State of Ohio Needs Assessment Addendum

I.   What percentage of the children in your State do not have true access to your mixed delivery system?

When determining the number of children who do not have access to Ohio's mixed delivery system, the State of Ohio started with data from the United States Census Bureau. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that there are 701,337 children under age five living in the State of Ohio. Twenty-five and a half percent of this population, or 178,841 children, are living at or below the federal poverty level (FPL) (2017 Ohio Poverty Report).

Next, the State gathered data from our mixed delivery system. Below is a chart of programs and the number of children Birth – Age Five that were served in SFY 2017:

Program serving Birth – Age Five in Ohio	Number of Children (Birth – Age Five) Served in SFY 2017 in Ohio
Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC)	83,467
Early Childhood Education (ECE)	18,150
Head Start (HS)	34,896
Early Head Start (EHS)	8,318
Preschool Special Education (PSE) (Part B 619 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	20,605
Help Me Grow Home Visiting	8,062
Early Intervention (EI) (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)	21,000
Other Home Visiting	2,416
Total	**196,914**

Using the US Census and Ohio Poverty Report that identified a universe of Birth - Age Five children living at or below 200% FPL is 350,668. Therefore, when we subtract our total served from the table above (196,914) from 350,668, we are left with approximately 153,754 children Birth through Age Five living in Ohio at or below 200% FPL who did were not in a publicly-funded early care and education program in SFY 2017. State-level analysis on the same population demonstrated a low percent of children who are participating in multiple programs (approximately 5%), therefore, if we factor that into the estimate and add back in 5% of the total population (9,845 children), the unserved number of children in this age group and poverty rate in Ohio is 163,599.

As a result, in year one of the grant, Ohio will analyze how to unify applications, evaluate if they can require EHS and HS to have State Student Identifiers (SSID) and create a cross system data match form to better understand data elements across systems. With this momentum, in year two of the grant, Ohio will conduct a study to identify barriers to access and the children most at-risk of not being served and start the process to do a one-time data match across programs using SSID.

a. Considering that children in ECE and PSE can only be served in programs rated 3 or higher and that only 33% of centers are rated, where are the other children being served and what is data for those "other" children?

Currently, in the State of Ohio there is no requirement for a program that is licensed by ODJFS to be rated, however, in 2012 the Ohio State Legislature mandated that by the year 2020 all child care programs that provide Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC) must be in Step Up to Quality (SUTQ) (Ohio Revised Code Section 5104.31(C)), Ohio's Quality Rating and Improvement System. The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) administered program for publicly funded preschool (Early Childhood Education) requires that programs be rated 3-,4-, or 5-star (House Bill 49, Section 265.2). Preschool Special Education (PSE) programs must be rated in SUTQ by law (House Bill 64, Section 265.190). Children in PSE may attend any community setting preschool program that is designated as their Least Restrictive Environment, as determined by their Individual Education Program team, which results in children receiving services wherever they attend preschool. For example, a child may receive physical therapy with their child care provider, at a half-day program within the school district, or at home; depending on their needs.

As of, April 2019, 53% or 2,874 programs (this number has been updated since the submission of the State of Ohio's assessment in December 2018) with an agreement to serve PFCC children are SUTQ-rated. Likewise, 47% of programs serving PFCC are not in SUTQ. Moreover, 100% of ECE programs receiving grant funding are highly rated. Of these, 56% are highly rated (3-, 4- or 5-star). Together, across both licensing agencies, 2,552 programs, serving Birth - Age Five, are currently not in Ohio's SUTQ rating system. Additionally, 67% of children, Birth - Age Five, who are receiving PFCC funds are in a SUTQ program.

The State of Ohio recognizes that in 2020 there may be an access issue for families who are seeking quality child care, if all programs are not able to participate in SUTQ, which is why almost all grant activities currently underway are working to increase the number of rated programs across the mixed delivery system. In addition, in year two of the grant, Ohio will conduct a study to determine if there is a barrier to families seeking quality child care.

b. Of the 33% of your programs rated, is the position that "any child that needs service is provided with such service" either in a rated or non-rated program? What happens to the children not in quality care? What assessment needs to be done related to them?

Yes, any child who qualifies for PFCC can utilize their authorization upon qualification, Ohio currently has no waitlist. As of April 2019, 67% of PFCC Birth – Age Five children are being served in a rated program and by 2020, 100% of PFCC children will be attending a program that is SUTQ rated. Additionally, we know that programs who are rated have higher Environmental Rating Scale (ERS) and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores compared to unrated programs. We also know that children in rated programs are better prepared when they get to kindergarten, as measured by Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. However, Ohio does not have a clear picture of children who are not receiving publicly funded early care and education program and the type of care they receive if the program they attend is not licensed. It is also unclear if families understand SUTQ and the importance of quality child care.

In year one of the grant Ohio is creating a survey to submit to families to better understand their knowledge of SUTQ. In conjunction, Ohio will develop a digital media campaign around SUTQ to continue outreach efforts in educating programs, families and care givers on the benefits of SUTQ. Finally, in year two of the grant, Ohio will do a study to determine the feasibility in embedding licensing standards into our SUTQ model so that all programs, whether serving PFCC children or not, are required to be SUTQ rated.

c. How does the population of children served in family child care reflected in the examination? How many children are in FCC, Kith and Kin Care and unlicensed programs? What is the quality of those programs? What are the state's findings for this group and how might this be addressed by the state?

Currently, state law in Ohio only requires a license to operate Family Child Care (FCC) when serving children receiving PFCC. As of April 2019, Ohio has 2,435 FCC providers who are licensed (these numbers were included in all aggregate totals for PFCC and child care programs unless otherwise stated). There is no data for FCC providers who are not currently licensed.

In 2018 Ohio created a kinship program which provides kinship families, who are under 200% of the FPL, with child care while the child is placed with them. The care must be through a provider who accepts PFCC and the copayment is waived for the caretaker.   In SFY 2018, 132 children, Birth - Age Five, were enrolled in Ohio's kinship program. Currently, in Ohio, there is no requirement for family members who are caring for relative children to be licensed or registered with the State of Ohio. In year two of the grant, Ohio will do a feasibility analysis to determine how we can better identify and collect information on unlicensed child care providers including unlicensed FCC and kin and kith care.

d. In describing the spaces not used in Head Start, are there other locations where they may be children not being able to access services but there are insufficient spaces?

In 2016 the Children's Defense Fund did a study of Ohio's Appalachian population (Appendix A). As part of this study, they documented that 44% of Appalachian Counties do not have EHS programs. Furthermore, out of Ohio's 88 counties 61 have waitlists for their HS and EHS programs. The number of children estimated to be on the waitlists for 2019 was 2,651 children.

At this time Ohio cannot determine if the 2,651 children on the waitlist are being served in other state programs. A critical activity in Ohio's Year 1 grant is to examine the feasibility of requiring HS and EHS to use SSID. The SSID will allow the State to track children across programs and provide much needed data on which children are being served, by which programs and longitudinal successes of these children.   Additionally, in year two of the grant Ohio will do a study that will determine what barriers families are facing in accessing all Birth- Age Five programs including HS and EHS.

e. **The Needs Assessment indicated that any child that attempts to obtain services, and is deemed eligible for those services, is provided with the appropriate service. What about the families that are not deemed eligible? What numbers of children are unable to be served because of such factors as parents not having employment or involved in an educational experience?   What happens to those children? How great is this need? Are all infants and toddlers of families that do not meet the working/education criteria supported in other ways? Addressing this population is an essential component of a state's examination of what is happening to all children and needs to be a part of your assessment.**

Under federal law, the State of Ohio is required to have a work activity tied to eligibility for PFCC (45 CFR 98.20 (a)(3)(i).) For calendar year 2018, 67,094 families were approved for PFCC and 35,963 families who applied, were denied eligibility. Authorization requires that a family must have a work activity and have identified a provider who serves PFCC and has a spot available for their child. In the month of February 2019, 133,619 children were authorized to receive PFCC and 127,367 utilized the service. This means that 6,252 children were approved but never utilized a day of service.

At this time, all other programs in Ohio's mixed delivery system do not track denials. Additionally, Ohio does not collect data on families who do not apply for services. We did provide the best estimate in answering question 1, which was that of the universe of children not yet six years old living in families at or below 200% of the FPL, we have an unserved population of 163,599 out of the 350,668, equating to 46.6%. Although poverty is only one factor for eligibility it is not the only criteria for eligibility in Ohio. Our Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) programs serve Birth – Age Five based solely on a qualifying condition or developmental delay.

To help us get closer to determining what happens to children who are denied PFCC services, Ohio is examining the viability of including HS and EHS programs in the SSID process.   Once this is determined, in year two of the grant, the State will look to implement one system that tracks SSIDs across programs so that Ohio can better determine which populations are being served by which programs.

Additionally, in Activities 3 and 4, Ohio is working to create a single access point to Ohio's mixed delivery system for families. In activity 3, Ohio is creating an online screening tool that will allow families the ability to see which programs they qualify for and then provide them with the link to access those programs. In activity 4, Ohio will analyze aligning Birth- Age Five programs into one single application. With the momentum from this analysis the hope would be that, in years 2-4 of the grant, Ohio will implement 1 application for all Birth - Age Five programs. Finally, in year two of the grant Ohio will conduct a study to determine what barriers families are facing in accessing Ohio's Birth - Age Five programs, including eligibility restrictions.

f. **There is a description of the K-12 population of children identified as disadvantaged on page 5 which seems the only mention of children and families with "limited English proficiency". What is not evident in the NA are the numbers represented in the B-5 population. It is important to understand how the state is proposing to examine and address this population. What about families that don't speak English and don't come**

> **forward seeking services because they don't know how to do so or even know that they can do so? There is a strong likelihood that there also are English speaking families that need services for their children who also don't come forward for one reason or another? How has the state thought about both populations and is that being addressed as a finding in the assessment process? What about the needs of homeless children, rural children, etc.? Have you assessed these sufficiently or is additional assessment of these groups necessary?**

In 2017 the Poverty Report determined that 6% of Ohioans (ages 5+) do not speak English as their first language. Currently, there is no data on how many Ohio children, from Birth – Age Five, are in homes where English is the second language. For SFY 2017 4,093 EHS and HS applicants, 28,171 EI referrals, 2,959 PFCC applications and 259 Home Visiting applicants reported English being their second language.

To better serve families with English as their second language Ohio's Birth – Age Five programs have done the following: provided outreach in multiple languages, PFCC's application can be found in 13 languages, HS and EHS provide family support in multiple languages and EI has translated all their websites to accommodate up to 90 languages. Additionally, as part of year one of the grant, Ohio has dedicated funds to translating the Bold Beginning! Website and the child care search engine to make both webpages easily accessible for English as second language families. Understanding that more can be done, Ohio pledges that in year two of the grant a study will be done to determine if language is a barrier to accessing appropriate services for children Birth - Age Five.

The United States Council on Homelessness, conducted a study on the number of homeless individuals in Ohio in 2018.   They determined that an estimated 10,249 individuals are experiencing homelessness in Ohio. In addition to this study, the Ohio Housing Finance Agency did a study and determined that 15.4% of homeless individuals range from 0-5 years of age, with infancy being the most vulnerable population.

Ohio has been proactive in trying to meet the needs of our homeless families. To begin with, for Ohio's PFCC population, a caregiver who does not meet Ohio Revised Code Section 5101:1-16-30(A)(3) can still be eligible to receive benefits if they temporarily reside in a homeless shelter or are determined by the county to be homeless. Additionally, regardless of income or assets the co-pay for these families is waived and they are approved for 90 days of care or the time that the caretaker and child are homeless, whichever period is shorter.   Additionally, for Ohio's ECE population, a family is considered automatically eligible and requires no income verification if they are homeless. For EHS and HS, a family who is homeless has categorical eligibility. Also, EHS and HS allow programs to hold 3% of their funded slots for homeless families and EI provides local outreaching funds, service coordinators and intervention services in all 88 counties.

Recognizing, that even with outreach and policy initiatives in place, Ohio still needs more information on what obstacles our homeless population faces in accessing quality child care and Birth – Age Five services.   As a result, in year two of the grant a study will be conducted to

determine what barriers are preventing our homeless families from accessing Birth – Age Five child care and services.

g.   In almost all areas that were addressed as part of your needs assessment submission. There is a focus on each issue as it impacts or is impacted by QRIS, but there is a lack of attention to licensed family child care or unlicensed care of any kind. An assessment of these populations needs to also be considered a part of your comprehensive statewide, Birth - Age Five needs assessment. How are children receiving home visiting services incorporated into your assessment, since they are not part of your QRIS? What others should be considered?

It should be noted, all numbers for PFCC include FCC, unless stated otherwise. As stated above, Ohio does not regulate FCC's that do not serve PFCC, unless they voluntarily request to be licensed. In year two of the grant, Ohio will do an access study, which will holistically look at access to care in Ohio.

EI, although not part of Ohio SUTQ, is an evidence-based service that provides children age 3 and under, with developmental delays or disabilities, by creating an individualized family service plan (IFSP).   These plans use the families existing supports and resources and build upon them to help families learn how to enhance their child's learning and development. In SFY 2017 EI served 21,601 children and had no waitlist.

Another program that is not SUTQ rated is Home Visiting. In calendar year 2017, the Home visiting program received 8,885 referrals and served 9,612 families. Most of the families served were at or below 200% of the FPL with only 4% being above. In addition, 46% of children enrolled were enrolled prenatally, 71% of children enrolled received a development screening and of these children 31% were identified as having a potential developmental delay. The home visiting program also made over 13,000 referrals to various services including child care; EHS; job training; Women, Infants and Children; county job and family services; housing; food; medical needs; and social needs.

To get a better understanding of our Birth – Age Five programs, Ohio is using year one of the grant to focus on creating a screening tool, analyzing how to align applications across programs, and determining the feasibility of requiring HS and EHS to have SSIDs. We believe that these activities will begin the process of breaking down the silos in our Birth – Age Five system so that we can truly understand which children are being served and by whom. Once this base is established, in year two of the grant, the State will look to implement one system to track SSIDs across programs. With one centralized system we will begin to fully understand what children are being served, by whom, for how long and the impact of our programs.

VI. **Transition –**
1. **in the application submitted for consideration, there is a short section that briefly speaks to the issue of transition, though this not evident in the NA document submitted for review. Transition is one of the key domains listed in the FOA and does necessitate more consideration in a description of the NA process completed or to be completed. Your assessment should also speak to transition at various ages and across various programs and services, with particular attention paid to the transition into kindergarten and elementary schools.**

   - **What are the transition practices currently in place that are mandated across age groups within and across programs? Are these monitored and evident or is more exploration required to better understand what is happening? What are the school entry transition practices in place and is more exploration required to also better understand what is happening?**

Attached (Appendix B) is a cross walk of Ohio's mixed delivery system and transition requirements for each program. This document outlines that the only consensus among the programs is that transition plans are required. Although all programs require a transition plan, each plan varies by standards, scenarios, and requirements. Ohio recognizes the need to assess transition plans across the Birth – Age Five programs. In year one of the grant, Ohio will create a best practice guidance document for programs and families.

The best practice guidance document will create a document that all Birth – Age Five programs can use when determining what is needed for transition plans for each program. The document will also align standards across programs, where it can, to create continuity and consistency for programs and families. Finally, the document will be posted on Ohio's Bold Beginning! website so programs and families can easily access the document.

VII. **Facilities – the NA report and the application indicates the state examines the health and safety issues related to facilities. What is not evident is the state's assessment of the physical quality of the state's various facilities and the potential needs for upgrading facilities or the need for new facilities?**

Safety issues regarding facilities are governed by Ohio's child care licensing standards and must be met before a program can be SUTQ rated. To be licensed in the state of Ohio a program must have had an inspection done by the following: building inspection, fire inspection (which must be done annually) and an inspection by the department of health regarding foods service. Not only must these minimum inspections be done but programs must meet safety requirements defined in Ohio Revised Code. Some of these include, but are not limited to, indoor and outdoor regulations, safe equipment and environment, sanitary equipment, emergency and health related plans for all the rules and their corresponding ORC number. These requirements ensure that programs are providing safe and healthy environments for Ohio's children.

In addition to meeting our licensing standards programs who participate in SUTQ are required to complete a program self-assessment and classroom self-assessment(s) annually. These assessments are then used by programs to create goals which may include facility improvements. Highly rated programs, 3-, 4- and 5-star, also have a classroom self-assessment completed by state staff called the Ohio Classroom Observation Tool (OCOT) that examines the environment and staff child interactions. The environmental examination includes an assessment of the materials, classroom organization, schedule and routines, as well as curriculum integration. When observing staff child interactions, the evaluator assesses instructional strategies, child guidance and behavior management.

Currently, Ohio is unable to determine the cost it takes for a program, who is SUTQ rated, to maintain their facilities or the cost to keep a facility 3-,4-, or 5-star rated. Previously when providers were asked about costs associated with being rated, one of the main expenditures gaps was based on if a program owned their facility or rented it. Likewise, to better understand of this gap and others, in year two of the grant, Ohio will survey providers regarding costs (related to their facility) associated with being rated. With the results of the survey, Ohio will determine how we can help programs maintain facilities that are SUTQ rated and how to help programs have facilities that meet the standards of a 3-,4-, or 5-star rated program.

VIII. **System collaboration and data integration – it was not evident how the state assessed the level of collaboration across and among systems providing support to children and families. What data is needed that supports collaboration, and what is the data needed to examine the efficient use of resources, or data needed to link activities, outcomes and goals. If some of this data is not available, then what findings would necessitate further examination as a part of the state's future strategic plan**

Ohio has limited data integration among the Birth - Age Five agencies. Some agencies have data sharing agreements with each other, and several programs use the same unique identifier, the SSID but currently the data is not in the same repository and is not compared. This has caused Ohio to have a gap in understanding the needs, resources and impact of our early childhood programing. To address this, in year one of the grant, Ohio is examining if we can align application criteria across programs, the viability of EHS and HS using SSIDS, reviewing data sharing agreements between agencies, and creating a cross system data match form. In year two of the grant Ohio will propose to do a one -time data match across agencies using SSID. We will also further align our data elements and begin the process of creating one system between agencies using SSIDs. By having one system, Ohio will be able to determine which programs children are utilizing, which children are in more than one program and longitudinally the success of each child.

REFERENCES

Link	United States 2018 Census Bureau Statistics	https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/oh
Link	Step Up to Quality PFCC ORC Section 5104.31 (C)	http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/5104.31
Link	Sep Up to Quality ODE OAC 3301-37-04	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/3301-37-04
Link	2016 Validation Study	http://earlychildhoodohio.org/sutq/pdf/SUTQValidationStudy2017.pdf
Appendix A	Ohio's Appalachian Population	PDF Attachment Ohio's Appalachian Children at a Crossroads
Appendix B	Transition Plan Crosswalk	PDF Attachment Transition Plans
Link	ORC 5101:2-12-04 Building department, fire inspection and food services licensure for licensed child care center	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-12-04
Link	ORC 5101:2-12-11 Indoor and outdoor space requirements for licensed child care center	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-12-11
Link	ORC 5101:2-12-12 Safe equipment and environment for a licensed child care center	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-12-12
Link	ORC 5101:2-12-13 Sanitary equipment and environment for a licensed child care center	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-12-13
Link	ORC 5101:2-12-16 Emergency and health-related plans for a child care center	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-12-16
Link	ORC 5101:2-13-04 Building department and fire inspection for a licensed family child care provider	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-13-04v1
Link	ORC 5101:2-13-11 Indoor and outdoor space requirements for licensed child care provider	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-13-11
Link	ORC 5101:2-13-12 Safe equipment and environment for a licensed child care provider	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-13-12
Link	ORC 5101:2-13-16 Emergency and health-related plans for a child care provider	http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/5101:2-13-16