



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Child Care

Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Initial Grant

HHS-2019-ACF-OCC-TP-1599

Application Due Date: 11/05/2019

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**Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families**

Funding Opportunity Title:	Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Initial Grant Modification
Announcement Type:	
Funding Opportunity Number:	HHS-2019-ACF-OCC-TP-1599
Primary CFDA Number:	93.434
Due Date for Applications:	11/05/2019

Executive Summary

Notice:

- **Applicants are strongly encouraged to read the entire funding opportunity announcement (FOA) carefully and observe the application formatting requirements listed in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*. For more information on applying for grants, please visit "How to Apply for a Grant" on the ACF Grants & Funding Page at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.**

The published announcement is modified. Content is changed in *Section II. Federal Award Information*. The Award Floor amount has decreased.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) jointly with the Department of Education (ED) (the Departments) are soliciting applications from states that did not receive an award under funding opportunity number HHS-2018-ACF-OCC-TP-1379. Those states are as follows: Idaho, South Dakota, Tennessee, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, the Territories of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (hereinafter referred to as "states," as defined in this Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Initiative funding opportunity announcement (FOA)).

This PDG B-5 FOA will fund states to develop, update, or implement a strategic plan to facilitate collaboration and coordination among early childhood care and education (ECE) programs in a mixed delivery system to prepare low-income and disadvantaged children to transition into the local educational agency or elementary school. PDG B-5 is designed to support states in coordinating and aligning ECE programs, resources, and services that already exist, improving program quality; facilitating better partnerships between programs and improving the transition from ECE programs into elementary school; increasing program operating and cost efficiencies; expanding parental choices and involvement; and ensuring families are linked to the full range of needed services.

I. Program Description

Statutory Authority

This grant is authorized by Section 9212 of the Every Student Succeeds Act, 42 U.S.C. 9831 note.

Description

Program Purposes

The initial PDG B-5 grants will assist states to develop, update, or implement a strategic plan that facilitates collaboration and coordination among existing programs of early childhood care and education using a mixed delivery system across the state. These grants are designed to prepare low-income and disadvantaged children to enter kindergarten and to improve transitions into the local educational agencies or elementary schools that enroll such children by:

- more efficiently using existing federal, state, local, and non-governmental resources to align and strengthen the delivery of existing programs;
- coordinating the delivery models and funding streams existing in the state's mixed delivery system; and
- developing recommendations for better use of existing resources to (a) improve the overall participation of children in a mixed delivery system of federal, state, and local early childhood care and education programs; (b) maintain program quality as well as availability of services; (c) ensure availability of parental choice and knowledge about existing programs; and (d) provide opportunities for school readiness for children from low-income and disadvantaged families, effectively transitioning children into elementary school.

The second purpose is to encourage partnerships among Head Start providers, state and local governments, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, private entities, including faith-based and community-based organizations, and local education agencies to improve coordination, program quality, and service delivery.

The final purpose is to maximize parental choice in a mixed delivery system of early childhood care and education program providers.

In summary, the PDG B-5 grants will support states in analyzing the current landscape of their ECE mixed delivery system and implementing changes to the system to maximize availability of quality early childhood care and education options for low-income and disadvantaged families with a variety of providers and partners; to improve the quality of care; to streamline administrative infrastructure; and to improve state-level early childhood care and education funding efficiencies.

Program Activities

In order to achieve the purposes stated under the previous section, all states must apply to use PDG B-5 grant funds for each of the five required activities. Specific to funding for Activity Five, states must seek funding appropriate to the anticipated grant time remaining after the statewide B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan have been completed, submitted, and accepted by the Departments. States that already have a statewide B-5 needs assessment and

related strategic plan meeting the requirements in this FOA at the time of application, or states that expect to have completed these activities early in the grant period, must focus on Activity Five. These states should evaluate the amount of time they anticipate having, determine on which activities within Activity Five they will focus, and identify and describe these activities in their application.

Activity One:

Conduct or update a periodic, statewide B-5 needs assessment of the availability and quality of existing programs in the state, including such programs serving the most vulnerable or underserved populations and children in rural areas, and, to the extent practicable the unduplicated number of children being served in existing programs and, to the extent possible, the unduplicated number of children awaiting service in such programs.

Activity Two:

Develop or update a strategic plan that recommends collaboration, coordination, and quality improvement activities among existing programs in the state and local educational agencies. Such a plan shall include information that identifies opportunities for and barriers to collaboration and coordination among existing programs in the state, including state, local, and tribal agencies responsible for administering such programs. The strategic plan shall recommend partnership opportunities among Head Start providers, local education agencies, state and local governments, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and private entities including faith-based and community-based organizations that would improve coordination, program quality, and service delivery. The strategic plan must build on existing plans and goals with respect to early childhood care and education programs. This includes improving coordination and collaboration among such programs and the State Advisory Council while incorporating new or updated federal, state, and local statutory requirements including the requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9857 et seq.) and, when appropriate, information found in the report required under section 13 of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-186; 128 Stat. 2002). Finally, the strategic plan describes how accomplishing each of these previously mentioned requirements will better serve children and families in existing programs and how such activities will increase the overall participation of children in the state.

Activity Three:

Maximize parental choice and knowledge about the state's mixed delivery system of existing programs and providers to ensure that parents are provided information about the variety of early childhood care and education programs for children from birth to kindergarten in the state's mixed delivery system. The state must promote and increase involvement of parents and family members, including families of low-income and disadvantaged children, in the development of their children and their transition from an early childhood care and education program into an elementary school.

Activity Four:

Share best practices among early childhood care and education program providers in the state to increase collaboration and efficiency of services, including improving transitions from such programs to elementary school.

Activity Five:

After activities one and two are completed, improve the quality of early childhood care

and education programs in the state, including, but not limited to, the development and/or implementation of evidence-based practices, improving professional development for early childhood care and education providers, and enhancing learning opportunities for children.

Program Requirements

States must leverage these PDG B-5 grant funds to develop and expand parental choice and access to the mixed delivery system that provides early childhood care and education programs and services to infants, toddlers, and young children, and meets the needs and preferences of their families for whom programs and services are designed and coordinated.

All funds made available for the purpose of implementing the PDG B-5 activities must be used to supplement, not supplant, existing federal funding investments in the state.

Grantees will be required to include travel costs to send at least four individuals to Washington, DC. to attend a 3-day PDG B-5 grantee meeting.

Program Approach

To fulfill the requirements of this PDG B-5 grant, applicants must describe their current statewide mixed delivery system. States are eligible to apply whether they have not yet begun planning how they will conduct a B-5 needs assessment and related strategic plan, or are in a more advanced phase of implementation of the requirements and will focus their investments in areas such as improving availability and quality in their early childhood care and education programs. As mentioned previously, all states must seek funding for Activities One through Five, but states that already have a statewide B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan meeting the requirements in this FOA must seek a larger amount of funding for Activity Five because there is a longer portion of the grant period remaining to carry out these activities.

We invite state innovation in planning, designing, enhancing, implementing, and evaluating an early childhood care and education mixed delivery system that will support the healthy growth and development of all infants, toddlers, and young children, particularly low-income and disadvantaged children. These PDG B-5 grants will assist states in promoting growth and success among children from birth through age five, improving developmental outcomes at kindergarten entry, ensuring families are linked to the full range of services needed, improving the quality of ECE programs, and facilitating stronger partnerships and transitions between early childhood care and education and school systems.

To encourage partnerships among the various providers to improve coordination, program quality, and delivery of services, states are strongly encouraged to meaningfully engage and develop their application jointly with a full range of early childhood care and education stakeholders and partners at the local community and state levels including Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations. Coordination with partners should incorporate parent input that reflects system design and development that best meet the needs of families and their children.

Early childhood care and education stakeholders include custodial and non-custodial parents, and/or parent council or association representatives, as well as representatives of relevant community partners, advocacy organizations, faith-based organizations, think tanks, philanthropic organizations, and business or public/private partners, and any and all other partners deemed appropriate; state and local early learning councils, if applicable; program

directors and staff across child-serving agencies and programs, including preschool and K-12 school districts, Medicaid/CHIP, Head Start, child care, special education and early intervention, health, mental health, and child welfare; and representatives of Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations within the state.

States, in addressing the *Program Activities* identified earlier in this section, are encouraged to incorporate trauma-informed approaches to early childhood care and education to counter the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences, thereby increasing each child's chances for success in kindergarten and beyond. Additionally, states are encouraged to consider how best to improve the training and experience of B-5 early childhood care and education providers in the state, as well as ongoing practice-based coaching and professional development needs of the early childhood care and education workforce in developing the state's proposed approaches toward improving outcomes for children and families.

In describing current early childhood care and education systems and considering how to invest resources under all Activities, but particularly Activities Three, Four, and Five, states are encouraged to include related activities required by 2014 CCDBG reauthorization such as designing, improving, and/or enhancing Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS); building better consumer information systems to support parents in their decisions with consideration to linking to or taking advantage of the new national CCDBG web site, www.childcare.gov; and incorporating the availability of services, as well as other program characteristics as determined relevant by the state, as a rating component in QRIS or on their state website.

States may not expend funds on Activity Five until the needs assessment and/or strategic plan has been accepted by the Departments and written approval is provided.

For a state that has updated an existing needs assessment and strategic plan, the Departments encourage the state to submit a description of these updated items as part of the application. The peer reviewers will score the descriptions of the needs assessment and strategic plans, proposed as completed. If the state is selected for award, having met the defined requirements, the state will be asked to send a copy of the actual documents to the Departments for review and acceptance. If those documents are accepted, the Departments will give the state permission to begin spending on Activity Five along with all other spending. If the documents are not accepted, the Departments will instruct the state to revise the documents before being allowed to spend funds on Activity Five.

For states that need to develop a new needs assessment or strategic plan, or if the existing documents require significant updates, the state should update these items as part of the grant and follow the separate submission and review process before beginning to spend funds on Activity Five. (See *Program Activities* earlier in this section.)

Post-Award State Reporting Requirements

ACF's Office of Child Care (OCC) is currently seeking approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for information collection under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) on the PDG B-5 Initiative data indicators for post-award reporting. Data indicators to be collected from PDG B-5 grantees, as part of a final report to the Secretary not later than 6 months after the end of the grant period, include, but are not limited to:

(A) how, and to what extent, the grant funds were utilized for activities described in the state's

application, and any other activities for which funds were used to meet the purposes of this FOA;

(B) strategies undertaken at the state level and, if applicable, local or program level, to implement recommendations in the state's strategic plan;

(C) any new partnerships among Head Start providers, State and local governments, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and private entities, both faith-based and community-based, and how these partnerships improve coordination and delivery of services;

(D) if applicable, the degree to which the state used information from the report required under section 13 of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 to inform activities under this FOA, and how this information was useful in coordinating, and collaborating among, programs and funding sources;

(E) the extent to which activities funded by the initial grant led to the blending or braiding of other public and private funding;

(F) how information about available existing programs for children from birth through kindergarten entry was disseminated to parents and families, and how involvement of parents and family was improved; and

(G) other state-determined and voluntarily provided information to share best practices regarding early childhood education programs and the coordination of such programs.

***NOTE:** Consistent with the PRA of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, under this FOA, OCC will not conduct or sponsor – and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information covered by such Act, unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OCC is seeking approval of its PDG B-5 data indicators through the OMB Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. OCC will not request this information if these forms are not approved at the time that reports are due. Please see Section VI.3 Reporting for more information.*

Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this PDG B-5 FOA and any subsequent year in which awards are made.

B-5 Early Childhood State System. -- The term “B-5 Early Childhood State System” refers to core early childhood care and education programs, including the Child Care and Development Fund and state child care, which may include center-based, family child care, and informal care providers; Early Head Start and Head Start; the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program and other state or locally funded home visiting services; Part C and Section 619 of Part B of IDEA; state preschool programs; and programs funded by Title I of the ESEA. In addition, it also includes a wide range of early childhood care and education programs and services that strengthen, engage, and stabilize families and their infants and young children including supports that target health and wellness, such as Medicaid; the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); Title V Maternal and Child Health Programs; Healthy Start; Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); and the infrastructure components that support these programs and services.

Early childhood care and education programs. -- This term has been updated to incorporate and reflect the definition of the term “early childhood education program,” which is defined in

section 103 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003) as (A) a Head Start program or an Early Head Start program carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), including a migrant or seasonal Head Start program, an American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start program, or a Head Start program or an Early Head Start program that also receives State funding; (B) a State licensed or regulated child care program; or (C) a program that— (i) serves children from birth through age six that addresses the children’s cognitive (including language, early literacy, and early mathematics), social, emotional, and physical development; and (ii) is— (I) a State prekindergarten program; (II) a program authorized under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; or (III) a program operated by a local educational agency.

Elementary school. -- The term “elementary school,” as defined by section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801), means a nonprofit institutional day or residential school, including a public elementary charter school that provides elementary education, as determined under State law.

Evidence-based. -- This term is defined by Section 9212(b)(4) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (42 U.S.C. 9831 note). The term “evidence-based” means an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on— (I) strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; (II) moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or (III) promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias.

Existing program.--The term “existing program,” as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Pub. L. 114-95, Section 9212(b)(4), means a Federal, State, local, or privately funded early childhood care and education program that -

(A) was operating in the State on the day before the date of enactment of this Act (December 10, 2015); or

(B) began operating in the State at any time on or after the date of enactment of this Act through funds that were not provided by a grant under this section.

Local educational agency. -- The term “local educational agency,” as defined by section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801), means (A) a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools; (B) Administrative Control and Direction.—The term includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary school or secondary school; (C) Bureau of Indian Education Schools.—The term includes an elementary school or secondary school funded by the Bureau of Indian Education but only to the extent that including the school makes the school eligible for programs for which specific eligibility is not provided to the school in another provision of law and the school does not have a student population that is smaller than the student population of the local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act with the smallest student population, except that the school shall not be subject to the jurisdiction of any State educational agency other than the Bureau of

Indian Education; (D) Educational Service Agencies.—The term includes educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies; (E) State Educational Agency.—The term includes the State educational agency in a State in which the State educational agency is the sole educational agency for all public schools.

Mixed delivery system. -- The term “mixed delivery system,” Section 9212(b)(5) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), (42 U.S.C. 9831 note), means a system of early childhood care and education services that are delivered through a combination of programs, providers, and settings, such as Head Start, licensed family and center-based child care programs, public schools, and other community-based organizations, that is supported by a combination of public and private funds.

Services. --The term "services" refers to children’s developmental supports across a range of domains, including cognitive, social-emotional, physical, language, and literacy, and approaches to learning, as well as nutritional, mental, and behavioral health. “Services” also play a role in providing support for parents including engaging parents as key partners in promoting their children’s learning and healthy development and promoting parental knowledge and choices about how and where their children receive the early developmental supports they need to be successful in school and later in life. Effective partnerships and coordination strategies across the various programs and networks in a State that provide services in these areas are a key component of a B-5 Early Childhood State System, and can improve the quality of and families’ access to the early childhood care and education supports that are needed to build the foundation for ongoing growth, learning, and services.

State. -- The term “State” means each of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands.

State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. – The term "State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care" or "State Advisory Council" is the council designated or established by the Governor of a State pursuant to Section 642B(b)(1)(A) of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9837B(b)(1)(A), which serves as the State Advisory Council for children from birth to school entry. The overall responsibility of the State Advisory Council is to lead the development or enhancement of a high-quality system of early childhood care and education that ensures statewide coordination, alignment, and collaboration among the wide range of early childhood programs and services in the State, including child care, Head Start, IDEA preschool and infants and families programs, and pre-kindergarten programs and services.

State entity. -- The term "State entity" for this PDG B-5 grant refers to the State agency which will have responsibility for execution and administration of the grant based on designation by the State’s Governor.

Tribal organizations. -- The term “tribal organizations” shall mean both “tribal organizations” and “urban Indian organizations”, as defined by Section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, (25 U.S.C. 1603). Here are the definitions from the legislation:

- "Indian tribe" means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or group or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement

Act (85 Stat. 688), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

- "Tribal organization" means the recognized governing body of any Indian tribe or any legally established organization of Indians, which is controlled by one or more such bodies or by a board of directors elected or selected by one or more such bodies (or elected by the Indian population to be served by such organization) and that includes the maximum participation of Indians in all phases of its activities.
- "Urban Indian organization" means a nonprofit corporate body situated in an urban center, governed by an urban Indian controlled board of directors, and providing for the maximum participation of all interested Indian groups and individuals, which body is capable of legally cooperating with other public and private entities for the provision of health care and referral services.

Pre-Application Webinar/Teleconference

The ACF Office of Child Care and ED's Office of Early Learning will conduct a pre-application webinar/teleconference on September 23, 2019 from 3:00-4:30 pm, EST. The goal of this webinar/teleconference is to walk interested parties through the FOA to point out the different sections and what is contained in each. To join the webinar, go to <https://meet33767696.adobeconnect.com/foadiscussion/>. Call-in information 1-866-876-6756, code 2171272791#. The webinar will be posted at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/pdg-b-5-initiative> by Monday, September 30, 2019.

Joining and participating in the webinar/teleconference is voluntary. Only the information provided in this FOA will be presented. No question and answer portion will be conducted during the session. **Participants will remain anonymous.** Please note that opting not to participate in the webinar/teleconference will not affect eligibility, application scoring, or the selection process. Applicants unable to attend can access the recording and transcript at the website referenced in the previous paragraph after the webinar/teleconference has concluded.

Future Eligibility for Renewal Grants

States that are awarded a PDG B-5 Initial Grant will be eligible to apply for a PDG B-5 Renewal Grant. Contingent upon the appropriation of funds by Congress in FY 2020, the Departments will issue a new FOA for PDG B-5 Renewal Grants. States deemed eligible will have the option to apply for Renewal Grants to expand upon activities described in their initial application and to carry out new activities, including awarding subgrants to programs in a mixed delivery system across the state designed to benefit low-income and disadvantaged children, including children living in rural areas, prior to entering kindergarten to:

- expand or improve access to existing programs and to the full range of services that support the development, growth, and school readiness of infants, toddlers and young children; and
- enable programs to implement other activities addressing areas in need of improvement; as determined by the state, and

- develop new programs to address the needs of children and families eligible for, but not served by, such programs, if the state ensures that (1) the distribution of subgrants under this subparagraph supports a mixed delivery system; and (2) the funds will be used to supplement, and not supplant, any other federal, state, or local funds that would otherwise be available to carry out related activities.

A state will be eligible for a Renewal Grant if the state received a PDG B-5 Initial Grant.

As with funding for the Initial PDG B-5 Grant, there is a requirement for a minimum of a 30 percent match each year of Renewal Grant funding.

In the event that an eligible state receives a PDG B-5 Renewal Grant, the grantee will be required to refine and implement their finalized strategic plan and proposed plan for state data collection and evaluation. It is intended that states will use a percentage of the total amount of their grant award during the last two years to conduct the proposed process, cost, and outcome evaluations, and to implement a data collection system that will allow them to collect, house, and use data on the populations served, the implementation of services, the cost of providing services, and coordination across service partners. Evaluation plans will be expected to describe activities appropriate for the funding level and timeline of the Renewal Grants.

II. Federal Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Estimated Total Funding:	\$36,500,000
Expected Number of Awards:	5
Award Ceiling:	\$10,000,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$500,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$5,000,000 Per Budget Period
Anticipated Project Start Date:	12/31/2019
Length of Project Periods:	
Length of Project Period:	12-month project period and budget period

Additional Information on Awards:

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of federal funds.

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Note: For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. **A recipient's failure to provide the required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds.** See *Section III.2.* of this announcement for information on cost-sharing or matching requirements.

In considering the amount for which the applicant should apply, the applicant must determine its capacity to complete the activities listed in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities.*

All states must apply to use PDG B-5 grant funds for each of the five required activities. Specific to funding for Activity Five, states must seek funding appropriate to the anticipated grant time remaining after the statewide B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan that meet the descriptions and requirements in this FOA have been completed, submitted, and accepted by the Departments. States that already have a statewide B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan that meet the descriptions and requirements in this FOA at the time of application, or expect to have completed these activities early in the grant period, must seek funding, appropriate to the grant time remaining, with a focus on Activity Five, improving the overall quality of early childhood care and education programs in the state.

States that require significant time to complete their needs assessment and strategic plan must ensure that these activities are completed before the end of the grant period, including appropriate time for the Departments' review of the strategic plan and needs assessment, prior to any spending on Activity Five. Funding can be spent on Activities Three and Four at any point in time during the grant.

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include states that did not receive an award under funding opportunity number HHS-2018-ACF-OCC-TP-1379. Those States are as follows: Idaho, South Dakota, Tennessee, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming, the Territories of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

With the exception of Tennessee, these states are only eligible to receive this Initial Grant award under the FY 2019 PDG B-5 FOA.

Tennessee, a state that previously received a Preschool Development Grant under the program that existed from 2014-2018, must choose whether it will apply to this PDG B-5 Initial Grant announcement or to the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant FOA (HHS-2019-ACF-OCC-TP-1567).

Applicants must submit a letter on official letterhead, signed by the governor or an authorized representative, designating the state entity that will have responsibility for execution of this

grant. This letter must include a description of why the state entity chosen is best suited to manage the grant, leading to the improvement of an early childhood care and education mixed delivery system serving children from birth through age five.

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: Yes

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306.

For awards that require matching by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, where "cost sharing" refers to any situation in which the recipient voluntarily shares in the costs of a project other than as statutorily required matching, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. These include situations in which contributions are voluntarily proposed by an applicant and are accepted by ACF. Non-federal cost sharing will be included in the approved project budget so that the applicant will be held accountable for proposed non-federal cost-sharing funds as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to provide voluntary cost sharing of non-federal resources that have been accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that have been shown as part of the approved project budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

Grantees are required to meet a non-federal share of the project cost, in accordance with Section 9213(c)(4) of the Every Student Succeeds Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 note).

Grantees must provide funds from non-federal sources (which may be provided in cash or in kind) to carry out the activities supported by the grant in an amount equal to not less than 30 percent of the amount of the grant (the ACF federal share). For example, in order to meet the match requirements, a project requesting \$10,000,000 in ACF (federal) funds must provide a non-federal share of the approved federal grant amount of at least \$3,000,000.

To meet the match requirement, states can use non-federal sources that are not being claimed as

matching sources for another federal award. States are expected to meet their match requirement by the end of this 12-month budget period.

Matching Waiver Pursuant to 48 U.S.C. § 1469a(d)

Matching requirements (including in-kind contributions) of less than \$200,000 (up to \$199,999) are waived under grants made to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (other than those consolidated under other provisions of 48 U.S.C. 1469) pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a(d). This waiver applies whether the matching required under the grant equals or exceeds \$200,000.

Non-federal resources will be evaluated under criteria found in *Section V.1.* of this announcement.

III.3. Other

Application Disqualification Factors

Applications from individuals (including sole proprietorships) and foreign entities are not eligible and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Award Ceiling Disqualification

Applications that request an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period ("per project period" refers only to fully funded awards), as stated in *Section II. Federal Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

Required Electronic Application Submission

ACF requires electronic submission of applications at www.Grants.gov. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not been approved for an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow the applicant to submit applications in paper format. Information and the requirements for requesting an exemption from required electronic application submission are found in "ACF Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Electronic Application Submission" at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6.

Missing the Application Deadline (Late Applications)

The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. Electronic applications submitted to www.Grants.gov after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from www.Grants.gov, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. That is, applications submitted to www.Grants.gov, on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the www.Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at, or acknowledged by, ACF.

Each time an application is submitted via www.Grants.gov, the submission will generate a new date and time-stamp email notification. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times*. Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. **Paper applications received from applicants that have not received approval of an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

PDG B-5 Application Disqualification Factor

The applicant must submit a letter on official letterhead, signed by the governor or an authorized representative, designating the state entity that will have responsibility for execution of this grant. This letter should include a description of why the state entity chosen is best suited to manage the grant, leading to the improvement of an early childhood care and education mixed delivery system serving children from birth through age five.

An applicant that fails to provide this documentation will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Notification of Application Disqualification

Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

Richard Gonzales
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families

Office of Child Care
330 C Street, SW.
Suite 4012E
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (202) 401-5138
Email: richard.gonzales@acf.hhs.gov

Electronic Application Submission:

The electronic application submission package is available in the FOA's listing at www.Grants.gov.

Applications in Paper Format:

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the "Select Grant Opportunity Package" available in the FOA's Grants.gov Synopsis under the Package tab at www.Grants.gov. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to www.Grants.gov.

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) for assistance at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

Each applicant applying electronically via www.Grants.gov is required to upload only two electronic files, excluding Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. No more than two files will be accepted for the review, and additional files will be removed. Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)

AOR is the designated representative of the applicant/recipient organization with authority to act on the organization's behalf in matters related to the award and administration of grants. In signing a grant application, this individual agrees that the organization will assume the obligations imposed by applicable Federal statutes and regulations and other terms and conditions of the award, including any assurances, if a grant is awarded.

Point of Contact

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

Application Checklist

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials.

Accepted Font Style

Applications must be in Times New Roman (TNR), 12-point font, except for footnotes, which may be TNR 10-point font. Pages that contain blurred text, or text that is too small to read comfortably, will be removed.

English Language

Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United States (U.S.) dollars. If applications are submitted using another currency, ACF will convert the foreign currency to U.S. currency using the date of receipt of the application to determine the rate of exchange.

Page Limitations

Applicants must observe the page limitation(s) listed under "PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:". Page limitation(s) do not include SFs and OMB-approved forms.

All applications must be double-spaced. An application that exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description file or the Appendices file will have the last extra pages removed and the removed pages will not be reviewed.

Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements

The following elements of the application submission are exempt from the double-spacing requirements and may be single-spaced: the table of contents, the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, required Assurances and Certifications, required SFs, required OMB-approved forms, resumes, logic models, proof of legal status/non-profit status, third-party agreements, letters of support, footnotes, tables, the line-item budget and/or the budget justification.

Adherence to FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements

Applications that fail to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will be adjusted by the removal of page(s) from the application. Pages will be removed before the objective review. The removed page(s) will not be made available to reviewers.

Applications that have more than one scanned page of a document on a single page will have the page(s) removed from the review.

For applicants that submit paper applications, double-sided pages will be counted as two pages. When the maximum allowed number of pages is reached, excess pages will be removed and will not be made available to reviewers.

NOTE: Applicants failing to adhere to ACF's FOA formatting, font, and page limitation requirements will receive a letter from ACF notifying them that their application was amended. The letter will be sent after awards have been issued and will specify the reason(s) for removal of page(s).

Corrections/Updates to Submitted Applications

When applicants make revisions to a previously submitted application, ACF will accept only the last on-time application for pre-review under the Application Disqualification Factors. The Application Disqualification Factors determine the application's acceptance for competitive review. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors* and *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

Copies Required

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

Applicants submitting applications in paper format must submit one original and two copies of the complete application, including all Standard Forms and OMB-approved forms. The original copy must have original signatures.

Signatures

Applicants submitting electronic applications must follow the registration and application submission instructions provided at www.Grants.gov.

The original of a paper format application must include original signatures of the authorized representatives.

Accepted Application Format

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, all application materials must be formatted so that they are 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins all around.

If possible, applicants are encouraged to include page numbers for each page within the application.

ACF generally does not encourage submission of scanned documents as they tend to have reduced clarity and readability. If documents must be scanned, the font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable. Documents must be scanned page-for-page, meaning that applicants may not scan more than one page of a document onto a single page. Pages with blurred text will be removed from the application.

PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:

The application should be submitted in two files with the total submission limited to 75 pages for all the components in the two files. Pages exceeding 75 will be removed from the

application and will not be reviewed.

File 1 (Project Description) must include the following:

- Project Summary/Abstract - limited to 1 page
- Table of Contents - suggested 1 page
- Project Description - suggested between 65-71 pages
 - Approach: Activities One Through Five
 - Organizational Capacity
 - State B-5 Mixed Delivery System Description and Vision Statement
 - Project Timeline and Milestones
 - Program Performance Evaluation Plan
 - Logic Model
 - Project Sustainability Plan
 - Budget and Budget Justification

File 2 (Appendices) – suggested between 2 and 8 pages

- Letter on official letterhead, signed by the governor or an authorized representative.
- Organizational Chart(s) of State Entity and Partnering Entities

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* for information about requesting an exemption.

Electronic applications will only be accepted via www.Grants.gov. **ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile.**

Each applicant is required to upload ONLY two electronic files, excluding SFs and OMB-approved forms.

File One: Must contain the entire Project Description, and the Budget and Budget Justification (including a line-item budget and a budget narrative).

File Two: Must contain all documents required in the Appendices.

Adherence to the Two-File Requirement

No more than two files will be accepted for the review. Applications with additional files will be amended and files will be removed from the review. SFs and OMB-approved forms will not be considered additional files.

Application Upload Requirements

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other

file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

To adhere to the two-file requirement, applicants may need to convert and/or merge documents together using a PDF converter software. Many recent versions of Microsoft Office include the ability to save documents to the PDF format without need of additional software. Applicants using the Adobe Professional software suite will be able to merge these documents together. ACF recommends merging documents electronically rather than scanning multiple documents into one document manually, as scanned documents may have reduced clarity and readability.

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Professional they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on "Support" at the top bar menu and select "Adobe Software Compatibility," which is listed under the topic "Online Answers." The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test application package. Grants.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions for use, if an applicant is unable to open the test application package.

The Adobe Software Compatibility page located on Grants.gov also provides guidance for applicants that have received error messages while attempting to save an application package. It also addresses local network and/or computer security settings and the impact this has on use of Adobe software.

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms

Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved forms, such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL (Project/Performance Site Location), are uploaded separately at Grants.gov. These forms are submitted separately from the Project Description and Appendices files. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for the listing of required Standard Forms, OMB-approved forms, and required assurances and certifications.

Naming Application Submission Files

Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by www.Grants.gov. Limit file names to 50 characters (characters and spaces). Special characters that are allowed under Grants.gov's naming conventions, and are accommodated by ACF's systems, are listed in the instructions available in the "Select Grant Opportunity Package" at Grants.gov. Please also see <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/submitting-utf-8-special-characters.html>.

Use only file formats supported by ACF

It is critical that applicants submit applications using only the supported file formats listed here. While ACF supports all of the following file formats, **we strongly recommend that the two application submission files (Project Description and Appendices) are uploaded as PDF documents in order to comply with the two file upload limitation.** Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

ACF supports the following file formats:

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format. Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order for a paper format application to be accepted for review. For more information on the exemption, see "*ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*" at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

All copies of mailed or hand-delivered paper applications must be submitted in a single package. If an applicant is submitting multiple applications under a single FOA, or multiple applications under separate FOAs, each application submission must be packaged separately. The package(s) must be clearly labeled for the specific FOA it addresses by FOA title and by Funding Opportunity Number (FON).

Applicants using paper format should download the application forms package associated with the FOA's Synopsis on www.Grants.gov under the Package tab.

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate sections of the application. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the federal government for review. **All application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes. All pages in the application submission must be sequentially numbered.**

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

See *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper format application submissions.

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available in the Application Package posted for this FOA at www.Grants.gov.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs	<p>Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.</p> <p>By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.</p>	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project.
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management	<p>Required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.</p> <p>Active registration at the</p>	See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.

(SAM) registration.	Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov .	
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.

Mandatory Grant Disclosure

All applicants and recipients are required to submit, in writing, to the awarding agency and to the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG), all information related to violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. (Mandatory Disclosures, 45 CFR 75.113)

Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

The Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Grants Management, ATTN: Grants Management Specialist, 330 C Street, SW., Switzer Building, Corridor 3200, Washington, DC 20201

And to:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, ATTN: Mandatory Grant Disclosures, Intake Coordinator, 330 Independence Avenue, SW., Cohen Building, Room 5527, Washington, DC 20201

Fax: (202) 205-0604 (Include “Mandatory Grant Disclosures” in subject line) or

Email: MandatoryGranteeDisclosures@oig.hhs.gov

Non-Federal Reviewers

Since ACF will be using non-federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

General Expectations and Instructions

The Project Description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for financial assistance. It must address all activities for which federal funds are being requested and all application requirements as stated in this section. The Project Description must explain how the project will meet the purpose of the FOA, as described in *Section I. Program Description*. As a reminder, reviewers will be evaluating this section in accordance with *Section V.I. Criteria*.

The Project Description must be clear, concise, and complete. ACF is particularly interested in Project Descriptions that convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project Descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting documents designated as required must be included in the Appendix of the FOA.

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents may be single spaced.

Project Summary

Provide a summary of the application project description. It must be clear, accurate, concise, and without cross-references to other parts of the application. The summary must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the Project Summary:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax, Cell)
- Email Address
- Website Address, if applicable

The Project Summary must be single-spaced, Times New Roman 12-point font, and limited to one page in length. Additional pages will be removed and will not be reviewed.

Additional Eligibility Documentation

Applicants must provide the additional, required documentation, or required credentials, to support eligibility for an award, as described in *Section III. Eligibility Information* of this announcement.

Expected Outcomes

Identify the outcomes to be achieved from the project. Outcomes should relate to the overall program as described in *Section I. Program Description*. If research is part of the proposed work, outcomes must include hypothesized results and implications of the proposed research.

Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application.

Cite potential obstacles and challenges to accomplishing project goals and explain strategies that will be used to address these challenges.

B-5 Mixed Delivery System Description and Vision Statement

The applicant must describe the progress and successes, as well as hurdles and challenges shaping the development and implementation of a robust mixed delivery and state early childhood care and education system.

The applicant is required to clearly describe:

- The current landscape of B-5 Early Childhood State System and a vision statement for its continued development;
- The policies and programs (enacted and implemented) that support the state's B-5 mixed delivery system, including all public or private funding sources that target improvements in early childhood outcomes;
- How key partners and stakeholders, including families and caregivers, as well as local and community-based organizations and potential public-private partnerships, may be leveraged to achieve the described vision and the identified activities of this grant;
- How the state's vision will increase the quality, coordination, alignment, and efficiency of programs and services, including improving transitions from early childhood care and education programs into the elementary grades;
- Known gaps, anticipated challenges, and opportunities for improvement in the coordination, alignment, and delivery of quality services – and proposed strategies to address each; and
- Populations of children targeted, and intended short-term and long-term outcomes for those populations.

B-5 Statewide Needs Assessment Plan

The applicant must provide a clear description of how they will address the required activity outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity One* and how much funding they plan to spend on this activity. Specifically, the applicant must describe its planned process for developing or updating and conducting an effective needs assessment, including defining the scope and developing a work plan. The applicant must also identify how other federal and state needs assessments may be leveraged to inform this B-5 statewide needs assessment.

States that have already developed a B-5 statewide needs assessment meeting the requirements should describe their needs assessment as part of their application to be assessed based on the evaluation criteria at *Section V.1. Criteria*.

The needs assessment must:

- Describe how the state defines key terms, including: quality early childhood care and education, availability, vulnerable or underserved, and children in rural areas;
- Describe the populations of children who are vulnerable or underserved, and children in rural areas;
- Identify the current quality and availability of early childhood care and education, including for vulnerable or underserved children, and children in rural areas;
- Identify, to the extent possible, the unduplicated number of children being served in existing programs and the unduplicated number of children awaiting service in such programs;
- Identify gaps in data or research about the quality and availability of programming and supports for children birth through five, considering the needs of working families, as well as those who are seeking employment or in job training;
- Describe the state's plan to fill these gaps in data or research to support collaboration between programs and services and maximize parental choice;
- Describe the state's plan for developing and tracking measurable indicators of progress that align with the state's vision and desired outcomes;
- Describe the state's plan for addressing ECE facilities and facility-related concerns;
- Include an analysis of barriers to the funding and provision of high-quality early childhood care and education services and supports, and identify opportunities for more efficient use of resources; and
- Address transition supports and gaps that affect how children move between early childhood care and education programs and school entry.

Applicants that propose a meaningful plan in their statewide B-5 needs assessment to measure the unduplicated number of children being served in the existing programs and/or the unduplicated number of children awaiting service in such programs may receive up to 5 bonus points.

B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan

The applicant must provide a clear description of how they will address the required activity outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity Two* and how much funding they plan to spend on this activity. Specifically, the applicant must describe the process by which they will develop or update a strategic plan, clearly describing how they will build on previous strategic planning efforts for relevant programs and services. States that have already developed a B-5 statewide strategic plan meeting the requirements must describe the plan in their application. States must describe their process for updating the plan to align with their vision statement, logic model, and needs assessment and identify how they will track progress toward achieving identified goals.

In describing its planned process for developing the statewide strategic plan, the applicant is required to:

- Describe how the state's strategic plan will lead to cost and resource efficiencies;
- Describe how the strategic plan development and implementation processes will engage the full range of stakeholders, identifying which stakeholders will be meaningfully impacted;
- Recommend partnership, collaboration, coordination, and quality improvement activities and opportunities that can leverage existing resources to improve coordination, policy alignment, program quality and service delivery, across early childhood care and education programs in the B-5 Early Childhood State System, including activities to improve children's transition from early childhood care and education programs into elementary schools;
- Incorporate new or updated federal, state, and local statutory requirements and identify barriers to the various levels of collaboration and coordination;
- Describe how the strategic plan process and proposed activities will build on relevant state and program plans to improve coordination and collaboration among its programs, better serve children and families in existing programs, and increase the overall participation of children in the state in high quality early childhood care and education programs and services in a mixed delivery system;
- Describe how the state's strategic plan will make use of indicator data to assess progress and to inform needed revisions to the plan over time, as well as to assess key desired outcomes related to delivery of services; and
- Provide a description of how the state will include the State Advisory Council in the development and implementation of its strategic plan.

Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge

The applicant must provide a clear description of how they will address the required activity outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity Three*. Specifically, the applicant must provide a plan with strategies and activities to ensure that parents and families are provided timely, accurate information in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner. The plan must address the variety, quality, access, and affordability of early childhood care and education programs for children from birth through kindergarten entry in the state's mixed delivery system of existing programs and providers. Also, the applicant must address how they will promote and increase involvement by and engagement of parents and family members in the development and education of their children.

Additionally, the applicant is required to:

- Describe how they will collaborate and coordinate with the wide range of early childhood care and education programs and services that strengthen, engage, and help stabilize children, including the various health and mental health and wellness supports such as Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Title V Maternal and Child Health Programs, Healthy Start, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the infrastructure components that support these programs and services;
- Describe how they will collaborate with IDEA programs in the state to ensure that families who have concerns about their child's development and may suspect a

developmental delay or disability are connected to the IDEA Part C early intervention program or Part B Section 619 preschool special education program and ensure infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities have access to high-quality inclusive early childhood care and education programs;

- Describe how the state will ensure collaboration occurs with the state agency administering CCDF, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, early learning councils or similar entities, State Head Start Collaboration Office, and any other collaborative partners, as identified by the state; and ensure efficient coordination of the state's efforts to maximize parental choice and build on and enhance existing strategies and activities;
- Describe how the state will empower parents and programs to facilitate smooth transitions for children from birth through preschool, and into elementary school; and
- Describe how parent education initiatives will target particular populations of parents, including fathers, parents who speak a home language other than English, and families who are identified as most vulnerable.

Sharing Best Practices among State Early Childhood Care and Education Providers

The applicant must provide a clear description of how they will address the required activity outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity Four* and how much funding they plan to spend on this activity. Specifically, the applicant must provide a plan for how to share best practices among early childhood care and education program providers in the state to reduce duplication of effort, leverage financial and other resources, and increase program quality, collaboration, and efficiency of B-5 services, including improving transitions across programs and into the early elementary grades.

The applicant is also required to:

- Describe the partnerships and opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and sharing best practices, as they relate to efforts conducted by researchers, national technical assistance centers, Head Start State Collaboration Offices, state educational agencies, lead agencies for Part C of IDEA, national organizations, and other relevant entities identified by the state; and
- Discuss how the state will provide systematic technical assistance to local communities and community-based organizations, and on what topics.

Improving Overall Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs/Providers/Services

The applicant must provide a clear description of how they will address the required activities outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity Five* and how much funding they plan to spend on this activity. Specifically, the applicant must identify how much time within the 12-month project period it anticipates will remain, once the B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan are completed, for the applicant to focus on activities related to improving the overall quality of early childhood care and education programs and providers within the state using evidence-based practices.

As described earlier, all states must seek funding for Activities One through Five. However, states that already have a statewide B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan meeting

the requirements of this FOA at the time of application, or states that expect to have completed these activities early in the grant period, must seek additional funding for Activity Five.

These states should evaluate the amount of time they anticipate having, determine which activities within Activity Five they will focus on, and identify and describe these activities in their application.

We encourage states to consider how to align their quality improvement spending with activities required under the CCDBG Act and to build on previous quality improvement investments made through other federal sources, such as the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge and the earlier Preschool Development Grants Program.

Project Timeline and Milestones

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections (for the entire project period) of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Organizational Capacity

Provide the following information on the applicant organization and, if applicable, on any cooperating partners:

- Organizational charts;
- Evidence that the applicant organization, and any partnering organizations, have relevant experience and expertise with administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of programs similar to that offered under this announcement;
- Evidence that each participating organization, including partners, contractors and/or subrecipients, possess the organizational capability to fulfill their role(s) and function(s) effectively.

The applicant must discuss how the administration and management of this grant will be supported by the organizational capacity of the designated state entity.

The applicant is required to:

- List the agencies and key individuals that will play a role in grant activities and describe their roles and responsibilities; provide information about key staff regarding their expertise and experience doing similar work, including evaluation expertise where appropriate;
- Discuss how grant activities align with other federal, state, or local early childhood care and education initiatives that may impact the state, local, and/or community-level implementation of a B-5 mixed delivery system; and
- Discuss the organizational capacity of the state entity to administer the funding and

manage the development and sustainability of the required grant activities.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities

Grantees are required to ensure proper oversight in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D. These regulations set forth the following standards for effective oversight:

- Financial and Program Management
- Property (if applicable by program legislation)
- Procurement
- Performance and Financial Monitoring and Reporting
- Subrecipient Monitoring and Management
- Record Retention and Access
- Remedies for Noncompliance

Describe the framework (e.g. governance, policies and procedures, risk management, systems) in place to ensure proper oversight of federal funds and activities in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart D. The description must include: system(s) for record-keeping and financial management; procedures to identify and mitigate risks and issues (e.g., audit findings, continuous program performance assessment findings, program monitoring); and those key staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities staff, and, if applicable, partner(s) and/or subrecipient(s).

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

Applicants must describe a plan for the program performance evaluation that will contribute to continuous quality improvement. The program performance evaluation must monitor ongoing activities and the progress towards the goals and objectives of the project. Include descriptions of the inputs (e.g., organizational profile, collaborative partners, key staff, budget, and other resources), key activities, and expected outcomes of the funded activities. The plan must explain how the inputs, activities, and outcomes will be measured; how the resulting information will be used to inform improvement of funded activities; and any processes that support the overall data quality of the performance outcomes.

Applicants must describe the organizational systems and processes that will effectively track performance outcomes, including a description of how the organization will collect and manage data (e.g., assign skilled staff, data management software, data integrity, etc.) in a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles for implementing the program performance evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed. Applicants must include a timeline for how information from the quality improvement evaluation will be reviewed and applied to the ongoing project.

In addition to aligning with the state's logic model, the program performance evaluation should align with the state's vision statement and needs assessment and should address how the state anticipates it will assess processes, costs, and outcomes of activities to be completed, including those set forth in the strategic plan.

The program performance evaluation approach should include a description of existing program

data that could be used in the process and outcome evaluations of the system to deliver early childhood care and education services and other early childhood services, as well as new data the state presently anticipates will need to be collected to complete their program performance evaluation.

Applicants are required to describe an approach to develop a program performance evaluation plan that shall ultimately:

- Identify, refine, and finalize, based on findings from the needs assessment, the target population or geographic areas identified in the strategic plan that will benefit most from implementation of early childhood care and education and coordinated services;
- Include a refinement of the project logic model and identify associated process and cost indicators and outcomes;
- Identify changes in short and long-term child, family, and program/service implementation outcomes linked with proposed strategic plan activities;
- Identify and finalize indicators and metrics necessary to examine proposed process, cost, and program implementation reporting;
- Identify existing data systems and data elements aligned with proposed metrics and gaps in data needs to be able to address proposed process and implementation reporting;
- Identify new data sources to complement, as necessary, program and service data to address proposed implementation reporting and, as necessary, plan for the development of a new data system;
- Identify an appropriate methodological approach that includes a strategy for data collection, sampling, measurement, and analysis;
- Work with technical assistance providers to finalize implementation reporting plans; and
- Identify how implementation reporting findings will be used to inform continuous learning and improvement efforts.

Note: Once chosen, grantees will have the opportunity to revise and finalize their program performance evaluation plans with the support of a designated federal technical assistance provider during the period of performance of this first year of funding.

Logic Model

Applicants must submit a logic model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a diagram that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the links among program elements. Logic models must target the identified objectives and goals of the grant program. While there are many versions of logic models, for the purposes of this announcement, the logic model may include connections between the following items:

- Inputs (e.g., additional resources, organizational profile, collaborative partner(s), key staff, budget);
- Target population (e.g., the individuals to be served, identified needs);

- Activities, Mechanisms, Processes (e.g., evidence-based practices, best practices, approach, key intervention and evaluation components, continuous quality improvement efforts);
- Outputs (i.e., the immediate and direct results of program activities);
- Outcomes (i.e., the expected short and long-term results the project is designed to achieve, typically described as changes in people or systems), and
- Goals of the project (e.g., overarching objectives, reasons for proposing the project).

Project Sustainability Plan

Applicants must propose a plan for project sustainability after the period of federal funding ends. Grantees are expected to sustain key elements of their grant projects, e.g., strategies or services and interventions, which have been effective in improving practices and outcomes.

Describe the approach to project sustainability that will be most effective and feasible. Provide a description of key individuals and/or organizations whose support will be required. Address the types of alternative support that will be required to maintain the program. If the proposed project involves key project partners, describe how their cooperation and/or collaboration will be maintained after the end of federal funding.

Dissemination Plan

Applicants must propose a plan to disseminate reports, products, and/or grant project outputs so that project information is provided to key target audiences. Dissemination plans must include:

- Dissemination goals and objectives;
- Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences;
- Allocation of sufficient staff time and budget for dissemination purposes;
- A preliminary plan to evaluate the extent to which target audiences have received project information and have used it as intended, and
- The timeline for dissemination.

Third-Party Agreements

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. Letters of Commitment and MOUs must both clearly describe the roles and responsibilities for project activities and the support and/or resources that the third-party (i.e., subrecipient, contractor, or other cooperating entity) is committing. The Letters of Commitment and MOUs must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements.

Collaboration/consortia applicants must provide letters of commitment or MOUs identifying the primary applicant and all collaborators that are responsible for project activities.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C. Applicants are encouraged to review the form instructions in addition to the guidance in this section. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

Project budget calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance). See the table in *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* listing the appropriate budget forms to use in this application.

Special Note: *The Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Appropriations Act, 2019, (Division H, Title II, Sec. 202), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$189,600. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget for the initial budget period only (typically the first 12 months of the project) using the SF-424A and/or SF-424C, as applicable.

Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for only the first budget period of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

The applicant is required to specify the amount projected to be spent on each of the required statutory Activities One through Five: needs assessment, strategic plan, maximizing parental choice and knowledge, sharing best practices, and improving overall quality.

The applicant must indicate the amount of their grant funding that will be used to support related technical assistance activities leading to successful implementation of grant requirements. In addition, the applicant must include travel costs for at least four individuals to attend a 3-day meeting in Washington, DC.

Finally, the applicant must provide a clear description of how the state will address *Section III.2 Cost Sharing or Matching* requirement, including:

- Describing and submitting appropriate evidence of a credible plan for obtaining and using non-federal matching funds, cash, or in-kind services to support PDG B-5 implementation, identifying the source(s) of its cost match; and

- Indicating that the required match of at least 30 percent will be met by the end of the year.

Use the following guidelines for preparing the project budget and budget justification. The budget justification includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail. Applications should only include allowable costs in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

Personnel

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages. See 45 CFR 75.430 for more information on allowable personnel costs. Do not include the personnel costs of consultants, contractors and subrecipients under this category.

Justification: For each position, provide: the name of the individual (if known), their title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees in addition to regular salaries and wages. For more information on Fringe Benefits please refer to 45 CFR 75.431. Do not include the fringe benefits of consultants, contractors, and subrecipients.

Typically, fringe benefit amounts are determined by applying a calculated rate for a particular class of employee (full-time or part-time) to the salary and wages requested. Fringe rates are often specified in the approved indirect cost rate agreement. Fringe benefits may be treated as a direct cost or indirect cost in accordance with the applicant's accounting practices. Only fringe benefits as a direct cost should be entered under this category.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement, taxes, etc.

Travel

Description: Costs of project-related travel (i.e., transportation, lodging, subsistence) by employees of the applicant organization who are in travel status on official business. Travel by non-employees such as consultants, contractors or subrecipients should be included under the Contractual line item. Local travel for employees in non-travel status should be listed on the Other line. Travel costs should be developed in accordance with the applicant's travel policies and 45 CFR 75.474.

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of travelers; travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key project staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops/conferences/grantee

orientations should be detailed in the budget justification.

Equipment

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.) See 45 CFR 75.439 for more information.

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposition of the equipment after the project ends.

Supplies

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property, other than included under the Equipment category. This includes office and other consumable supplies with a per-unit cost of less than \$5,000. See 45 CFR 75.453 for more information.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

Contractual

Description: Cost of all contracts and subawards except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contract or subawards with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Costs related to individual consultants should be listed on the Other line. Recipients are required to use 45 CFR 75.326-.340 procurement procedures, and subawards are subject to the requirements at 45 CFR 75.351-.353.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Applicants must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold stated in [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\) Memorandum M-18-18: Implementing Statutory Change to the Micro-Purchase and the Simplified Acquisition Thresholds for Financial Assistance](#) and 48 CFR Subpart 2.1 (when amended accordingly). Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Indicate whether the proposed agreement qualified as a subaward or contract in accordance with

45 CFR 75.351. Provide the name of the contractor/subrecipient (if known), a description of anticipated services, a justification for why they are necessary, a breakdown of estimated costs, and an explanation of the selection process. In addition, for subawards, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each subaward, by entity name, along with the same justifications referred to in these budget and budget justification instructions.

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include, but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel, insurance, food (when allowable), medical and dental costs (non-personnel), professional service costs (including audit charges), space and equipment rentals, printing and publications, computer use, training costs (such as tuition and stipends), staff development costs, and administrative costs. Please note costs must be allowable per 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of costs, computations, a narrative description, and a justification for each cost under this category.

Indirect Charges

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category has one of two methods that an applicant can select. An applicant may only select one.

1. The applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant federal agency.

Justification: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed. Choosing to charge a lower rate will not be considered during the objective review or award selection process.

2. Per 45 CFR 75.414(f) Indirect (F&A) costs, "any non-Federal entity [i.e., applicant] that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, ... may elect to charge a *de minimis* rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in Section 75.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs, but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as the non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time."

Justification: This method only applies to applicants that have never received an approved negotiated indirect cost rate from HHS or another cognizant federal agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposal may request the 10 percent *de minimis* rate. When the applicant chooses this method, costs included in the indirect cost pool must not be charged as direct costs to the grant.

Commitment of Non-Federal Resources

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424. This line should be used to indicate required and/or voluntary committed cost sharing or matching, if applicable.

For all federal awards, any shared costs or matching funds and all contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind contributions, must be accepted as part of the recipient's cost sharing or matching when such contributions meet all of the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306.

For awards that require matching or cost sharing by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources (at or above the statutory requirement) in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards. **A recipient's failure to provide the statutorily required matching or cost sharing amount (and any voluntary committed amount in excess) may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

For awards that do not require matching or cost sharing by statute, recipients are not expected to provide cost sharing or matching. However, recipients are allowed to voluntarily propose a commitment of non-federal resources. If an applicant decides to voluntarily contribute non-federal resources towards project costs and the costs are accepted by ACF, the non-federal resources will be included in the approved project budget. The applicant will be held accountable for all proposed non-federal resources as shown in the Notice of Award (NOA). **A recipient's failure to meet the voluntary amount of non-federal resources that was accepted by ACF as part of the approved project costs and that was identified in the approved budget in the NOA, may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.**

Justification: If an applicant is relying on cost share or match from a third-party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s). In-kind contributions must be accompanied by a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. Matching or cost sharing must be documented by budget period (or by project period for fully funded awards).

Applications that lack the required supporting documentation will not be disqualified from competitive review; however, it may impact an application's scoring under the evaluation criteria in *Section V.I. Criteria* of this announcement.

Paperwork Reduction Act Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C §§ 3501-3521, the public reporting

burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 02/28/2022. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via www.Grants.gov

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for ACF program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

Electronic Delivery

ACF is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. ACF applicants are required to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

How to Register and Apply through Grants.gov

Read the following instructions about registering to apply for ACF funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

Obtain a DUNS Number: All entities applying for funding, including renewal funding, must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). Applicants must enter the DUNS number in the data entry field labeled "Organizations DUNS" on the SF-424 form.

For more detailed instructions for obtaining a DUNS number, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

Register with SAM: In addition to having a DUNS number, organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). All organizations must register with SAM in order to apply online. Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

Create a Grants.gov Account: The next step in the registration process is to create an account with Grants.gov. Applicants must know their organization's DUNS number to complete this process. Completing this process automatically triggers an email request for applicant roles to the organization's E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC) for review. The EBiz POC is a representative from your organization who is the contact listed for SAM. To apply for grants on behalf of your organization, you will need the AOR role.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

Authorize Grants.gov Roles: After creating an account on Grants.gov, the EBiz POC receives an email notifying them of your registration and request for roles. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of your organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been approved as an AOR.

For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

Track Role Status: To track your role request, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization's AOR that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC must authorize individuals who are able to make legally binding commitment on behalf of the organization as an AOR; this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.

How to Submit an Application to ACF via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each FOA, you can create individual instances of a workspace.

The following is an overview of applying via Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete an application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace, complete all the required forms, and check for errors before submission.

Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace so that they will appear similar to other Standard or ACF forms. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drive(s), then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

Mandatory Fields in Forms: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

Complete SF-424 Fields First: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS number. To trigger this feature, an applicant must complete the SF-424 information first. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

Submit a Workspace: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application **at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date** to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

Track a Workspace: After successfully submitting a workspace package, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the package. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist ACF with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

All applications must be received by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by

Grants.gov. The applicant AOR will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ACF successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submission, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by ACF.

Applicants with slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

Issues with Federal Systems

For any systems issues experienced with Grants.gov or SAM.gov, please refer to ACF's "Policy for Applicants Experiencing Federal Systems Issues" document for complete guidance at www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/systems_issue_policy_final.pdf.

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

To request an exemption from required electronic submission please refer to ACF's "Policy for Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" document for complete guidance at:

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/acf_policy_for_requesting_an_exemption_from_required_electronic.pdf.

Paper Format Application Submission

An exemption is required for the submission of paper applications. See the preceding section on "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.*"

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.7.* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions. Applications submitted in paper format must be received by 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.4. Submission*

Dates and Times in this announcement.

IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

All applicants must have a DUNS Number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov/SAM, <https://www.sam.gov>).

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

All applicants are required to maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete. If a grant is awarded, registration at SAM must be active throughout the life of the award.

Plan ahead. Allow at least 10 business days after you submit your registration for it to become active in SAM and at least an additional 24 hours before that registration information is available in other government systems, i.e. Grants.gov.

This action should allow you time to resolve any issues that may arise. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in your inability to submit your application through Grants.gov or prevent the award of a grant. Applicants should maintain documentation (with dates) of their efforts to register for, or renew a registration, at SAM. User Guides are available under the “Help” tab at <https://www.sam.gov>.

HHS requires all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the SAM prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its active DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

IV.4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications: **11/05/2019**

Explanation of Due Dates

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Electronic Applications

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via www.Grants.gov is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via www.Grants.gov unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via www.Grants.gov are available at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

Applications submitted to www.Grants.gov at any time during the open application period prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged.

Mailed Paper Format Applications

The deadline for receipt of mailed, paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview* and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.7. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2*.

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.

No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:

- Applications submitted electronically via www.Grants.gov are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

Emergency Extensions

ACF may extend an application due date when circumstances make it impossible for an applicant to submit their applications on time. Only events such as documented natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or a verifiable widespread disruption of electrical service, or mail service, will be considered. The determination to extend or waive the due date, and/or receipt time, requirements in an emergency situation rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)*.

Acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to www.Grants.gov. This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of application's submission. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Applicants will also receive an email acknowledging that the received application is in the **Grants.gov validation process**, after which a third email is sent with the information that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, the series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged by ACF.

See "What to Expect After Submitting" at www.Grants.gov for more information.

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from www.Grants.gov by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:

ACF will provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

IV.5. Intergovernmental Review

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Intergovernmental_Review_SPOC_01_2018_OFFM.pdf.

Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 330 C St. SW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20201.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

IV.6. Funding Restrictions

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred to raise capital or obtain contributions are unallowable. Fund raising costs for the purposes of meeting the Federal program objectives are allowable with prior written approval from the Federal awarding agency. (45 CFR §75.442)

Proposal costs are the costs of preparing bids, proposals, or applications on potential Federal and non-Federal awards or projects, including the development of data necessary to support the non-Federal entity's bids or proposals. Proposal costs of the current accounting period of both successful and unsuccessful bids and proposals normally should be treated as indirect (F&A) costs and allocated currently to all activities of the non-Federal entity. No proposal costs of past

accounting periods will be allocable to the current period. (45 CFR §75.460)
Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.
Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.
Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

IV.7. Other Submission Requirements

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. Also see *ACF Policy on Requesting an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* at www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto#chapter-6.

Submission By Mail

Stefanie Gordon
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Administration
Office of Grants Management
26 Federal Plaza Room 4114
New York, NY 10278

Hand Delivery

Stefanie Gordon
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Administration
Office of Grants Management
26 Federal Plaza
New York, NY 10278

Electronic Submission

See *Section IV.2.* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via www.Grants.gov.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.*

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

Please note: With the exception of the funding opportunity announcement and relevant statutes and regulations, reviewers will not access, or review, any materials that are not part of the application documents. This includes information accessible on websites via hyperlinks that are referenced, or embedded, in the application. Though an application may include web links, or

embedded hyperlinks, reviewers will not review this information as it is not considered to be part of the application documents. Nor will the information on websites be taken into consideration in scoring of evaluation criteria presented in this section. Reviewers will evaluate and score an application based on the documents that are presented in the application and **will not** refer to, or access, external links during the objective review.

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

Approach - Activity One: B-5 Needs Assessment **Maximum Points:10**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The applicant has provided a clear description of how the state will address the required activity outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity One*. (0-2 points)
2. The applicant has fully described its planned process for developing an effective needs assessment, including defining the scope of the needs assessment and developing a work plan that leads to the successful implementation of the needs assessment. (0-2 points)
3. The applicant has sufficiently identified how other federal and state needs assessments will be leveraged to inform this B-5 statewide needs assessment and how the assessment plan aligns with the logic model and vision statement. (0-2 points)
4. The applicant has provided a clear description of the populations of children who are vulnerable or underserved, as defined by the state, and children in rural areas. (0-2 points)
5. The applicant has included a thorough plan for the analysis of the quality and availability of programming and supports serving children B-5, and, to the extent practicable, the unduplicated number of children being served and awaiting service in existing programs. (0-2 points)

Approach - Activity Two: B-5 Strategic Plan **Maximum Points:9**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The applicant has provided a clear description of how the state will address the required activity outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity Two*.(0-3 points)
2. The applicant has clearly described the process by which the state will develop or update a strategic plan, clearly articulating how they will build on previous strategic planning efforts to improve coordination and collaboration for relevant programs and services, better serve children, and increase the overall participation of the state's children in high quality early childhood care and education programs and services in a mixed delivery system. (0-2 points)

3. The applicant has identified partnership opportunities that can leverage existing resources to improve collaboration, coordination, policy alignment, program quality, and service delivery across early childhood care and education programs in the B-5 Early Childhood State System including activities to improve children's transition from early childhood care and education programs into elementary schools. (0-2 points)

4. The applicant has described how the strategic plan development and implementation processes will engage a full range of stakeholders, identifying which stakeholders will be meaningfully impacted. (0-2 points)

Approach - Activity Three: Maximizing Parent Knowledge and Choice **Maximum Points:7**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The applicant has provided a clear description of how the state will address the required activity outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity Three*. (0-3 points)

2. The applicant has clearly articulated a plan with strategies and activities to ensure that parents and families are provided timely, accurate information in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner about the variety, quality, access, and affordability of early childhood care and education programs for children from birth through kindergarten entry in the state's mixed delivery system of existing programs and providers. (0-2 points)

3. The applicant has adequately addressed how the state will promote and increase involvement by and engagement of parents and family members in the development and education of their children and the smooth transition for their children from birth through preschool, and into kindergarten. (0-2 points)

Approach - Activity Four: Sharing Best Practices **Maximum Points:7**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The applicant has provided a clear description of how the state will address the required activity outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity Four*. (0-3 points)

2. The applicant has provided a thorough plan on how to share best practices among early childhood care and education program providers in the state to reduce duplication of effort, leverage financial and other resources, and increase program quality, collaboration, and efficiency of B-5 services, including improving transitions across programs and into the early elementary grades. (0-2 points)

3. The applicant has identified the partnerships and opportunities for collaboration, coordination, and sharing best practices within the State while discussing how the state will provide systematic statewide technical assistance to local communities and community-based organizations. (0-2 points)

Approach - Activity Five: Improving Overall Quality **Maximum Points:8**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The applicant has provided a clear picture of how much time within the 12-month project

period it anticipates will remain once the B-5 needs assessment and strategic plan are completed, clearly identifying appropriate activities, as outlined in *Section I. Program Description, Program Activities, Activity Five*. (0-4 points)

2. The applicant has provided a reasonable rationale for each *Improving Overall Quality* activity, based on the remaining time, and the amount of funding to be spent on each. (0-4 points)

Organizational Capacity **Maximum Points:8**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The responsibilities and roles of the lead entity's staff and its partner(s) are clearly described and substantiated, allowing them to meet the requirements of the program. (0-2 points)
2. The staff of the lead entity and its partners have sufficient experience to successfully complete the proposed project. The proposed project's direct and key staff possess sufficient relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities to implement and manage this project effectively. (0-2 points)
3. The applicant provides strong evidence of sufficient experience and expertise in the program areas of this FOA; in collaboration with partner organizations; in culturally and linguistically competent service delivery; and in administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects. (0-2 points)
4. The applicant demonstrates strong evidence that the lead agency and its partners have the fiscal, administrative, and performance management capacity to effectively administer grant funds. (0-2 points)

State B-5 Mixed Delivery System Description and Vision Statement **Maximum Points:8**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The applicant has effectively described the state's existing B-5 mixed delivery early childhood care and education system, including the policies and programs (enacted and implemented) that support the system, and all public or private funding sources that target improvements in early childhood outcomes. (0-2 points)
2. The applicant has identified their progress and successes, as well as hurdles, challenges, and strategies addressing each, that are shaping its mixed delivery system's ongoing development and implementation. (0-2 points)
3. The applicant has provided a thorough picture of its mixed delivery vision and how that vision will increase the quality, coordination, alignment, and efficiency of programs and services. (0-2 points)
4. The applicant has identified its key partners and stakeholders and how they will be leveraged to achieve the described vision and identified activities of the grant. (0-2 points)

Project Timeline and Milestones **Maximum Points:7**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The application presents a detailed timeline that discusses how progress toward the project's milestones will be documented in a manner that is thorough, reasonable, and references data

management or other similar resources. (0-2 points)

2. The timeline and milestones are precise and commensurate for the project's size and scope showing a reasonable schedule of accomplishments and target dates, and the factors that may accelerate or decelerate the work. (0-2 points)

3. The timeline highlights the amount of time remaining in the 12-month project period after the needs assessment and strategic plan are completed, thereby supporting the reasonableness of activities proposed for improving overall quality of early childhood care and education programs and providers. (0-3 points)

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

Maximum Points:12

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. Adequately takes into account the metrics necessary to examine proposed process, cost, and program implementation reporting. (0-2 points)

2. Includes a refinement of the proposed logic model, aligned with the state's vision statement, and identifying proposed associated process indicators and outcomes. (0-2 points)

3. Examines existing data infrastructure, systems, and data elements aligned with proposed metrics and gaps in data needs in order to address proposed process and implementation reporting. (0-2 points)

4. Identifies new data sources to complement, as necessary, program and service data to address proposed implementation reporting and plan for the development of a revised data system, as needed. (0-2 points)

5. Thoroughly identifies an appropriate methodological approach that includes a strategy for data collection, sampling, measurement, and analysis, including metrics of progress to inform continuous learning and improvement efforts related to implementation. (0-2 points)

6. Incorporates findings from the needs assessment and the strategic plan. (0-2 points)

Logic Model

Maximum Points:9

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The overall project goals and objectives, and the plans and procedures for achieving them, are well-developed and parallel those of the logic model. (0-3 points)

2. The logic model is well-defined, reasonable, clear, concise, and demonstrates the conceptual framework of the project, including strong links to the *Program Activities* referenced in *Section I. Program Description*. (0-3 points)

3. The logic model demonstrates a clear association between goals, objectives, activities, inputs, outputs, intended short-term and long-term outcomes, and the plans and procedures for achieving them. The logic model is an accurate depiction of the proposed project activities and intended outcomes, and informs the scope of the proposed project. (0-3 points)

Sustainability Plan

Maximum Points:4

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The applicant has provided a clear plan for sustaining key elements of their grant projects that have been effective in improving practices and outcomes for children and

families, the key individuals and organizations whose support will be required to sustain these elements, and how their cooperation and collaboration will be maintained after federal funding ends. (0-4 points)

Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points:11

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

1. The budget is clearly outlined and provides itemized expenses for the project aligned with the project proposal and includes a narrative justification for the amount requested. (0-4 points)
2. The costs of the project are reasonable, allocable, and appropriate, and are commensurate with the types and range of activities and services to be conducted and the expected goals and objectives. (0-4 points)
3. The application includes funds for all required items, including a percentage of the grant award for technical assistance and travel costs for at least 4 individuals to attend the annual meeting in Washington, D.C. (0-3 points)

Bonus Points

Maximum Points:5

The reviewer will determine if the applicant has proposed a meaningful plan in their Activity One needs assessment to measure the unduplicated number of children being served in each of their existing programs and the unduplicated number of children awaiting services in each awaiting services in each of their existing programs.

V.2. Review and Selection Process

No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant or sub-recipient that does not have a DUNS number (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>) and an active registration at SAM (www.sam.gov). See *Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)*.

Initial ACF Screening

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets any of the disqualification factors described in *Section III.3. Other, Application Disqualification Factors*.

Disqualified applications are considered to be “non-responsive” and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 federal business days from the closing date of this FOA.

Objective Review and Results

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using only the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process. ACF reserves the right to evaluate applications in the larger context of the overall portfolio by considering geographic distribution of federal funds (e.g., ensuring coverage of states, counties, or service areas) in its pre-award decisions.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested.

OCC Review and Selection Process

The Departments shall review all applications to determine if the program requirements have been satisfied and will confirm that the applicant, as of the date of the application's submission, has a mixed delivery system in place.

No state with a score below 70 will be eligible to receive a PDG B-5 grant award. All states, starting with the highest score and moving to the lowest score above 69, will be awarded a grant until all funds are awarded.

The actual award amounts will be determined by the Departments' evaluation of the applicant's rationale and the supporting evidence that the activities can reasonably be accomplished within the one-year grant project period, as well as the number of applications received and the amounts requested. If necessary, the Departments will work with states that are eligible for an award to make any adjustments before finalizing PDG B-5 awards.

PDG B-5 Priority Preference

Applicants that have not previously received Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) or Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funding and that obtain a score of 70 or better will receive 10 bonus points after the objective review, since they have not benefitted from prior federal RTT-ELC or PDG funding. The states eligible for these bonus points are Idaho, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wyoming, plus the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.

Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants

As required by 2 CFR Part 200, the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS), www.fapiis.gov/, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment

about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants (http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8).

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-federal reviewers in the review process.

Approved but Unfunded Applications

Applications recommended for approval in the objective review process, but not selected for award, may receive funding if additional funds become available or may compete for funding during the next review cycle (if one occurs in the next fiscal year). Applications designated as “approved but unfunded” typically cannot be kept in an active status for more than 12 months. For those applications determined as “approved but unfunded,” notice will be given of the determination by email.

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Announcement of awards and the disposition of applications will be provided to applicants at a later date. ACF staff cannot respond to requests for information regarding funding decisions prior to the official applicant notification.

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

VI.1. Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail, email, or by GrantSolutions.gov or the Head Start Enterprise System (HSES), whichever is relevant. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions.*

Grantees may translate the Federal award and other documents into another language. In the event of inconsistency between any terms and conditions of the Federal award and any

translation into another language, the English language meaning will control. Where a significant portion of the grantee's employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in English, the grantee must provide the Federal award in English and in the language(s) with which employees are more familiar.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to 45 CFR Part 75 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) is available at www.ecfr.gov. Unless otherwise noted in this section, administrative and national policy requirements that are applicable to discretionary grants are available at: www.acf.hhs.gov/administrative-and-national-policy-requirements.

HHS Grants Policy Statement

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NOA). The HHS GPS is available at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-1>.

An application funded with the release of federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable federal regulations.

VI.3. Reporting

Performance Progress Quarterly
Reports:

Recipients under this FOA will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. Information on reporting requirements is available on the ACF website at www.acf.hhs.gov/discretionary-post-award-requirements#chapter-2.

For planning purposes, the frequency of required reporting for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Financial Reports: Quarterly

VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Program Office Contact

Richard Gonzales
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Care
330 C Street, SW
Room 4012E
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (202) 401-5138
Email: Richard.Gonzales@ACF.hhs.gov

Office of Grants Management Contact

Stefanie Gordon
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Administration
Office of Grants Management
26 Federal Plaza Room 4114
New York, NY 10278
Phone: (212) 264-2890
Email: stefanie.gordon@acf.hhs.gov

Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service (FedRelay) at www.gsa.gov/fedrelay.

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) www.hhs.gov/.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) www.acf.hhs.gov/.

ACF Funding Opportunities Forecast www.grants.gov/.

ACF Funding Opportunity Announcements ami.grantsolutions.gov/.

ACF "How To Apply For A Grant" <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/howto>.

Grants.gov Accessibility Information www.grants.gov/web/grants/accessibility-compliance.html.

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) <http://www.ecfr.gov/>.

United States Code (U.S.C.) <http://uscode.house.gov/>.

Application Checklist

Applicants may use this checklist as a guide when preparing an application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
The Project Description	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications</i> . This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Project Summary/Abstract	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
Mandatory Grant Disclosure	Requirement, submission instructions, and mailing addresses are found in the "Mandatory Grant Disclosure" in <i>Section IV.2. Required</i>	If applicable, concurrent submission to the Administration for Children and Families and to the Office of the Inspector General is required.

	<i>Forms, Assurances and Certifications.</i>	
Table of Contents	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description.</i>	Submit with the application by the due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Referenced in <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> in the announcement. To obtain a DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier), go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . To register at SAM, go to http://www.sam.gov .	A DUNS number (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration at SAM.gov are required for all applicants. Active registration at SAM must be maintained throughout the application and project award period.
The Project Budget and Budget Justification	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification.</i>	Submission is required in addition to submission of SF-424A and / or SF-424C. Submission is required with the application package by the due date in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov .	Submission is due with the application package or prior to the award of a grant.
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i> This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i>

<p>SF-424 Key Contact Form</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>This form is available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov.</p>	<p>Submission is due with the application by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>
<p>SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs</p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications.</i></p> <p>These forms are available in the FOA's forms package at www.Grants.gov in the Mandatory section.</p> <p>They are required for applications that include only non-construction activities.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.4. Submission Dates and Times.</i></p>