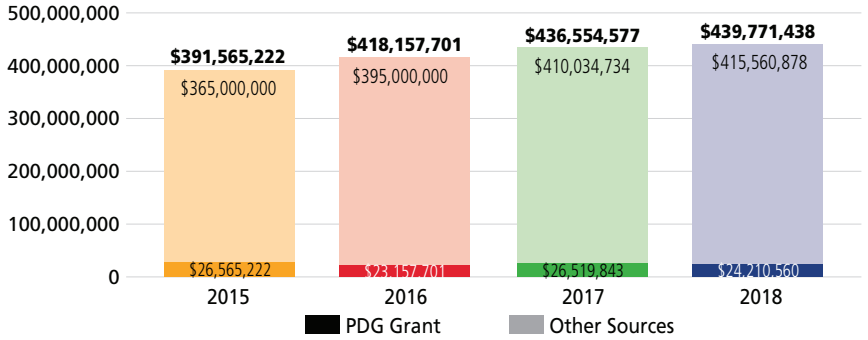
PDG grant supported **5** communities designated as "high-need"

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"Through the expansion of prekindergarten slots utilizing Federal [PDG] grant funds, the state was able to provide intensive technical assistance and professional learning opportunities to five school districts. Initiatives in each of the districts have been used to serve as models in other state funded prekindergarten programs throughout NYS."

DeSylvia Dwyer, Acting Director, NYS Education Department, Office of Early Learning

New York's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,375,218
Source: New York 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$100,453,326

NEW YORK'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$1,585,595,612

"We are grateful for being a part of a program that has given us the opportunity to provide over 800 four-year-olds with a preschool experience. Underprivileged and at risk Pre-K children have been exposed to an educational community that fosters growth and development, social and emotional well-being, creative thinking, investigation, and problem solving skills."

Elaine Debono, Principal, Uniondale Union Free School District

NEW YORK'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Use **"Pre-K...as a key strategy to improve educational outcomes and narrow the achievement gap"**
- Implement [state's] most **progressive high-quality approaches** to Pre-K and supplement programs with **innovations to strengthen the quality and capacity** of programs, parent engagement, social-community partnerships, and State partners focused on early education.

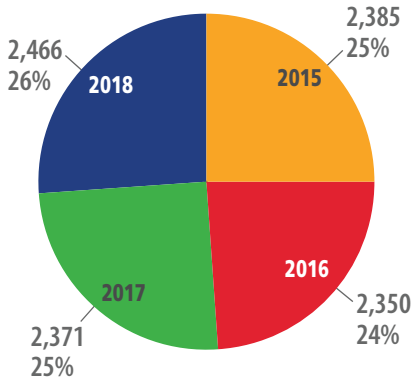
CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW YORK'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Built PDG prekindergarten (Pre-K) on **existing state-funded preschool program**
- **All** PDG preschool **settings met the 12 PDG criteria** for quality preschool
- Five PDG subgrantees represent **different areas of the state, urban, and rural communities**
- Subgrantees could choose from **three assessments to measure children's progress and readiness** for kindergarten: Work Sampling, Teaching Strategies GOLD and Child Observation Record Advantage by High Scope
- New York State is a **Pyramid Model Implementation State**

[1] Abstract – New York's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/nypdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

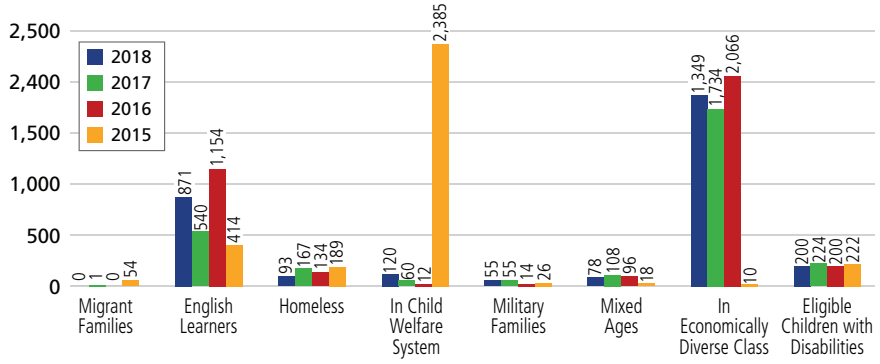
Total Number Enrolled = 9,572



Source: New York 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children New York's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

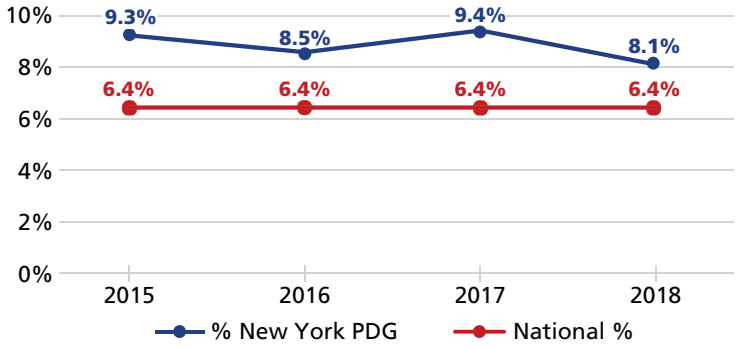
New York's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: New York reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category was omitted in the chart.

Source: New York 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: New York 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress New York made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Secured a commitment from the state that the **Pre-K slots funded with PDG funds** in the five participating school districts **would be continued after the end of the PDG grant**
- Developed a video series, *NYSED Office of Early Learning Video Series: A Guide for Educators Serving Children in Prekindergarten through 2nd Grade* to show **quality learning environments and the instructional cycle**. New York created training manuals to support these videos
- Developed a *NYS Kindergarten Learning Standards Resource* which **consolidates all kindergarten standards in one place**; this resource supports implementation of the kindergarten learning standards

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd Grade (P-3) Continuum:** New York has implemented several initiatives supporting the P-3 continuum. It has developed resources for teachers, coaches, specialists, and administrators to gain a deeper understanding of effective P-3 instructional and assessment practices. It developed a P-3 Tool for districts to use as they work through the four phases of P-3 implementation.

New York has embraced a pre-K to grade 3 approach to early education and launched several initiatives. It created the P-3 Instructional Toolkit designed to help build capacity and strengthen effective P-3 instruction by using the standards and instructional cycle, while ensuring developmentally appropriate, responsive and effective teaching and leadership. It held a P-3 Summer Institute and convened a P-3 Task Force.

RHODE ISLAND

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

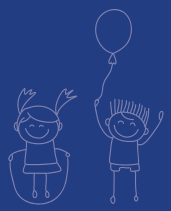
Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Rhode Island Department of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 3,320

Total number of preschool slots* created: **3,320**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **0**[1]

PDG grant supported **11** "high-need" Rhode Island communities

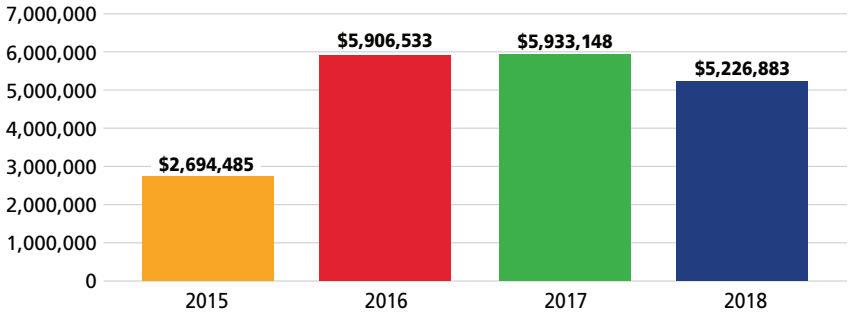


*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"If we want to put our kids on a path to success, the road starts at birth and continues into robust early education programs. A strong foundation is key for future success, and I am grateful that Rhode Island is providing that foundation with high quality Pre-K for more young people than ever before thanks to the Preschool Development Grant."

Angélica Infante-Green, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Rhode Island's Total PDG Funding



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $729,516
Source: Rhode Island 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$19,761,049

"Access to high quality early education can change the course of a child's life. The investment we make in Pre-K today will pay dividends tomorrow for our students, our families, our communities, and ultimately our economy."

Governor Gina M. Raimondo

RHODE ISLAND'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- **Expand access to the high quality Rhode Island Pre-K Program** by accelerating the existing state expansion plan
- **Increase preschool access** for eligible children in high needs communities
- **Improve upon the state processes** and **supports** that ensure preschool quality including increased monitoring capacity, technical assistance and coaching, and a rigorous program evaluation

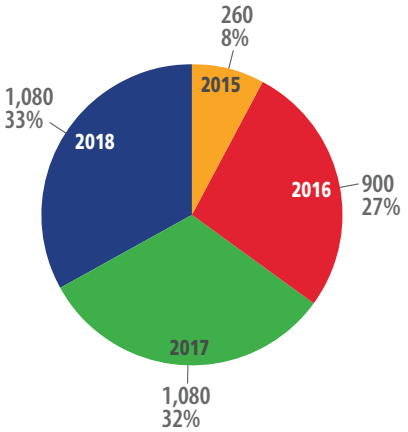
CHARACTERISTICS OF RHODE ISLAND'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Built on the state's **universal prekindergarten (Pre-K) program** which has **met all 10 NIEER benchmarks** for several consecutive years
- Uses *Teaching Strategies GOLD* to **evaluate children's progress** on kindergarten readiness indicators
- Uses a **mixed delivery model** and a **mixed income model** where children above 200% of poverty are in the same classroom but paid for with state dollars
- Through a **collaboration with Bright Stars**, the state's QRIS program, Bright Stars staff conduct ECERS and CLASS assessments for PDG-supported state Pre-K programs to ensure consistency
- **Teachers receive onsite coaching support**

[1] Rhode Island devoted all PDG funds to creating new preschool slots
[2] Abstract – Rhode Island's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/ripdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

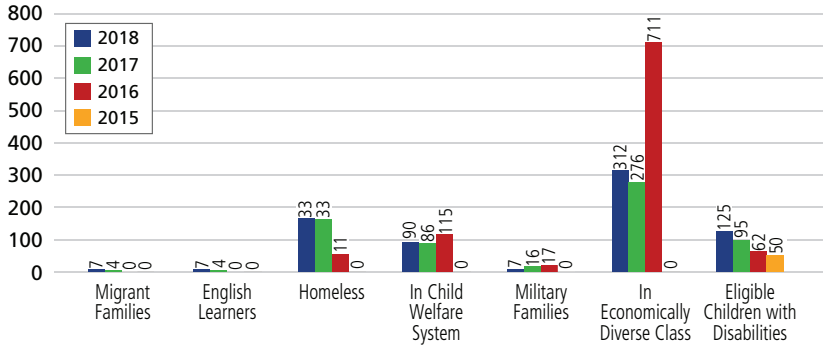
Total Number Enrolled = 3,320



Source: Rhode Island 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

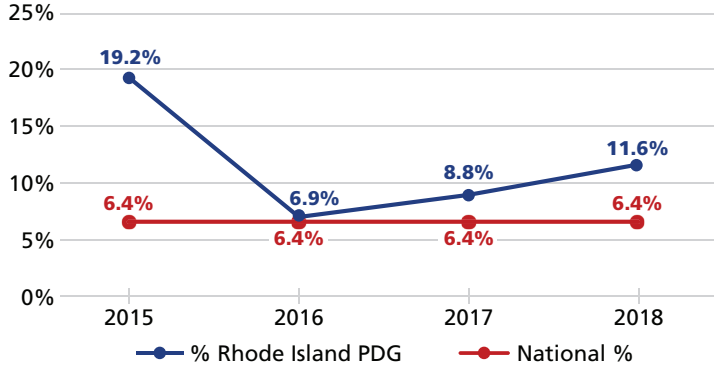
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Rhode Island's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Rhode Island's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Rhode Island reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" and "Mixed Ages" in all four APRs. Those categories are not included in this chart.
Source: Rhode Island 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Rhode Island 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Rhode Island made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Expanded Pre-K faster** than proposed in its original PDG proposal and received funding to sustain PDG-funded slots at the end of the grant
- **Developed courses on Rhode Island's Early Learning Standards** specifically for certified teachers, certified administrators, and for Pre-K to K Transition
- Piloted the **Inclusive Classroom Profile,** which has allowed the state to move its proposed itinerant early childhood special education model forward
- Worked to enable the state's longitudinal data system to **track children from birth onwards**
- Developed two online series on formative assessment that are available to all early educators
- As part of its Birth-third grade work, the state piloted the interdisciplinary Common Core aligned kindergarten curriculum developed by the Boston Public Schools in 21 kindergartens
- Developed a **Graduate Certificate in Early Childhood Leadership** for childcare administrators, education coordinators, and school principals

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Scaling Up and Maintaining Quality:** When Rhode Island was awarded a PDG grant, it had a small but high quality universal state Pre-K program that served 3% of the state's four-year-olds. At the end of the PDG grant, the capacity of the state's Pre-K program had increased threefold without compromising quality. The state ensured that the infrastructure needed to continue a quality program (e.g., professional development, coaching, monitoring) was scaled up along with the added number of Pre-K "seats."

Rhode Island is focused on supporting the B-3 continuum and Pre-K to Kindergarten (K) transitions. It has worked to provide professional development to teachers and administrators in Pre-K and K on appropriate curriculum, instructional practices, and assessment strategies.

TENNESSEE

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Tennessee Department of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 17,941

Total number of preschool slots* created: **6,624**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **11,317**

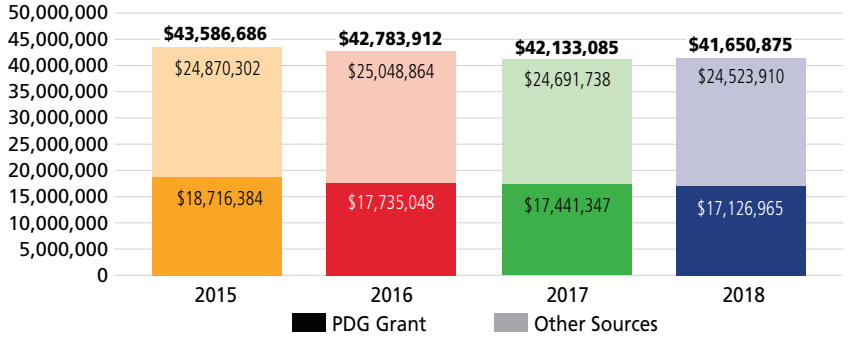
PDG grant supported **2** "high-need" Tennessee communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"The Preschool Development Grant provides quality early learning opportunities to approximately 18,000 children in Shelby and Davidson Counties. In addition, it not only provides Tennessee the opportunity to collect nationally normed data using CLASS, but also allows districts to build up their infrastructure for internal assessments, coaching, and professional learning communities."

Dr. Penny Schwinn, Commissioner of Education

Tennessee's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,232,288
Source: Tennessee 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$71,019,744

TENNESSEE'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$99,134,814

"Each year, for the last five years, the Preschool Development Grand afforded 760 Shelby County families the opportunity to experience high quality Pre-K. Additionally, enhancing Pre-K classrooms in more than 30 childcare centers across the county was indeed beneficial to our community. Without PDG funds, many Shelby County four-year-olds would not have started kindergarten ready to learn."

Kathryn Bostic, Shelby County Schools, Early Childhood Manager

TENNESSEE'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- Substantially **expand access to high-quality prekindergarten** in two high need communities – a consortium of Local Educational Agencies in Shelby County, and Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
- Ensure **100 percent of state preschool programs** in these communities **meet the PDG's definition of quality preschool programs**
- Invest in quality of existing preschool programs including **professional development** and an **innovative coaching model** in Nashville

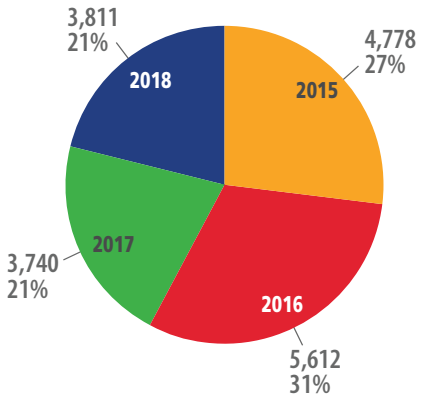
CHARACTERISTICS OF TENNESSEE'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Built on a **strong infrastructure and base of investment in Pre-K** since passage of the state's Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act in 2005
- Used an **onsite tiered practice-based coaching and reflective practice model**
- **Family Involvement Specialists** and **Family Service Workers** support families directly
- **Comprehensive services** were provided through **partnerships with community organizations** (e.g., Catholic Charities)
- Organized an **early learning conference for Pre-K through grade 2 teachers**
- **Collected data on quality** using the CLASS and ECERS-R assessments

[1] Abstract – Tennessee's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/tnpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

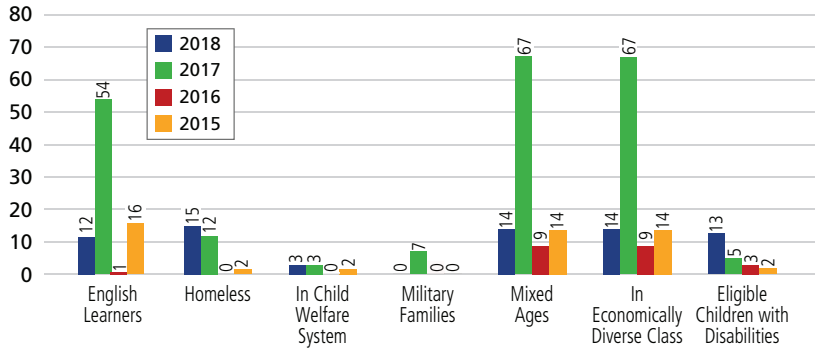
Total Number Enrolled = 17,941



Source: Tennessee 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

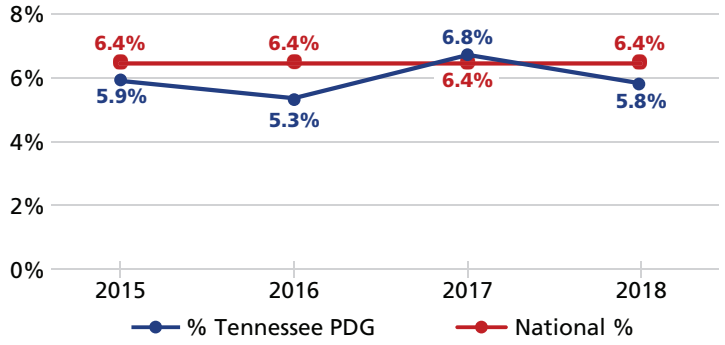
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Tennessee's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Tennessee's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Tennessee reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category is not included in this chart.
Source: Tennessee 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Tennessee 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Tennessee made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Implemented the **Reflective Coaching Frameworks**
- Offered the **Principal Early Learning Summer Institute** and developed the **Walkthrough Tool** for administrators
- **Aligned curriculum** and **assessments across the Pre-K through third grade continuum**
- Offered **trainings for coaches, teachers,** and **administrators**
- Opened a **Family Enrichment Center** for families to meet and talk; the space included child development books and a computer for families to use
- Added an **English Learner coaching position** to support Pre-K and K-3 teachers with English learners in their classrooms

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Coaching:** The Reflective Coaching Frameworks are used to provide individualized instructional coaching and other supports to teachers. It includes the online My Teaching Partners and Making the Most of Classroom Instruction (both based on CLASS results and offered through Teachstone), and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The PLCs use data to analyze teaching strategies, embed reflective practice, and encourage peer collaborations.

The Nashville school district requires all elementary school principals to complete the *Principal Early Learning Institute*, a two-year summer program for principals to develop knowledge of Pre-K expectations, social-emotional learning, early learning environments, and instructional best practices in Pre-K.

VERMONT

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

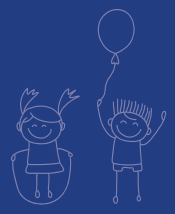
Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Vermont Agency of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 1,665

Total number of preschool slots* created: **511**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **1,154**

PDG grant supported **17** "high-need" Vermont communities

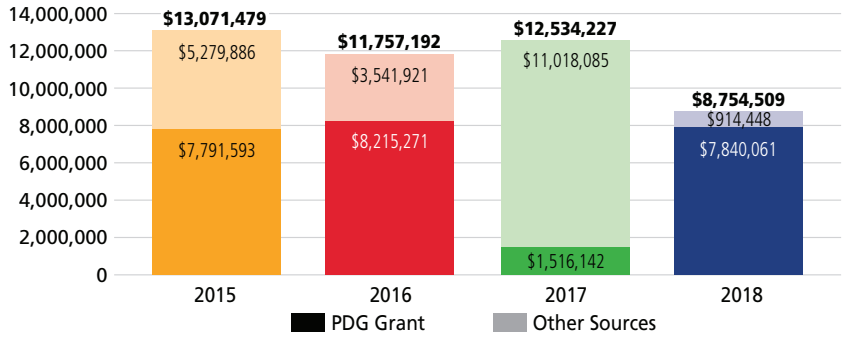


*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"We are grateful for the support that the PDG grant provided to the Agency, particularly regarding our state PK-12 data infrastructure system. Without the PDG grant, we would be unable to adequately capture data regarding some of our youngest and most vulnerable Vermonters."

Heather Bouchey, Deputy Secretary, Agency of Education

Vermont's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Source: Vermont 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$25,363,067

VERMONT'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$20,755,340

"By receiving the grant, we were able to extend our day for the Pre-K students. This opportunity has given the children more time in a structured environment with school readiness being the goal. I have found the extended day to be most beneficial to the children with disabilities."

Preschool Teacher

VERMONT'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- **Increase the quality of the state's universal prekindergarten (Pre-K)** program to meet the PDG definition of "high-quality"
- **Increase** the dosage of **preschool to a full school day** for income eligible four-year-olds in high need communities

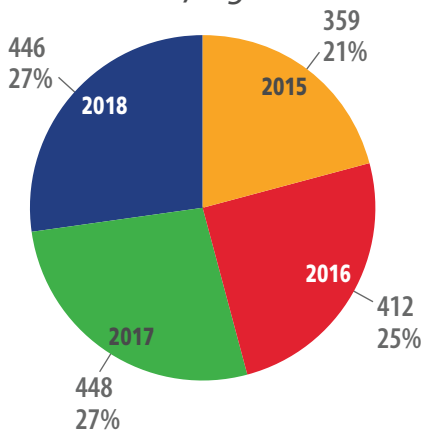
CHARACTERISTICS OF VERMONT'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Built upon some aspects of the **state's universal prekindergarten program** (e.g., mixed delivery model, licensed teacher, four or five STARS in the state's QRIS)
- *Teaching Strategies GOLD* used to **measure child progress**
- Prevalence of **mixed-age and/or mixed income classrooms** required complex budgeting
- Many **subgrantees provided transportation**

[1] Abstract – Vermont's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/vtpdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

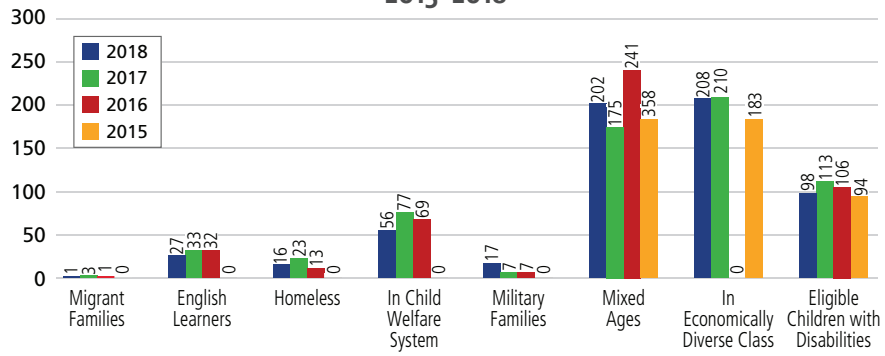
Total Number Enrolled = 1,665



Source: Vermont 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

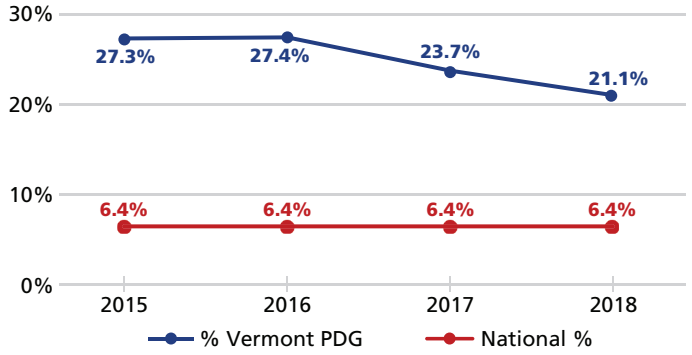
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Vermont's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Vermont's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Vermont reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category was omitted in the chart.
Source: Vermont 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Vermont 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Vermont made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

Vermont has a rich history of supporting the inclusion of children with disabilities in various early childhood settings. This trend was exemplified in the state's PDG enrollments. During all four years of PDG, at least 20% of Vermont's PDG enrollment were children with identified special needs on an IEP.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- State Board of Education adopted the *Birth through Grade Three Vermont Early Learning Standards*
- PDG contributed to the AOE making significant progress in verifying the mapping of **early childhood data elements** to Vermont's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). Early SLDS is now in place because of PDG.
- **Increased the number of licensed early childhood educators** through a collaboration with the Agency of Human Services and philanthropic organizations
- Unexpected result of the PDG was **increased collaboration** between the Agency of Education, Head Start PDG subgrantees, and the Head Start Collaboration Office
- Completed revisions to Vermont's **Ready for Kindergarten! Survey**
- Afforded professional development opportunities (e.g., Early MTSS coaching model, dual language learner series, TS GOLD and CLASS trainings) to PDG subgrantees and state's early childhood field

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Learning:** Vermont has worked on supporting the social and emotional learning of young children for many years. It subscribes to the Pyramid Model Consortium and NCPMI, and recently began implementing Early MTSS.[1] Early MTSS in Vermont includes five components: system support, partnership and collaboration, professional development, high-quality and inclusive learning environments, and comprehensive and functional assessments. Early MTSS onsite coaches guide teachers and programs in their implementation of these practices that support children's social and emotional learning.

[1] Multitiered Systems of Support

VIRGINIA

A PDG EXPANSION STATE

Preschool Development Grant Awarded to the
Virginia Department of Education

TOTAL NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE CHILDREN SERVED FY2015–FY2018: 13,325

Total number of preschool slots* created: **5,566**

Total number of existing preschool slots* improved: **7,759**

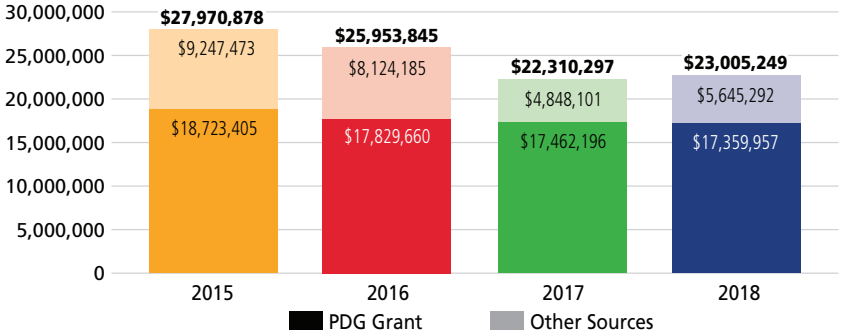
PDG grant supported **13** "high-need" Virginia communities

*The total number of new and improved slots over four years may include slots reported in previous years. However, the total number of children served represents the actual number of children enrolled in PDG programs.

"More Virginia children are kindergarten ready. Thousands of children benefited from 100 new classrooms and the improvement of 100 existing preschool classrooms in 13 high-need communities across the Commonwealth. In addition to high quality instruction, these children and their families were connected to comprehensive services, received home visits, and were supported to promote their children's learning and development. The lessons learned in VPI+ continue to inform our state preschool program as well as efforts in PDG B-5 moving forward."

Jenna Conway, Virginia's Chief School Readiness Officer

Virginia's Total Preschool Investment by PDG Funding and Other Sources



Note: 2018 includes PDG Supplemental Funding award of $1,375,218
Source: Virginia 2018 Annual Performance Report

TOTAL PDG FUNDING:
$71,375,218

VIRGINIA'S INVESTMENT IN PRESCHOOL DURING PDG GRANT PERIOD:
$26,314,975

"During the 4 years of the VPI+ program, teachers, family engagement specialists, and leaders served over 13,000 of the Commonwealth's most vulnerable children, providing them with a high-quality preschool experience and getting them on a trajectory for success in school and in life. A rigorous independent evaluation demonstrated VPI+ students gained a 20.8 months of early literacy skill development and 15.4 months of math skill development."

Jenna Conway, Virginia's Chief School Readiness Officer

VIRGINIA'S MAJOR PDG GOALS[1]:

- **Increase access to high quality preschool** by establishing new preschool classrooms using a model that installs research-tested professional development and curriculum, ensure more systematic provision of **comprehensive services for children and families**, and create effective pathways to **engage diverse and hard-to-reach families**
- **Improve quality of existing classrooms** by extending VPI+ best practices to them
- **Strengthen the state's longitudinal data system**
- Build **higher caliber pre-service and in-service training and credentialing**
- Pursue policy changes to **promote improvements to standards, practice, and access**

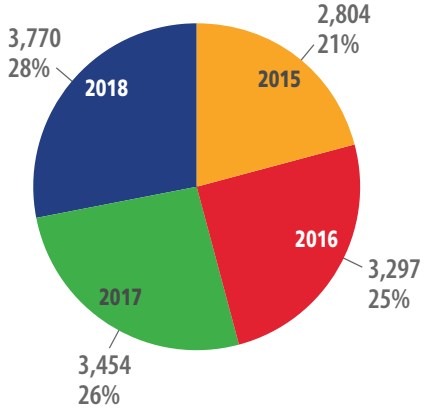
CHARACTERISTICS OF VIRGINIA'S PDG PROGRAM:

- Built on the existing state preschool program (Virginia Preschool Initiative-VPI) but added elements to create **VPI+, a more comprehensive and effective program**
- **Child progress is measured** by the formative assessment, *Teaching Strategies GOLD*
- **Classroom quality is assessed** using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) measures
- VPI+ teachers received **onsite coaching and professional development** through local in-person trainings, online modules, and webinars

[1] Abstract – Virginia's PDG Proposal https://www2.ed.gov/programs/preschooldevelopmentgrants/abstracts/vapdgabsfinal.pdf

Number of Eligible Four-Year-Olds Enrolled in PDG & State Preschool FY2015–2018

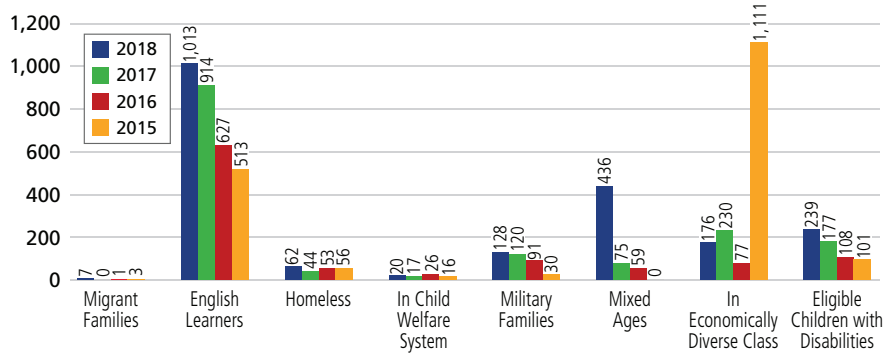
Total Number Enrolled = 13,325



Source: Virginia 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

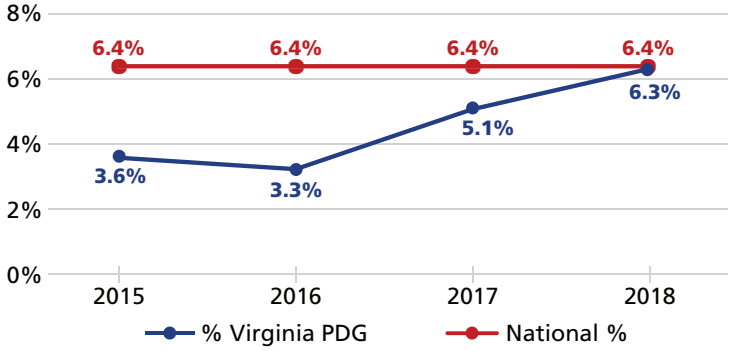
A goal all PDG Grantees shared was to provide the most vulnerable children with access to quality preschool. These included children who were in the welfare system, were homeless, were from migrant families, had disabilities, or were English learners. The chart below shows the number of children Virginia's PDG programs enrolled by demographic category.

Virginia's PDG Enrollment by Student Demographic Categories 2015–2018



Note: Virginia reported "0" for "reside in Indian lands" in all four APRs; that category was omitted in the chart.
Source: Virginia 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Percentage of Children with Disabilities Served in Inclusive PDG Classrooms



Source: Virginia 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018 APR Workbooks

Additionally, grantees were required to offer an inclusive preschool setting and enroll income eligible children with disabilities in PDG-supported preschool classrooms at the state or national percentage (i.e., 6.4%), whichever was higher. The progress Virginia made towards inclusion is depicted in the chart to the left.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- **Exceeded enrollment targets** every year of the PDG grant
- Established a **Cross-Organizational Data Team** to facilitate the addition of preschool data in the Virginia Longitudinal Data System (VLDS)
- Launched ***VPIplus.org*, a multimedia resource library** of free high-quality resources
- Offered **VPI+ Leadership Academies and trainings on coaching**
- CASTL developed a **Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)** to focus subgrantees' improvement efforts
- In the year between enrolling in VPI+ and beginning kindergarten, participating children developed more than 15 months of mathematics skills and more than 20 months of literacy skills in a 12-month timeframe
- Published *Guidelines for Early Childhood Inclusion* in April 2018
- Provided a workshop on **collaborative funding strategies to support inclusion**

PROMISING PRACTICES:

- **Inclusion of Children with Disabilities:** After not meeting the PDG benchmark for including children with disabilities in PDG classrooms for three years, the PDG leadership team took action. It interviewed school districts with low rates to identify barriers, strategies, and resources. The Department and Head Start Collaboration Office offered an ECE Leaders Collaborative Institute to provide technical assistance and professional development to programs. The Institute invited school early childhood special education leaders, PDG- and state-funded Pre-K, and Head Start. There was one message from the state. Ongoing support for increasing inclusion is offered through the online Early Education Leaders Committees of Learners for Inclusive Programs.

Overall, two-thirds of children who participated in VPI+ entered kindergarten ready to learn. VPI+ participation increased school readiness skills based on a rigorous impact study. In the 12 months children attended VPI+, the average impacts on literacy skills was 20 months, impacts on self-regulation and math skills of 15 months, and smaller impacts on vocabulary skills.

APPENDIX B1: NUMBER OF PDG SUPPORTED PROGRAMS BY TYPE OF SETTINGS

Most PDG state grantees partnered with various types of programs to offer PDG supported classrooms in different settings. These settings included public schools and public charter schools; Head Start; faith-based and non-faith-based private schools and community-based early childhood programs; college, university, or technical/vocational school sponsored early childhood programs; and family, friend, or neighbor programs. While the majority of PDG supported programs operated in public schools across all four years of the grant, a significant number of programs operated in the types of settings mentioned above. These diverse settings provided PDG eligible families with options to enroll their children in programs that best fit the needs of the child and family.

Table 6 summarizes the number of PDG supported programs by type of setting in each of the four years of the grant.

Table 6: Number of PDG Supported Programs by Type of Setting: 2015-2018

Type of Setting	2015	2016	2017	2018
Public School	1,309	1,528	2,230	2,486
Public Charter School		42	53	59
Private-School (Faith-Based)1	80	18	66	45
Private School		25	122	90
Head Start	121	144	500	274
Community-Based (Faith-Based)1	237	81	21	9
Community-Based		247	309	355
Tribe or Indian	12	15	24	25
College, university, or Vocational/ Technical	14	14	23	31
Family, Friend, or Neighbor	2	0	-	3
Other	8	7	10	9
TOTAL	1,783	2,121	3,358	3,423

Note: The data collected in the 2015 Annual Performance Report did not ask grantees to specify which Private School or Community-Based programs were Faith-Based.

Sources: Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2015, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2016, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2017, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2018

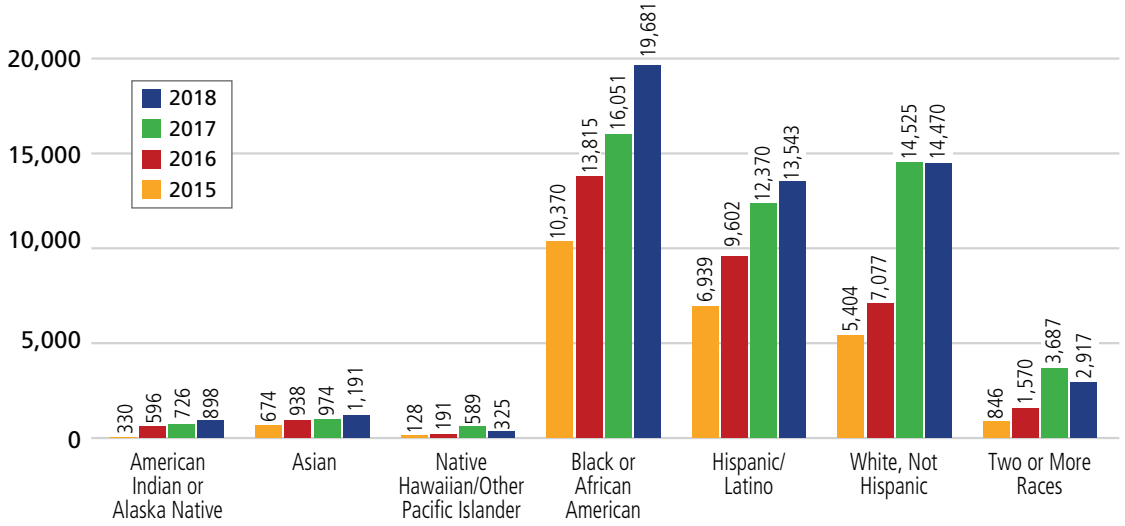
APPENDIX B2: NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED IN PDG SUPPORTED PROGRAMS BY RACIAL AND ETHNIC CATEGORIES

The Preschool Development Grants Program served a racially and ethnically diverse group of four-year-old children and their families. Data from grantees' Annual Performance Reports (APR) detail the composition of eligible children enrolled and served in PDG classrooms.

Over the four years of the grant, the largest ethnic group was Hispanic/Latino with a total of 42,454 children (25.3% of all children served). The second largest ethnic group was children identified as Asian; it included a total of 3,777 children (or 2.3% of all children) followed by American Indian or Alaska Native (2,550 or 1.5%) and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (1,233 or 0.7%).

Children identified as Black or African American constituted the largest racial group PDG programs served (i.e., 59,917 or 35.7% of all children). A total of 41,476 children (i.e., 24.7%) were identified as White Not Hispanic.

Figure 5: Number of Children Served in PDG Supported Programs by Racial and Ethnic Categories: 2015-2018



Note: Racial and/or ethnic data were not reported for all children. Additionally, some children may have been reported in more than one racial and ethnic category.

Sources: Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2015, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2016, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2017, Preschool Development Grants Progress Update 2018

APPENDIX C: PDG GRANTS PROGRAM RESOURCES

PDG Technical Assistance and Learning Opportunities 2015-2018: Preschool Development Grants TA Center

In addition to providing direct technical assistance to PDG Development grantees, the PDG TA Center supported all PDG grantees through webinars, publications, and the GRADS360 PDG website. Many of these resources were made available to the early childhood field at that time and they continue to be accessible.

The following is a list of the Peer Learning Exchanges (PLEs), Community of Practice webinars, products, and publications PDG TA developed and implemented during the four years of the grant. Descriptions of these resources are provided along with links to the recordings, documents, materials, and resources.

Peer Learning Exchanges

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Sustaining the Promise of the Preschool Development Grants: A Peer Learning Exchange Webpage to access slides and PLE materials	October 2, 2018 Arlington, VA	This one-day PLE was scheduled as a pre-conference prior to the 2018 PDG Grantee Annual Meeting. It focused on financing and sustainability strategies at the state and the local levels. A presentation of communication strategies for "telling your story" to cultivate support amongst policymakers and the general public was part of this learning opportunity.
Including Children of All Abilities in High-Quality Preschool: A Peer Learning Exchange Webpage to access PLE materials and resources	July 25 – 26, 2018 Albany, NY	The PDG TA Center worked with the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center to offer this one and one-half day PLE for participants to share and explore innovative and creative strategies for making inclusion an effective component on their preschool programs. Grantees also had time to develop goals and strategy plans to bring back and use in their states. The PLE focused on two specific content areas: Innovative Strategies Used to Support Inclusion, and Financing Inclusion.
Getting the Message Across: How to Communicate with Various Audiences Webpage to access PLE resources	January 17 – 18, 2017 Phoenix, AZ	Five PDG states met in Phoenix, Arizona for this PLE. They developed goals for their early childhood public awareness campaigns, and designed network maps that identified target audiences, drafted messages, and identified strategies for moving forward. The group met again, virtually, in April and July to learn about each other's progress.
Cultivating Excellence: Developing and Strengthening Your Early Childhood Workforce Webpage to access Meeting Materials, Slides, and Resources	September 20 – 21, 2016 Las Vegas, NV	This PLE focused on the critical issue of strengthening and building the early education workforce with an end goal of helping PDG State Teams assess their current workforce development efforts, and generate plans to develop and strengthen their early childhood workforce. The topics addressed ranged from staff recruitment and retention, compensation parity, coaching, and developing leaders. Staff from the Ounce of Prevention Fund presented innovative practices and workforce policies. Grantees were provided with peer to peer learning opportunities and team planning sessions to explore options for strengthening their states' practices, and generate plans for future work.

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Bringing the Pieces Together: Strengthening Alignment Across the Birth through Third Grade Continuum Webpage to access Meeting Materials, Slides, and Resources	June 28 – 29, 2016 Chicago, IL	This PLE was jointly presented by PDG TA and Early Learning Challenge TA. At this PLE, state teams shared information on the B-3 state level work they were doing on building relationships; integrating preschool, kindergarten, and primary grades policies and practices; and aligning system level resource systems to sustain their efforts. Sharon Ritchie from FirstSchool at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill was a guest presenter and facilitator at this PLE.

Webinars: PDG Grantee Community

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Deepening Your Understanding of Best Practice and Evidence-Based Practices Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	November 14, 2018	The webinar focused on highlighting the differences and critical distinctions between "best practice" and "evidence-based practice" program evaluations. Diane Schilder from the Education Development Center was the guest presenter. The webinar provided information on strategies to strengthen and enhance program evaluation efforts. Linkage to the ESSA language on use of evidence- and research-based practices was reviewed. The webinar shared information on improving program evaluation within the early learning field and included recommendations for program evaluation efforts.
Financing and Sustaining PDG Funded Prekindergarten Programs: Funding Sources, Strategies, and State Examples Webpage with Slides, Recording, Resources, and Summary	September 11, 2018	States are in the last year of their four-year federal Preschool Development Grants (PDG) Program. Most of the 18 states will be able to extend their funding and continue supporting their preschool programs through the 2018-2019 school year. But what happens after that? Can other sources of funding be identified? How can other funding be accessed? This webinar focuses on state financing of prekindergarten programs. The presentation explored federal, state and local funding sources and strategies. Bruce Atchison, co-author of the recent brief from the Education Commission of the States, How States Fund PreK: A Primer for Policymakers, was the guest presenter. He shared examples of how states across the nation fund prekindergarten.
Building Effective Collaborations to Support Young Children and Their Families: Three Promising Practices from Preschool Development Grant Programs Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	June 21, 2018	Effective collaborations are key to the successful design and implementation of comprehensive, quality programs and services that support young children and their families. In this webinar, examples of successful collaborations from three PDG states – Connecticut, Louisiana, and New Jersey – were presented. The focus of these collaborations is varied: family engagement, coordinated enrollment and informing family choice, and a central intake system for managing referrals.
Sustainability Part A: Sustaining Quality Through Continuous Improvement Efforts Webpage with Slides, Recording, Resources, and Summary	September 26, 2017	Ensuring the quality of early learning opportunities is a critical aspect of sustainability. It is through an ongoing process of continuous improvement that quality can be realized. In this webinar, Candace Cook and Elizabeth Alves from Tennessee discuss Pre-K in their state, the expansion of Pre-K through PDG, and Tennessee's response to the widely publicized Vanderbilt study of their state's Pre-K program. This webinar illustrated how state leaders can work to re-establish and sustain quality.
Recruitment and Enrollment Part B: Hard to Reach Families Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	April 25, 2017	The evidence is clear: high-quality early learning programs increase children's readiness for kindergarten and beyond. But sometimes the children and families who would benefit most from these programs are not enrolled in high-quality early learning programs. This webinar highlights successful strategies Virginia is using to recruit and enroll children from hard to reach families for its Virginia Preschool Initiative – PLUS program (VPI+). VPI+ is supported through their PDG grant.

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Recruitment and Enrollment Part A: Children with Disabilities - PDG TA Topical Webinar Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	January 24, 2017	Recruitment and Enrollment Part A: Children with Disabilities, is one in a series of Topical Technical Assistance Webinars sponsored by the PDG Technical Assistance (PDG TA) Team. In this webinar, two state "sparks" describe their efforts to establish policies and practices that promote and provide young children with disabilities greater opportunities to participate in inclusive PDG programs. The presenters were Donna Traynham and Sarah Volkenant from the Massachusetts Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education, and Early Education and Care; and Stacey Joyner from Ready Nevada! at the Nevada Department of Education.
Part III Program Evaluation: Using Data for Analysis Webpage with Slides and Recording	November 22, 2016	The PDG TA team facilitated a webinar, Part III Program Evaluation: Using Data for Analysis, addressing how to analyze and use data for continuous program improvement. Participants were provided with information about the benefits and purposes of evaluation. Two general types of evaluation, and different levels of evaluation were examined. Examples of evaluation questions were provided.
Data Part II: Data Use Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Resources	September 27, 2016	The PDG Team facilitated a webinar, Data Part II: Data Use, which addressed the relevance and benefits of using data to achieve positive outcomes for continuous program improvement. The Data Use Framework developed by the DaSy Center was featured. The DaSy Center's Framework is organized around six interrelated subcomponents – Purpose and Vision; Data Governance and Management; Stakeholder Engagement; System Design and Development; Data Use; and Sustainability. A demonstration of using the Data Use subcomponent was provided.

Webinars: Family Engagement Community of Practice

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Accessing Hard to Reach Families Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	February 18, 2016	This webinar was presented on February 18, 2016 by Deborah Watson, Project Manager for Family and Community Engagement at the Connecticut Office of Early Learning, and Melissa Dahlin from the Center for Enhanced Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO). The webinar highlights strategies for connecting with hard to reach families. It identifies potential barriers to successful outreach and recruitment efforts, and offers ideas to address these. The Connecticut Office of Early Learning's Outreach and Recruitment Plan is presented as an example.
Communicating with Families Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	April 21, 2016	In this webinar, Brandi Black Thacker from the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement discusses strategies for communicating with families. Brandi uses the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework as a springboard to discuss Strengths-based Attitudes and Relationship-based Practices that can build and grow relationships with families, a key to successful communication.
The Home-School Connection Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	June 16, 2016	This webinar addressed policies and practices for engaging families of young children. Melissa Dahlin, Research Associate at CEELO, offered an overview of a new policy statement on family engagement. Mary P. Hall, Communications and Outreach Specialist at Pennsylvania Key, described resources available to families through the Pennsylvania Key program.
Communicating with Families to Prevent Chronic Absenteeism Webpage with Slides, Recording, Resources, and Summary	August 18, 2016	This webinar begins by providing information about a report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Parenting Matters. The presenters then discuss an interactive data map (Chronic Absenteeism in Our Nation's Schools) from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Michael Katz and Sedria Wilson discuss chronic absenteeism among prekindergarten students in the District of Columbia. The webinar includes links to recent reports and other relevant resources.

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Engaging Parents, Developing Leader: A Self-Assessment Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	August 13, 2016	This webinar provided an overview of the Annie E. Casey Foundation's new assessment tool for gauging parent engagement in various organizational contexts. Shelly Waters Boots, Senior Consultant at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, shared the history of this self-assessment tool and how it can be used in different contexts.
Maryland's Family Engagement Toolkit: Valuable Resources for Families Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	December 1, 2016	This webinar provides an overview of Maryland's Family Engagement Toolkit, which offers resources aligned with Maryland's Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework for families and childcare providers. Cyndi La Marca Lessner, Early Childhood Coordinator at the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Early Childhood Development, shared the history of the Framework and Toolkit.
Strengthening Families through Early Childhood Education Part 1 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	February 16, 2017	In this webinar, Cailin O'Connor and Anna Lovejoy, senior associates at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, provided an overview of the Strengthening Families™ approach and described everyday actions that early childhood education practitioners can implement to strengthen family partnerships.
Strengthening Families through Early Childhood Education Part 2: Café Conversations: Engaging Parents and Building Protective Factors Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	April 20, 2017	In this webinar, Anna Lovejoy and Cailin O'Connor, Senior Associates at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, provide an overview of café conversations as they relate to the Strengthening Families Approach, and describe the café models used in Illinois, Washington, and Minnesota. This is a follow-up to their February webinar.
Father Engagement is Everybody's Business! Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	July 13, 2017	In this webinar, David Jones, Senior Program Specialist, Office of Head Start, discussed how early childhood programs can use systemic, integrated, comprehensive, and sustainable practices to better engage fathers.
Building Partnerships with the Families of Young Dual Language Learners: Part 1 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	September 12, 2017	This webinar discusses the difference between family engagement and parent involvement. It highlights the importance of family engagement, especially for families of young dual language learners (DLLs). Dr. Colleen Vesely, Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education and Human Development and Family Science at George Mason University, provided strategies for understanding cultural humility and overcoming implicit biases as precursors for building relationships with the families of young dual language learners.
Building Partnerships with the Families of Young Dual Language Learners: Part 2 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary Webpage with Slides, Resources, and Summary	October 17, 2017	This webinar is the second part of the "Building Relationships with Families of Young Dual Language Learners" series Colleen Vesely presented in September. This webinar builds upon her previous discussion on family engagement and how it benefits young dual language learners (DLLs). She identifies challenges that educators may face when working with families of DLLs and provides some strategies for overcoming these challenges and for enhancing family engagement.

Webinars: Young Dual Language Learners Community of Practice

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Tools for Teachers of Young Dual Language Learners Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	February 2, 2016	This webinar, presented by Alex Figueras-Daniel at the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), and Manuela Fonseca, PDG TA Team, explored the tool, Self-Evaluation of Supports for Emergent Bilingual Acquisition (SESEBA). SESEBA can be used to enhance practices and give teachers an opportunity for self-reflection and insights into modifying their practices in order to meet the needs of young dual language learners (DLLs).
Supporting the Early Literacy Development of Young Dual Language Learners Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	April 5, 2016	Dr. Linda Espinosa, Co-Principal Investigator for the Getting on Track for Early School Success: Effective Teaching in Preschool Classrooms project at the University of Chicago, presented current research on the language and literacy development of young dual language learners. She discussed implications of this research for policies and practices. Dr. Espinosa presented evidence-based strategies for teaching young dual language learners.
Early Childhood Programs That Support Young Dual Language Learners Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	June 7, 2016	This webinar presents various approaches used by early childhood programs to support young dual language learners and their families. Dr. Xin Gao and Ada Echevarría provide an overview of the evidence-based strategies used in the Oregon Child Development Coalition's (OCDC) early childhood programs, and the OCDC's dual language pilot project.
Early Childhood Programs That Support Young Dual Language Learners – Part 2 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	September 6, 2016	This webinar presents various approaches for providing high-quality programming for young dual language learners and their families. Lisa Luceno, Director of Early Childhood Education at Briya Public Charter School, highlights several evidence-based strategies used at this dual generation charter school for adults and young children in Washington, D.C.
A Deeper Dive into The Dual Language Learner Toolkit Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	November 1, 2016	This webinar is presented by Suzanne Thouvenelle, Content Liaison with the Office of Head Start's Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC), and Jennifer Amaya-Thompson of the Office of Head Start at the Administration for Children and Families. The webinar begins with an overview of a recent joint policy statement from the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services on supporting dual language learners. The presenters provide an overview of the ECLKC's Dual Language Learner Toolkit and explain how it can be used to support PDG quality indicators.
Teaching Young Dual Language Learners: A New Look at Planning the Environment Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	January 3, 2017	In this webinar, Karen Nameth, author, consultant, and founder of Language Castle LLC, shares strategies for ensuring that early childhood classroom environments effectively support the learning of young dual language learners (DLLs). The strategies include creating and using books, activities, displays, and linguistically and culturally appropriate materials.
Identifying and Assessing Young Dual Language Learners Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	March 7, 2017	In this webinar, Alex Figueras-Daniel, Assistant Research Professor at NIEER, and Manuela Fonseca, PDG TA Specialist, discuss: (1) the importance of identifying children who are dual language learners (DLLs) as early as possible, (2) the existing state policies for early DLL identification, and (3) considerations for creating and using surveys and assessments.

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	June 27, 2017	In this webinar, Dr. Linda Espinosa, Professor Emeritus of Early Childhood Education at the University of Missouri, discusses the essential elements, findings, and recommendations in Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English, a report published by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM). Dr. Espinosa was a contributing author to the NASEM report which focuses on the foundational elements of language development, developmental progress, assessment issues, school entry, and instructional practices for young children from birth through age eight who are dual language learners.
Building Partnerships with the Families of Young Dual Language Learners: Part 1 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	September 12, 2017	This webinar discusses the difference between family engagement and parent involvement, and highlights the importance of family engagement, especially for families of young dual language learners (DLLs). Dr. Colleen Vesely, Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education and Human Development and Family Science at George Mason University, provides strategies for understanding cultural humility and overcoming implicit biases.
Building Partnerships with the Families of Young Dual Language Learners: Part 2 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	October 17, 2017	This webinar is the second part of the "Building Relationships with Families of Young Dual Language Learners" series. Dr. Colleen Vesely, Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education and Human Development and Family Science, at George Mason University, builds upon her previous discussion on family engagement and how it benefits young dual language learners (DLLs). She identifies challenges that educators may face when working with families of DLLs and provides some strategies for overcoming these challenges and for enhancing family engagement.
Supporting Dual Language Learners in Prek-3rd Grade: Spotlight on Earl Boyles Elementary School Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	November 14, 2017	In this webinar, Ericka Guynes, Principal at the Earl Boyles Elementary School, and Maria Adams, the Language Development Specialist at the school, highlight several innovative practices used at their school to support dual language learners and their families. They also discuss the components and outcomes of the school's English Language Development model.

Webinars: Supporting Young Children with High Needs Community of Practice

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Supporting Children with Families Living in Poverty in Rural Areas Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	February 11, 2016	This webinar presented by Dr. Cathy Grace of the University of Mississippi Graduate Center for the Study of Early Learning, explored the challenges in supporting young children with families who live in poverty in rural areas. She reviews demographic information and research data to present a profile of rural America replete with its assets as well as challenges. Recommendations for addressing these challenges are discussed.
Supporting Young Children Who Are Experiencing Homelessness Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	April 14, 2016	This webinar focuses on the prevalence of homelessness among young children. John McLaughlin, federal coordinator of the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program; Marsha Basloe, Senior Advisor for the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development at the Administration for Children and Families; and Grace Whitney, Director of Connecticut's Head Start State Collaboration Office, discuss relevant laws, regulations, and support programs. They also share proven strategies for meeting the unique needs of children and families who are experiencing homelessness.
Supporting the Needs of Young Children with Challenging Behaviors Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	June 9, 2016	This webinar presented strategies for supporting young children exhibiting challenging behaviors. Dr. Tweety Yates, former project coordinator for the Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning and who now serves on the leadership team for the Pyramid Model Consortium, discusses national trends and provides concrete examples of how early childhood educators can proactively address these behaviors.

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Suspension and Expulsion in Early Childhood Programs Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	September 8, 2016	In this webinar, Dr. Walter Gillam (Director of The Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy, and Associate Professor of Child Psychiatry and Psychology at the Yale University Child Study Center) provide the political, historical, and research context for suspension and expulsion in early childhood programs.
Supporting Young Children Who Are Experiencing Homelessness: Part 2 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	November 10, 2016	In this webinar, John McLaughlin, federal coordinator of the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program; Marsha Basloe, senior advisor at the Administration for Children and Families; and Grace Whitney, Director of Connecticut's Head Start State Collaboration Office, provide an overview of recent changes to federal policies and programs related to children and families experiencing homelessness. The webinar also includes a discussion of a new joint policy statement on supporting children who are experiencing homelessness.
Supporting Young Children: Addressing Poverty, Promoting Opportunity, And Advancing Equity in Policy Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	January 12, 2017	In this webinar, Melanie Meisenheimer, policy analyst at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, discusses how poverty and racism affect the well-being of young children. She examines how early childhood policy and practice can promote equity, and the role race plays in the daily work of both policymakers and practitioners.
Supporting Young Children with Incarcerated Parents Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	March 9, 2017	One in every 14 U.S. children has a parent who has been or is currently incarcerated. This trend disproportionately affects children of color. Without adequate support, having an incarcerated parent can have a lasting impact on a child's development and well-being. In this webinar, George Lombardi, former director of the Missouri Department of Corrections, discussed Missouri's comprehensive approach to incarcerated parents. The approach builds compassion and altruism, teaches parenting skills to inmates, connects parents and children, and provides direct support to children with incarcerated parents.
Supporting Young Children in Families Experiencing Substance Abuse Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	June 29, 2017	This webinar presents information on the growing substance abuse epidemic, with a specific focus on opioid addiction. Jackie Newson, Director of the West Virginia Home Visitation Program and the Parents and Teachers (PAT) State Office, describes the ways in which substance abuse affects young children in West Virginia. She also offers some solutions and effective practices the state has used to alleviate challenges caused by substance abuse.
Supporting Young Children Who Have Experienced Childhood Trauma: Part 1 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	September 14, 2017	In this first of a two-part webinar series on trauma, Dr. Patsy Carter, Director of Children's Clinical Services at the Department of Mental Health and Children's Division in Missouri, provided an overview of different types of trauma. She discussed the impact of trauma on health and brain development, and explained what it means to be a "trauma-informed" agency.
Supporting Young Children Who Have Experienced Childhood Trauma: Part 2 Webpage with Slides, Recording, and Summary	November 9, 2017	In the second part of the webinar series on trauma, Dr. Patsy Carter builds upon the information she presented in the September webinar. She discusses the core principles associated with trauma-informed organizations and explains how organizations can become trauma-informed. She concluded the webinar by suggesting strategies for supporting young children who have experienced trauma.

Publications: State Technical Assistance Reports (STAR)

Title	Year	Description
Smoothing Out the Bumps of Transitioning to Kindergarten Link to Document	2017	The transition to kindergarten is an important time in the life of a child. Research has shown that the quality of children's kindergarten transition processes has implications for their future academic and social outcomes, and it also effects the level of families' engagement in kindergarten. Research further indicates that children living in families with low incomes are less likely to have positive transition experiences. This brief examines policies and practices that can be implemented to increase the likelihood all children will a positive transition. It includes a sample of promising kindergarten transition practices at the state and local levels.
State Approaches to Regional Early Childhood Councils Link to Document	2017	This document provides a review of the work states have undertaken with regional and local early learning councils to support sustaining early learning initiatives. Included is information on the functions of the councils and how they are funded. The document explores the varied tasks of local and regional early childhood councils such as advocacy and communications, governance, strategic planning, and implementing state policies. A review of the variety of funding sources used to support states' councils is provided. This document is a joint PDG TA and CEELO product.
Identifying Young Dual Language Learners: State Policies, Home Language Surveys, and Language Proficiency Assessments Link to Document	2017	The United States is becoming a more culturally and linguistically diverse nation. This growing diversity increases the need to accurately identify young children as dual language learners (DLLs) prior to kindergarten. This brief addresses the questions: How are states identifying and assessing young DLLs? What policies and practices are in place? What assessment measures are appropriate and effective? It examines state policies requiring the identification of DLLs in Pre-K, and reviews current practices in home language surveys, and English language proficiency assessments.
CEELO/PDG Fast Fact - State Pre-K and Charter School: A Summary of State Policies Link to Document	2017	This FastFact document is the result of a collaborative effort between CEELO and PDG TA. It was written in response to a PDG state's request for information on state policies that address public charter schools and state-funded prekindergarten education (Pre-K). It answers questions such as, "Which states allow charters to implement Pre-K? Approximately, how many children attend Pre-K in a charter school? What are some of the features and challenges of Pre-K programs implemented in charter schools?"
Braiding, Blending, and Layering Funding Sources to Increase Access to Quality Preschool Link to Document	2017	This report examines the strategies of braiding, blending or layering various funding streams to provide more comprehensive, inclusive early learning programs for young children and their families. Interviews with administrators from PDG-supported local school districts, Head Start programs, and child care centers provide a look into how these local administrators are making it work in their programs.
Suspension and Expulsion in Preschool Development States: Policies and Practices Link to Document	2017	The expulsion and suspension of preschool age children have become growing issues for states, and is receiving considerable attention at many levels. This report shares the ways in which PDG states are responding to the expulsion and suspension of their youngest students. The report outlines the policies and practices being used, and discusses relevant federal and state policies aimed at mitigating the excessive use of expulsion and suspension for preschool children.
Preschool Development Grants and Head Start: Partners in Realizing the Promise Link to Document	2016	The PDG grantees and Head Start programs are funded to provide high-quality preschool education and comprehensive services to families meeting federal poverty guidelines. The overlap of program standards and services across these two programs offers unique opportunities for partnerships. This document provides examples from PDG states that have successfully established PDG/Head Start partnerships. It includes a review of the individual programs' components, several partnership examples, and information on the strategies states can use to support successful partnerships.

Title	Year	Description
Curriculum Policies and Guidelines of the Preschool Development and Expansion Grant Programs Link to Document	2016	This brief examines the curricular policies and guidelines of the eighteen PDG State Grantees. It explores how these states are addressing the curriculum-related requirements of the PDG grant program. This brief clarifies the PDG requirements, discusses aspects of curriculum, and presents a snapshot of the preschool curriculum policies and guidelines of the PDG states.
Comprehensive Assessment Systems in Preschool Development and Expansion Grant States Link to Document	2016	This document compiles information from multiple sources to offer readers a snapshot of PDG states' progress towards implementing a comprehensive assessment system, as well as the tools states are using for each of the components of an assessment system.

Publications: Newsletters

Issue	Theme
April 2018	Emerging Best Practice in Effective Collaborations
December 2017	States' Progress Towards Coordinated Data Collection and Utilization
September 2017	PDG States' Progress: infrastructure; community collaborations; data collection and analysis; workforce development; and birth to third grade alignment
June 2017	Communication Using a Lens of Sustainability as a Focus
March 2017	Recruitment Outreach Strategies for Hard-to-Reach Families
December 2016	Inclusion Services for Preschool Children and Their Families
September 2016	Leadership in Early Education
June 2016	Family Engagement
March 2016	Coaching
December 2015	Birth through Third Grade
September 2015	Early Literacy Practices and Strategies

Other PDG TA Publications

PROMISING PRACTICES BRIEFS: In 2016, PDG TA staff conducted interviews with PDG Development grantees and others impacted by the PDG grant. The result was four Promising Practices briefs. The topics of the briefs were the Early Childhood Workforce, Rural Education, Family Engagement, and Coaching. The interviews were limited to the five PDG Development states: Alabama, Arizona, Hawaii, Montana, and Nevada.

Title	Year	Description
Promising Practices: Transforming the Workforce	2016	This brief discusses the need for highly qualified teachers in PDG classrooms. Read what public school administrators, coaches, early learning directors, and teachers have to say about their workforce concerns.
Promising Practices: Rural Education	2016	This brief discusses ways states used their PDG grant to address preschool in rural communities. Read about the four common themes: provision of full day/full year programs; transportation; partnerships; and a qualified workforce.
Promising Practices: Family Engagement	2016	The PDG grant program has had a positive impact on states' development or expansion of family engagement strategies. Read how the five PDG Development states have built this key component of the PDG program through moving from talking points to funded strategic action; teaching educators how to reach families; and using family engagement coordinators to support programs.
Promising Practices: Coaching	2016	This brief focuses on coaching, an aspect of professional development that has received considerable attention through PDG funding. It describes how PDG states have used coaching to improve teaching proficiency and support educational leaders' efforts to improve program quality.

Other PDG TA Publications

"What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make" Series: This series consists of eight very short "spotlights" (1-2 pages) of the work and impacts of the Preschool Development Grants in the words of parents, subgrantees, administrators and teachers. The series was based on interviews conducted with the five Development states (i.e., Nevada, Montana, Hawaii, Arizona, Alabama).

What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make: Braided Funding Increases Access to Pre-K and Diversity in the Classroom

What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make: PDG: A Partnership to Benefit the Whole Community

What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make: Creating Opportunities in Rural Communities in Hawaii

What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make: From Five Children to Classrooms Across the Diocese

What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make: Braided Funding Leverages District-wide Quality Initiative

What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make: Transforming Pre-K in a Large, Urban School District

What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make: What Parents are Saying about the Preschool Development Grant

What a Difference One Preschool Development Grant Can Make: What Educators are Saying about the Preschool Development Grant

PDG TA Online Professional Development Modules

Early Learning Language and Literacy Series Link to series webpage	This series of 14 professional development modules on early literacy learning, birth to kindergarten, is designed to support the work of early education professional development initiatives related to the language and literacy development of young children across the 50 states and the territories. The two key objectives for the Early Learning Language and Literacy Series are: 1. To provide teachers with background information/research on early language and literacy 2. To provide evidence-based strategies to support the language and literacy development of young children
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in Early Learning Series Link to series webpage	This series aims to enhance professionals' understanding and confidence in supporting children's intellectual learning. The 11-part series offers research, practical application for classroom and home and provides examples of experiences that build scientific, technology, engineering, and mathematical learning for older toddlers and preschool children. The two key objectives for the STEM in Early Learning Series are: 1. Provide early childhood professionals with background information and research on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) learning for young children 2. Provide evidence-based strategies to support STEM learning in varied environments, including early learning settings, homes, and community settings such as museums and libraries

PDG Expansion States: Technical Assistance and Learning Opportunities 2015-2017: Center for Enhanced Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO)

The following is a list of webinars and Peer Learning Exchanges (PLEs)[1] CEELO provided Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Expansion states during the first three years of the grant. The webinars and PLEs were based on the identified needs of the PDG Expansion states although PDG Development states were given access to many of these activities as well.

Webinars

Title	Date	Description
Job-Embedded Professional Development (JEPD) and Coaching: A PDG Peer Exchange Call Slides Recording	November 1, 2016	This webinar engaged state team participants in a discussion about definitions and characteristics of job-embedded professional development (JEPD), why it is important, best practices, and selected examples. Participants considered Virginia's approach to JEPD and coaching.
Building State P-3 Systems Webpage to access Slides, Recording and Resources	September 12, 2016	This webinar focused on the state's role in supporting Pre-K through Third Grade (P-3) system building at the state and local levels. It draws on a study of three states that devoted significant attention and resources to P-3 efforts: Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts. Each of these states has developed state-wide P-3 policy initiatives regarding standards, assessments, and instruction as well as targeted programs to support local P-3 community partnerships.
Why Understanding the Costs of Preschool Quality is Important: A Webinar for Preschool Development Grantee States Webpage to access Slides, Recording and Resources	July 19, 2016	This webinar presents a demonstration and discussion of the Cost of Preschool Quality Tool (CPQ) CEELO developed. The CPQ is an Excel based model that can be used at the state or district level to estimate the cost of expanding high quality preschool for three- and/or four-year-olds.
Approaches to State Pre-K Eligibility Policy Webpage to access Slides, Recording and Resources	July 21, 2015	This webinar reviews key findings from a recent CEELO policy report on state-funded Pre-K program eligibility policies and considerations for policymakers as they review or revise eligibility with the aim to balance accountability and increase access for high needs children. The discussion includes the revised eligibility policy of the Virginia Preschool Initiative, income verification, access and equity.
Effectively Engaging Private Partners: Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) Program Slides Recording	March 10, 2015	The Virginia Department of Education, with assistance from CEELO, hosted this webinar. Virginia shares successful strategies and lessons learned in strengthening the effectiveness of cross-sector partnerships. The purpose and goals of the partnerships are: (1) promote collaboration between schools and community-based partners in increasing access to VPI; (2) provide school staff with successful strategies and solutions for partnering with community-based early education providers; (3) share experiences from two school divisions; and, (4) encourage all school divisions to explore options for partnering with private providers.

[1] SOURCE: The information provided here is on CEELO's PDG TA website http://ceelo.org/pde-ta/

Title	Date	Description
Preschool Expansion Grant Webinar – Setting the Stage for Success: Quality Improvement and Program Evaluation in State Pre-K Programs Slides Recording	March 4, 2015	This webinar featured an interactive discussion with Steve Barnett, Director of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), and colleagues from CEELO. The experts shared insights on the implementation or expansion of the "continuous improvement cycle" in state-funded Pre-K programs. They also discussed how state leaders can ensure they have collected enough data on the short- and long-term outcomes of the program.

CEELO PDG Peer Exchanges. Peer Exchanges provide opportunities for state teams of PDG-Expansion grantees (and in some cases Development grantees) to address critical issues in implementing high-quality preschool programs. The Peer Exchanges were highly interactive and included sharing successful strategies among states, presentations by experts, and time for facilitated state team action planning. CEELO conducted the following Peer Exchanges:

Peer Exchanges

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Birth to Grade 3 System Building Webpage with Meeting Materials and Resources	September 27 – 28, 2016 Washington, DC	This peer exchange focused on the state's role in building effective birth to third grade systems, including: (1) aligning state policy from birth to third grade in areas such as standards, assessment, and workforce development; and (2) supporting local birth through third grade efforts. The peer exchange examined several compelling B-3 initiatives across the country.
Financing and Sustaining High Quality Preschool Programs Webpage with Pre-Meeting Webinar, Meeting Materials and Resources	August 9 – 10, 2016 Boston, Massachusetts	PDG states shared their approaches for determining the true costs of quality preschool, learned about braiding and blending funds, and developed a deeper understanding of strategic financial planning. Participants were asked to watch the webinar, *Why Understanding the Costs of Preschool Quality* is Important, prior to coming to the in-person Peer Exchange.
Recruitment and Enrollment Peer Exchange Webpage with Meeting Materials and Resources	Virtual Meeting held April 19 – 20, 2016	This Peer Exchange was an online, virtual peer exchange. Teams from Maryland, Nevada, and Virginia attended. During the meeting, participants discussed recruiting and enrolling families with high needs, issues around eligibility requirements and determination, braiding and blending funds, and community-level approaches to recruitment and enrollment.
Professional Learning Communities to Build Local Leadership Capacity Webpage with Meeting Materials, Presentations and Resources	December 8, 2015 Washington, DC	Participants of this Peer Exchange heard about early childhood leadership programs two states – New Jersey and Kentucky – have implemented. The programs are the New Jersey Early Childhood Academy and the Kentucky Early Learning Leaders Network. Presenters shared their rationale for creating the programs, funding strategies, the goals and outcomes of the leadership programs, and other key information.
Effective Curriculum Implementation Webpage with Meeting Materials, Presentations and Resources	November 18 – 19, 2015 New York City	This Peer Exchange examined curriculum from three points of effective implementation: (1) alignment of the curriculum to standards, (2) models of professional learning and support for curriculum implementation, and (3) examination of the fidelity of curriculum through a lens of monitoring for quality. Curriculum selection criteria and processes were also discussed.
Part 1: Monitoring for Continuous Improvement Webpage with Meeting Materials, Resources, and Slides for Part 1 & 2, plus Examples of SEA and LEA Monitoring Tools	September 16 – 17, 2015 Washington, DC	In this Peer Exchange, state teams discussed the processes they use to ensure subgrantees are systematically and intentionally improving services with the aim of increasing positive outcomes for children and families. During the in-person meeting, participants discussed the alignment of PDG grant monitoring processes with existing systems of monitoring for compliance across different program rules and funding requirements.

Title	Dates & Location	Description
Part 2: Innovations in Monitoring for Quality Improvement Webpage with Meeting Materials, Resources, and Slides for Part 1 & 2, plus Examples of SEA and LEA Monitoring Tools	March 14 – 15, 2017 Boston-Cambridge, Massachusetts	This Peer Exchange delved into innovative and effective strategies to drive continuous quality improvement while balancing economies of resources (including limited staff) and placing a greater focus on efforts to improve instructional practice. This Exchange built upon the **2015 Peer Exchange on Quality Improvement**.