

District of Columbia
Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) Application

Project Title: Making Data Count: Thrive by Five DC

Applicant Name: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)

Address: 1050 First St. NE, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20002

Contact Phone Numbers: Voice (202) 727-2814; Fax (202) 724-7656

Email Address: Elizabeth.Groginsky@dc.gov; **Website:** <https://osse.dc.gov>

Project Summary

The District of Columbia (“The District”) has implemented several innovative investments in early learning and has shown an increasing commitment to building a high-quality mixed delivery system for children birth to age five (B-5) and their families, with a targeted focus on children experiencing homelessness, children with special needs, children in foster care and/or children in families with very low incomes who are especially vulnerable. Still, inequities in child outcomes, awareness and program participation persist. Although the District has a robust universal pre-K program for children 3 and 4 years of age there are barriers for families in maximizing choice. Specifically, parents report lack of information and communication, poor coordination between their child’s early care and education program and the receiving local educational agency (LEA). The District will strategically use the PDG to create a more efficient, responsive and coordinated B-5 mixed delivery system that particularly meets the needs of vulnerable children and families. Specifically, the District will more effectively coordinate and collaborate across District agencies in several ways. First, the District will increase parents’ knowledge of programs and services by enhancing data use, integration and visualization tools to inform policy and system efficiencies, coordination and collaboration. Second, the District will maximize parental choice and involvement in their children’s education by improving messaging and communication to parents by using plain language, word-of-mouth campaigns through the expansion of peer support networks and multi-media dissemination efforts. Third, the District will improve families’ access to quality early care and education programs by increasing the use of data driven decision-making to improve communication among district agencies, to enhance coordination and collaboration for more effective service delivery. Fourth, the District will promote opportunities for sharing best practices among early care and education professionals by providing comprehensive and systemic professional development that emphasizes equity, inclusiveness as well as cultural and linguistic responsiveness. Collectively, these efforts will improve the quality of early learning environments by strengthening and aligning evidence-based practices used within the B-5 cross-sector early childhood mixed delivery system, so that the early care and education workforce can be supported in implementing best practices and trauma-informed approaches through systemic professional development. With this grant, the District will make strategic investments that will strengthen our existing infrastructure of programs and enable continued investments to be made over time. The District will focus the work that is supported by PDG to leverage the existing collaborative bodies and the data being gathered (e.g., via needs assessments, feasibility studies) to strengthen the District’s B-5 early learning system. The PDG B-5 funding directly aligns with the District’s existing Thrive by Five DC initiative, a holistic approach to healthy childhood development that aims to empower and support families with young children through a citywide collaboration of early childhood service and resources across and among communities and organizations.