

CA Preschool Development Grant Application Project Summary/Abstract

- Title: Preschool Development Grant – Improving CA’s Early Learning and Care System
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California (CA) has 3 million children aged birth through five years old (B-5) of which over one quarter (29%) live in families below 100% of the federal poverty level (FPL) and half live in families with incomes below 200% of FPL. To best serve our diverse community, CA’s early learning and care (ELC) system is implemented by collaboratively-designed state systems and strong community leadership. We jointly support mixed delivery of services that is expanding access to quality while tailoring care to meet local needs. Through the Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG), CA will strengthen the overall system in several important ways:

- *Develop statewide needs assessment capacity* that will enable an immediate analysis of gaps in CA’s existing services and improve our ability to target services to vulnerable populations most in need; this new capacity will be integrated into existing systems and contracts to sustain the improved needs assessment capacity beyond PDG.
- *Create a detailed and innovative strategic plan* that draws on the best thinking of a wide range of stakeholders and provides directional guidance to policymakers and leadership to increase access to high-quality services for children with high needs.
- *Dramatically expand family access to the information they need* to find high-quality ELC for their children and increase their child development knowledge through culturally and linguistically responsive modes. CA will build a new parent information portal to support parental choice, conduct a major revamping of parent engagement strategies to integrate best practices, and launch a parent committee to elevate beneficiary voices at the state level.
- *Strengthen supports for ELC professionals* through redesigning its professional learning (PL) platform to reduce duplication and integrate systems, efficiently expanding access through content in new formats and enhancing progress toward child development permits and degrees, utilizing communities of practice to strengthen provider practice and support local capacity building efforts, and aligning state PL systems to the state’s quality rating and improvement system (Quality Counts California, QCC).
- *Improve quality* through targeted efforts to support participation of the full mixed delivery system in QCC and reach more programs serving children with high needs. CA will support QCC consortia to utilize the new PL platform resources and create higher education pathways. CA also will invest in building the capacity and quality of the Tribal ELC and launch a peer learning network to develop new leaders for Tribal ELC.

The strategic investments implemented through PDG will allow CA to sustainably accelerate its progress toward ongoing capacity for improved outcomes at scale for its B-5 population through more effective and efficient operations that produce meaningful impacts for families and the providers who work with them.