

**Project Abstract**

Project Title: Ohio's BOLD Beginning: Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five

Applicant Name: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

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Project Summary/Abstract. Children under age five are the largest group of Ohioans living in poverty, with 25.5% of 0–5-year-old children at or below the FPL. The percentage of children under age six living in poverty doubles to 50% when we include those living at or below 200% of the FPL (2017 Ohio Poverty Report). Among children, 49.4% in large urban cities and 27.7% in rural areas live at or below 200% FPL (2017 Ohio Poverty Report). We know that poverty correlates with a child's initial reading competence in that the home literacy environment and number of books owned is correlated with socio-economic status of the parent(s) (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008). In Ohio, this gap is present in early childhood and persists throughout the school-age years, such that correlation between poverty and educational attainment is significant. Without intervention, the disparities evident early on widen and impact every aspect of a child's trajectory in literacy competency, academic, and ultimately, economic success. Through the 2017 Ohio Step Up To Quality Validation Study, Ohio found that practices required through Ohio's tiered quality rating system (TQRIS), Step Up To Quality (SUTQ) led to statistically significant results for Kindergarten readiness.

With this grant, Ohio will ensure adequate access to quality early childhood care and education programs for Ohio's vulnerable children living at or below 200% FPL. Ohio has defined quality early childhood care and education as programs rated through SUTQ, which represents all available programs (e.g., Head Start, Local Education Agencies, and private providers). Building on the success of Ohio's Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge Grant (ELCG) and the two years of continued multi-organization collaboration since, Ohio will meaningfully engage families, communities, and early childhood care and education providers in the continuous improvement by implementing our strategic plan.

During the 12-month grant period, Ohio will make measurable progress achieving our vision that *Each child in Ohio will engage in quality early learning and healthy development experiences that prepare that child for school and build a solid foundation for lifelong success.* To advance this vision, we have three goals: (1) All of Ohio's children, especially those from low-income and disadvantaged families both urban and rural, have access to quality early childhood care and education programs and are ready for Kindergarten; (2) Ohio's families understand the importance of early childhood care and education, and have the necessary resources and information to make an informed choice about their child's early childhood care and education setting; and (3) Ohio's early childhood delivery system increases the participation of children in quality settings through more efficient alignment of resources (federal, state and local) and better outreach coordination among state and local agencies.

Ohio is requesting \$14,812,000 to advance five strategies. Our application details the planned strategies and activities to realize Ohio's vision and goals, as well as the timelines, performance evaluation, proposed budget, and public reporting.



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Approach - Activity One: B – 5 Needs Assessment

Ohio has completed a comprehensive needs assessment, the *2017-2018 Access and Quality Needs Assessment* and is not requesting funding under Activity One; however, Ohio will continue to update and refine the data established in the needs assessment monthly for monitoring. Ohio has completed a needs assessment to evaluate both the access and quality of licensed early childhood care and education provided through Ohio’s mixed delivery system and has augmented this with several additional completed assessments. The needs assessment was undertaken to determine 1) if there was capacity to serve Ohio’s vulnerable children in licensed settings, 2) to assess if the children in care were in a “quality” setting that would move them toward Kindergarten readiness; and 3) the gaps or barriers keeping programs from not participating in SUTQ. The needs assessment is aligned with Ohio’s logic model and vision for early childhood care and education, as described in the forthcoming sections of this application.

1.1 Definition of Key Terms. Below are the key terms that were used in our assessment:

Availability means parents of children birth through five (B-5) years old have access to licensed quality child care within a reasonable distance through Head Start, Early Childhood Education, Preschool Special Education or PFCC in a setting that meets the needs of the family and their children.

Licensed child care program means any of the following: 1) A child day-care center licensed by the Department of Job and Family Services; 2) A Type A family day-care home or Type B family day-care home licensed by the Department of Job and Family Services; 3) A licensed preschool program or licensed school child program.

Publicly funded child care (PFCC) is the care of infants, toddlers, preschool children, and school children under age thirteen by an eligible provider. PFCC is paid, wholly or in part, with



federal or state funds, including funds available under the child care block grant act Title IV-A, and Title XX, distributed by ODJFS.

Rural County utilizes the definition of the Ohio Office of Rural Health Policy which designates 50 of Ohio's 88 counties as rural. The rural counties designated in Ohio are: Adams, Ashland, Ashtabula, Athens, Auglaize, Champaign, Clinton, Columbiana, Coshocton, Crawford, Darke, Defiance, Erie, Fayette, Gallia, Guernsey, Hancock, Hardin, Harrison, Henry, Highland, Holmes, Huron, Jackson, Knox, Logan, Marion, Meigs, Mercer, Monroe, Morgan, Muskingum, Noble, Ottawa, Paulding, Pike, Preble, Putnam, Ross, Sandusky, Scioto, Seneca, Shelby, Tuscarawas, Van Wert, Vinton, Washington, Wayne, Williams and Wyandot.

Quality Child Care is defined as any licensed program participating in Ohio's TQRIS, SUTQ demonstrating high quality including those programs rated at the third tier or higher.

Vulnerable children are those B – 5 five living at or below 200% of the FPL or who are living: in a rural area with less access to hospitals, federally qualified health centers and fewer health providers, with a disability, developmental delay, or learning English as a second language.

1.2 Scope. Ohio is striving to ensure all children receiving care through our mixed delivery system are in a healthy, safe, and quality educational environment. Ohio has defined these settings as those licensed and participating in SUTQ. The *2017- 2018 Access and Quality Needs Assessment* determined the access available across the state, with specific focus on the metro and rural areas, and supply of quality rated providers. Where gaps existed, steps were taken to determine the “why” through further data review, focus groups and surveys.

1.3 Approach to Completing the Needs Assessment. Ohio has completed multiple needs assessments across our mixed delivery system that were leveraged for our combined needs



assessment of access and quality. Ohio completed the *2017-2018 Access and Quality Needs Assessment* by: 1) compiling cross-program data to establish the number of licensed programs and unduplicated children being served; 2) defining quality, validating child outcomes in quality settings and reviewing program progress to meet these standards, 3) conducting three focus groups and two surveys to determine why programs were not participating and identify the barriers they were experiencing; and 4) evaluating existing needs assessments to understand the findings already established across Ohio's mixed delivery system to compare results and evaluate consistency.

In our comprehensive assessment, Ohio evaluated the number of children served through the following programs: Early Childhood Education, Preschool Special Education, Early Head Start, Head Start and PFCC. After establishing the services available, the State evaluated the data by county. For the programs with county-level data, the State was able to identify children in more than one program through each child's unique statewide student identifier (SSID). The State then reviewed the number of children being served by program by county to compare the services available, the children eligible and the available slots (i.e., Early Childhood Education, Early Head Start and Head Start) that went unused. Ohio does not support a waitlist for PFCC; all eligible children are served. After reviewing the accessibility of quality programs, Ohio examined the level of quality at which children were being served at all levels of quality with the highest levels of quality, defined as a SUTQ rating of 3, 4, or 5 stars.

1.3.1 Completed Needs Assessments (Federal & State). Ohio has already completed multiple needs assessments across the B-5 population, as seen in Exhibit 1, all were leveraged in Ohio's *2017 - 2018 Access and Quality Needs Assessment*.



Exhibit 1. Completed Needs Assessments

Assessment	Description	Stakeholders Involved
2016 Market Rate Survey	Goal of the survey is to characterize the unsubsidized (i.e., private pay) market rates for child care throughout the state to ensure the State rates and payment structure are adequate and not a barrier for licensed programs to meet health and safety standards and quality ratings when eligible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Advisory Council (20 members) • Early Childhood Advisory Council (24 members) • 7,778 licensed providers
2017 Head Start Needs Assessment	Focus on understanding needs, assets, barriers and desires related to partnerships and opportunities for collaboration.	Thirty-one (31) HS stakeholders representing different constituencies, from partners, educational facilities, to state agency representatives, met in two different sessions on April 21 and 22. The broad distribution of stakeholders included representatives from: schools (4 attendees), Head Start/Child Care Providers (7), Head Start Partners (7), universities (4), State agency representatives (4), Head Start and OAEYC Associations (2), and two experienced consultants in the field.
Child Care Development Block Grant State Plan	Defines the health and safety requirements for licensing, the outreach efforts made to providers and families, eligibility criteria for service, efforts to inform parents and general public of options when selecting child care and that program barriers do not impede access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Advisory Council (20 members) • Early Childhood Advisory Council (24 members) • Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Medicaid, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
Child Care Resource & Referral Agency local needs assessments (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs providing care, Number of families in need of care. • Number of families that understood Ohio’s tiered quality rating system. 	Community leaders, providers, families, advocates in the service delivery areas (SDA) statewide on child care issues, and local county agencies.

This work assisted in determining the necessary building blocks to establish the baseline and identify gaps to be addressed to ensure that Ohio’s vision is achieved – that children have access



to quality early childhood care and education and healthy development experiences which prepare them for school and to build a foundation for lifelong success. Additionally, the information in the *2017-2018 Access and Quality Needs Assessment* informed the development of *Ohio's Bold Beginning Strategic Plan* and is part of the framework for ensuring Ohio's programs are accessible and meeting the quality standards. The needs assessment identified and validated Ohio's concerns about the number of quality settings and barriers to quality, leading to the activities outlined in this application.

1.4 Program Populations. Children under age five are the largest group of Ohioans living in poverty with 25.5% of B – 5 children at or below the FPL. The percentage of children under age six living in poverty doubles to 50% when we include those living at or below 200% of the FPL. Also, among children, 49.4% in large urban cities and 27.7% living in rural areas are living at or below 200% FPL (2017 Poverty Report). Moreover, 6.7% of Ohio households speak a non-English language at home.

Ohio's B-5 system of services and supports includes populations currently in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C and Part B 619; Help Me Grow Home Visiting; Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting; PFCC; Early Head Start and Head Start; and Early Childhood Education. The most recent data available for each of these programs are:

- **IDEA Part C Early Intervention:** In 2017, Ohio's Early Intervention program served over 21,000 children with developmental disabilities or delays birth through age three.
- **IDEA Part B 619 Preschool Special Education:** In 2017, Ohio's Preschool Special Education for children with disabilities or developmental delays served 20,605 children age three to six, or not yet in kindergarten.

- ***Help Me Grow Home Visiting:*** In 2017, 8,062 children birth through age three participated with their parent or caregiver in this state-funded parent education program.
- ***Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting:*** In Ohio, this grant program served 2,416 families with pregnant women and their infants through age two.
- ***Publicly Funded Child Care:*** In May 2018, the PFCC program served 83,467 infants, toddlers and preschoolers monthly.
- ***Early Head Start/Head Start:*** In 2017, Ohio Early Head Start and Head Start were funded for 35,262 children and reported serving 43,187 children B-5.
- ***Early Childhood Education:*** Ohio's publicly-funded preschool program allocated 17,845 slots to high-needs locations across the State. Data from 2017 – 2018 indicated that 18,150 preschool age children were served through the year.

1.5 Needs Assessment Findings. Ohio asserts that early childhood care and education is available for the vulnerable B – 5 population based on the following:

- 1) PFCC does not have a waitlist. If parents meet the requirements of an income at or below 130% of the FPL with a qualifying activity, they are provided care;
- 2) Early Intervention, Preschool Special Education, and Home Visiting programs in the state do not turn eligible children and families away; and
- 3) Head Start/Early Head Start reported that over 1,000 of their available slots went unused.

While slots or spaces are available to vulnerable populations, there are places across the State that lack *quality* child care settings and this is Ohio's identified gap. More specifically, across the B – 5 programs, we see the following: the IDEA and Early Childhood Education programs serving preschool children are already highly rated in the State's TQRIS, SUTQ. Among the 487 Early Head Start and Head Start programs in Ohio, 83% are currently rated in SUTQ.



Additionally, there are 4,646 licensed child care providers who serve children B – 5 in PFCC. Among these providers, they serve over 83,000 B – 5 children; but only 1,790 (39%) were participating in SUTQ as of May 2018. This participation rate equates to 49% of the children in PFCC attending early childhood care and education with a rated provider. Exhibits 2 and 3 present additional findings using data from May 2018

Exhibit 2. Findings from Needs Assessment

PFCC by Setting	Number of Children Birth to 5	Number of Providers Rated	Number of Children Served in Rated Programs	Number of Providers Not Rated	Total Number of Providers
Centers	70,848	1,227	37,838	1,010	2,237
Family Child Care	12,779	563	3,262	1,846	2,409
Total	83,627	1,790	41,100	2,856	4,646

Exhibit 3. Children Placed with Rated Providers

Rating	1 Star	2 Stars	3 Stars	4 Stars	5 Stars	Unrated	Total
# of Infants, Toddlers & Preschoolers	14,403	5,171	7,577	7,110	6,839	42,527	83,627

1.6 Unduplicated Children Served. Through the Race to the Top – ELCG, Ohio expanded the use of the SSID, a unique number assigned to each child participating in Ohio’s preschool through grade 12 public school system to those children participating in PFCC programs. The B-5 programs that assign an SSID include Preschool Special Education, Early Childhood Education, PFCC, Early Intervention and Home Visiting.

In state fiscal year (SFY) 2017 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017) Ohio evaluated the number of preschool age children being served by Preschool Special Education, Early Childhood Education and the PFCC program and the duplication across programs. Exhibit 4 presents the number of children served by each program (children may be counted in 2 or more programs).

**Exhibit 4. Children Services by Program Type**

Program Type	Number of Children
Early Childhood Education (ECE)	14,162
Preschool Special Education (PSE)	24,314
Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC)	64,968

Note that state policy and regulation allow for children to participate in one or more program.

The data below, in Exhibit 5, shows children who were in more than one program at any time throughout the year (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).

Exhibit 5. Children Served in Multiple Programs

Program Type	Number of Children
# of Children Receiving ECE and PSE	2,032
# of Children Receiving ECE and PFCC	1,779
# of Children Receiving PSE and PFCC	1,218
# of Children Receiving ECE, PSE & PFCC	181

When analyzing the access and usage data, two gaps were identified. First, although early childhood care and education programs had unused slots, we do not know if the underutilization was because it was not needed by families or because the length (e.g., part-time program day) and timing (e.g., AM/PM) of the program did not meet the needs of working families. Second, Early Head Start and Head Start serve more than 40,000 children in Ohio; however, there is currently no way to evaluate duplication of services as Early Head Start/Head Start are locally administered and do not issue an SSID.

As Ohio moves all programs to quality early childhood care and education settings, as identified and outlined through SUTQ; we recognize the need to evaluate the needs of those parents applying for or receiving benefits rather than report on what is available (i.e. a part-day



slot is available but does not meet the need of a working parent). Throughout this application, Ohio has proposed ways to address these gaps, including a screening tool for potential eligibility across the B-5 programs. Additionally, in accordance with 45 CFR 1302.53 Ohio proposes to evaluate, in coordination with the Ohio Head Start Association, the extent to which offering the benefit of a state system could require local Head Start/Early Head Start providers to issue an SSID to assist with identifying program overlap and duplication. This would allow for improved state and federal program impact evaluation and monitoring of duplication.

1.7 Outcome Measures. Progress toward our goals will be measured using the: (1) Number of programs participating in SUTQ by geographic location; and (2) Number of children being served by a rated program by rating level. Progress will be monitored monthly and reported quarterly to the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC: State’s Advisory Council) and its sub-committees as proposed in this application.

1.8 Barriers to Providing Quality Care. Through the needs assessment, Ohio was also able to identify barriers to programs achieving a SUTQ rating. These barriers included lack of understanding of the process, lack of qualified staff, staff turnover, cost, professional development, and family and community engagement, including transitions between early childhood settings.

Barriers to program efficiency and alignment for Ohio’s three largest programs in Ohio’s mixed delivery system include the following: 1) variations in eligibility requirements for entrance into each program; 2) different administrative entities across programs; and 3) differences in payment methods.

Eligibility requirements vary across programs, including the family income maximums. The eligibility for PFCC is income at or below 130% FPL and a qualifying activity (work, education,



training); Early Childhood Education is a family income at or below 200% FPL; and Head Start/Early Head Start is a family income at or below 100% FPL.

In addition to eligibility requirements, the State currently differs in who administers the programs and how eligibility is determined across the programs. To illustrate this point, PFCC is supervised by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) while eligibility is determined by JFS county agencies. Early Childhood Education is administered by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and eligibility is determined by the grantee who provides the preschool education. Finally, Head Start/Early Head Start is administered locally, where eligibility is also determined.

Payment methods also differ by program. In PFCC, payment is based on categories of attendance – hourly, part time, full time, greater than 60 hours and rates are set by county, age and setting. In ECE, 2.5 hours/day for a minimum of 455 hours/year are paid at \$4,000/slot directly from the State to the grantee. Finally, Early Head Start must provide a minimum of six hours a day and Head Start must provide 2.5 hours, where payments vary by local grantee.

1.9 Transition Support. Through the *2017-2018 Access and Quality Needs Assessment*, the State found that many of the early childhood care and education programs had transition plan requirements (i.e. Early Intervention, Home Visiting, PFCC, Preschool Special Education, Early Childhood Education). However, although the programs had similar requirements the expectations and practices varied widely. As a result, in Activity Four Ohio has included a new effort to establish a best practice all programs can leverage to ensure families receiving services from multiple programs have similar experiences and expectations.

In this section, Ohio presented the process it used for conducting a needs assessment of its B-5 early childhood care and education programs, including, 1) using other federal and state needs



assessments, 2) identifying the scope and program populations included, and 3) the gaps that exist which limit the conclusions we can derive. While access to early childhood care and education programs is available, access to quality early childhood care and education programs is limited and where the focus of our efforts will be. In the next section of this application, we describe the process Ohio has undergone to create a strategic plan for early childhood and our proposal for updating the plan through proposed grant activities.

Approach - Activity Two: B – 5 Strategic Plan

Ohio is requesting \$35,000 for Activity Two. Ohio has completed a comprehensive Early Childhood Strategic Plan; however, this funding will allow for the continued review, updating, maintenance and refinement based on new data from the needs assessment, work with partners, trends, etc. It also will 1) support the ongoing healthy levels of collaboration across all partners; and 2) ensure that quality continues to be infused and strengthened into our delivery network. In this section, we present our approach, plan and timeline for updating Ohio’s Early Childhood strategic plan with broad representation and collaboration with the early childhood care and education community stakeholders.

2.1 Approach to Strategic Plan. In 2016, Ohio started drafting a statewide strategic plan for early childhood to continue the important work started by the ELCG. Through the support of that investment and the five years of system-focused activity, Ohio was facing a future with a B-5 landscape that had changed significantly. The State’s leaders in early childhood did not want to lose the momentum gained with the improvements, alignments, investments, and focus on early childhood. Leadership from the Governor’s office and from the six child-serving state agencies met monthly through 2016 and 2017 to design what is now known as *Ohio’s Bold Beginning Early Childhood Strategic Plan 2018 – 2025*.



2.2 Description of Strategic Plan. *Ohio's Bold Beginning Strategic Plan* is the result of a two-year process involving stakeholders across the state and local early childhood system. The State considers its strategic plan a living document, which will be updated with information about effectiveness, efficiencies, and needed areas of improvement as activities are implemented.

The strategic plan identifies Ohio's vision, *Each child in Ohio will have a Bold Beginning in life by engaging in high-quality early learning and healthy development experiences that prepare that child for school and build a solid foundation for lifelong success.* The plan is focused on collaboration and coordination of efforts across state and local initiatives in early childhood. It already identifies increasing the number of quality early childhood care and education programs across the mixed delivery system and the number of children who have access to them B-5. The plan includes goals and strategies through 2025 that leverage existing resources for the alignment of policies, program quality and service delivery across five action areas, including: 1) engage families and communities, 2) educate early, 3) identify early, 4) intervene early, and 5) prepare professionals. The deep and rich plan encompasses a set of 13 Goals, more than 70 associated Strategies and Outputs and 41 specified Outcomes across the action areas. The plan looks across the programs for the six child-serving agencies and brings them together to serve identified populations, with greater coordination and collaboration. It focuses on quality improvement activities in each of the five identified action areas, ranging from a specific focus on improving access to quality care through removing barriers to SUTQ improvement of the provider programs, a focus on more effective transition to Kindergarten, to early identification and intervention with quality supports, -- all with the goal of increasing participation and support for the State's most vulnerable children and families. As shown in the graphic attached, the Ohio EC Strategic Plan is deep and rich – the graphic illustrates one of the 13 goals with associated



strategies, outputs and outcomes. As seen in Exhibit 6, the full plan encompasses this level of detail for all 13 goals.

Exhibit 6. Ohio's Strategic Plan

OHIO's BOLD Beginning! Early Childhood Strategic Plan 2018 - 2025				
VISION				
Each child in Ohio will have a BOLD Beginning in life by engaging in high-quality early learning and healthy development experiences that prepare that child for school and build a solid foundation for lifelong success.				
MISSION				
Ohio is a leader, creating a BOLD Beginning in early childhood for lifelong success so that:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each family has access to knowledge and resources to support Each child has access to safe, healthy high-quality early learning Each child begins school healthy and ready to learn; Early care and education professionals are ready to receive, edu Public and private stakeholders partner to advance the early chi Communities and policy makers understand and actively suppor 	EDUCATE EARLY GOALS EDU 1 – Each child in Ohio has access to high-quality early care and education.	STRATEGIES PROVIDERS A. Per HHS/TEACH, maintain 2016 Step-Up-To-Quality (SUTQ) reimbursement rates as the floor (Outcomes 1-6). B. Maintain TEACH investment. (Outcomes 1, 2, 5, 6). C. Define and implement tools, education, and outreach/ communication strategies for provider education about quality and SUTQ application support (Outcomes 1-6): 1. SUTQ Overview; 2. Family Child Care (FCC)/ SUTQ Implementation Card; 3. Parent / Caregiver Brochure and outreach; 4. SUTQ Regional Fairs; and 5. SUTQ Checklist development/ web-based trainings. D. Continue to offer Curriculum and Assessment packages to rated providers and those registered to participate (Outcomes 1, 2, 5, 6). E. Continue to offer Two-Star transition Incentive (Outcomes 1, 2, 5, 6). F. Publish star-rating reimbursement rates for each child care category (Outcomes 1-6). G. Pending funding availability, align the 88 counties into their accurate Market Rate category (Outcomes 1-6). H. Create a Childcare Supply and Demand State analysis after 2020 and 2025 legislative targets (Outcomes 1-6). COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORKS I. Continue performance incentives for the CC&R agencies to increase SUTQ percentages for providers (Outcomes 1, 2, 5, 6). J. Maintain State investments in community support networks that are helping providers to increase their quality (Outcomes 1, 2, 5, 6). K. Work with community support networks to: 1. Identify successful local strategies used to increase quality ratings; and 2. Explore options to support local quality-building efforts. (Outcomes 1, 2, 5, 6)	OUTPUTS A.1. Maintained current SUTQ reimbursement rates. B.1. Maintained TEACH investment. C.1. Defined and implemented tools, education and outreach strategies for provider education and SUTQ application support, including: 1. SUTQ Overview; 2. FCC SUTQ Implementation Card; 3. Parent/Caregiver Brochure and outreach; 4. SUTQ Fairs in 12 service delivery areas; and 5. SUTQ checklist and web-based training. D.1. Curriculum and Assessment packages offered to rated and registered providers. E.1. Continued offering of Two-Star transition Incentive. F.1. Published star-rating reimbursement rates for each category. F.2. Tools developed and available to demonstrate the financial and quality differences for each SUTQ rating level. G.1. Pending funding availability, all 88 counties are in their accurate Market Rate category. H.1. 2025 Statewide Childcare Supply and Demand Report. H.2. 2025 Statewide Childcare Supply and Demand Report. I.1. Ongoing performance incentives for the CC&R agencies to increase SUTQ percentages for providers both for the 2020 and 2025 goals. I.1. State maintains investments to community support networks that are effectively helping providers to increase their quality. I.1.1. State maintains investments to community support networks that are effectively helping providers to increase their quality. I.1.1.1. State maintains investments to community support networks that are effectively helping providers to increase their quality. I.1.1.1.1. State maintains investments to community support networks that are effectively helping providers to increase their quality. K.2. Continue to support local quality-building efforts.	OUTCOMES 1. All 88 licensed providers serving children in the State's publicly funded child care program are participating in SUTQ to meet the 2020 legislative mandate. 2. 85 licensed Centers and Type A home providers serving children in the State's publicly funded childcare program meet the 2025 legislative mandate of achieving a 3-, 4-, or 5-star rating. 3. ODE licensed providers serving children in the Early Childhood Education (ECE) program meet legislative mandate to be highly rated by July 2025. 4. ODE programs serving children in the Pre-School Special Education (PSSE) program meet legislative mandates to be highly rated by July 2025. 5. EC Stakeholders have the tools to support providers in understanding the benefits of, encouraging the participation in, and the progression through the SUTQ system. 6. Ohio's early childhood quality data are published in the Ohio Early Childhood Annual Report and are used to inform State-level policy, funding and programmatic decisions that will increase positive outcomes for children.
ACTION AREA: ENGAGE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES ACTION AREA: EDUCATE EARLY ACTION AREA: IDENTIFY EARLY ACTION AREA: INTERVENE EARLY ACTION AREA: PREPARE PROFESSIONALS				

2.3 Partnership Opportunities. Ohio worked hard to engage and receive feedback from both public and private partners through six meetings with the ECAC, 5 meetings with the Head Start Innovation Collaborative, 15 meetings with various Early Childhood stakeholder groups across the state, 15 meetings with the state's Early Childhood Cross-Agency Leadership Team, and 15 meetings supported by the BUILD Initiative. In total, more than 400 people contributed to the development of Ohio's Bold Beginning Early Childhood Strategic Plan.

The cross-agency early childhood leadership team included Ohio's Early Childhood Officer from Governor Kasich's office, as well as the senior early childhood leaders from the six child-serving agencies including, the Ohio Departments of Education, Job and Family Services, Health, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Developmental Disabilities, and Medicaid.

The ECAC is a 24-member group, comprised of Governor-appointed members representing the United Way, private foundations, local early childhood initiatives, the Ohio chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Head Start, child care providers and early childhood advocacy



organizations and provides input on all major early childhood initiatives. In addition to supporting the plan for implementation of *Ohio's Bold Beginning Early Childhood Strategic Plan*, the group has supported the design, rollout and professional development for the State's Early Learning and Development Standards; statewide professional development registry; alternative career pathways; the TQRIS validation study; and the State's publicly funded preschool grant funding methodology. Each one of these early childhood stakeholders will be meaningfully impacted by the focus of our State's early childhood strategic plan; an assertion that was confirmed during the review and approval of the plan. The *Ohio Bold Beginning Early Childhood Strategic Plan* was approved by the ECAC in July 2018.

In addition to ECAC, as described above, the early childhood system is diverse and fortunate to have so many potential partnership opportunities. From local early childhood initiatives to resource networks, Ohio will continue the strong partnerships and the consistent meetings, planning, discussion, and workgroups it started under the ELCG. This consistent communication across the mixed delivery system allows Ohio to leverage existing resources to improve coordination, align policy at the state level and improve program quality and service delivery. For example, the twelve regional Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies employ direct technical assistance providers whose job is to support child care providers in licensing and SUTQ standards. The sixteen State Support Teams are another regional network resource in the State of Ohio who support all school districts with professional development, needs assessments, data analytics, and strategies for performance improvement. More specifically, State Support Teams employ early childhood consultants who focus on the transition of children from preschools in the community to public Kindergarten; aiding in establishing cooperative agreements across Head Starts, community providers, and schools.



Head Start and Early Head Start is another engaged stakeholder throughout Ohio, led by the Ohio Head Start Association and the Head Start Collaboration Office. Serving over 40,000 children across the State, the Head Start and Early Head Start grantees meet federal performance standards and are peer models for connecting families to needed services, community and family engagement, and service coordination for children with disabilities. These experienced partners contribute much to the mixed delivery system, yet the State programs do not engage them as fully as we could. This grant provides an opportunity to strengthen the relationship and leverage the Head Start expertise to benefit the entire system.

We will continue to provide an opportunity for Ohio's technical assistance supports and providers of Head Start and Early Head Start services to join us at the continuous improvement discussion table in ECAC sub-committees to provide input on implementation of the drafted plan, offer proposed solutions to identified obstacles, and contribute their expertise and experience to implementation of both the plan and these grant activities.

2.4 Strategic Plan Updates. It is expected that the plan will need to evolve as goals are met and challenges are identified. We will explicitly incorporate the logic model and all elements from this proposal into our plan implementation, and will ensure new and updated federal, state and local law/policy is incorporated. Therefore, every two years the State Cross-Agency Leadership Team and the ECAC will jointly review data, goals and strategies and make necessary adjustments to the plan. Additionally, ongoing efforts and accomplishments will be monitored quarterly through examination of the specified outcomes and outputs.

2.5 Stakeholder Engagement. While many stakeholders were included in the creation, review and approval of Ohio's strategic plan for early childhood, as described in Section 2.1, we wanted a draft that clearly articulated a vision and goals across the system before fully engaging



busy parents and professionals in its implementation. It took two calendar years to draft the plan and now that we have something to share, we will offer the opportunity for them to join us as key partners in completing the plan. “No plan about us, without us” is a motto that Ohio commits to for families and early childhood care and education providers. This means the State is committed to meaningfully engage them, listen to their experiences, and work to create state policy that has included them as partners.

More specifically, three sub-committees will be created and charged with lending their expertise and experience to update the strategic plan and implement the activities, measure the progress, evaluate effectiveness of strategies, and report on impacts. The funding requested under this activity will cover travel and substitute teacher stipends for four to five meetings through the grant year for parents and professionals.

If we want families to understand the importance of early childhood, we must understand how to talk, see, hear, and live the experience of those families. And, if we want to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers in early childhood care and education, we need to understand and reduce the duplication of efforts required to be a teacher in a quality program and the needs of those living the experience here in Ohio.

One sub-committee of the ECAC will be created for each of the action areas to oversee the strategic plan update and implementation of the identified strategies over the grant year, including: 1) Engage Families and Communities, 2) Educate Early, and 3) Prepare Professionals (Action Areas 4 and 5 -- Identify and Intervene Early will be reviewed with the subcommittee in later years if awarded). By creating sub-committees of the ECAC, we will include and meaningfully engage new thought leaders, parents and caregivers, providers of services and programming, and representatives from rural, suburban, urban, and Appalachian areas of the



State who the specific needs of these populations. The sub-committees will identify the actions needed to implement the strategies that will move Ohio toward meeting its goals. Using the performance evaluation plan outlined in this application, the state agencies will report quarterly on the progress using indicator data identified as both output and outcome targets toward goal achievement and engage these groups to identify key continuous improvement actions.

Sub-committees will contain representation from: Ohio's technical assistance providers, parents and families of young children, and early childhood care and education providers across the state's diverse geography, cultures, and population types. A public call for interested stakeholders will be posted and disseminated in December 2018. From the applications received, the Cross-Agency Early Childhood Leadership Team will extend invitations to individuals to ensure representation by geography. The subcommittees will ensure all necessary stakeholders with the authority to make changes on the mixed delivery system are engaged to take program coordination, policy alignment, program quality and service delivery, across early childhood care and education programs in the B-5 Early Childhood State System to the next level as outlined in Activities Three through Five. These committees will be charged with providing quarterly updates on the strategic plan, activity implementation, progress, and effectiveness. This information will then be shared with ECAC for a final recommendation on any material changes to the strategic plan.

Approach - Activity Three: Maximizing Parent Knowledge and Choice

Engaging families and creating a family-friendly system is critical to reaching a key strategic plan goal, *Ohio's families understand the importance of early care and education and have the necessary resources and information to make an informed choice about their child's early care and education setting.* To establish a family-friendly system, Ohio recognizes that family



engagement and communication occurring at the right time and appropriate level is critical. Ohio is requesting \$3,760,000 under Activity Three to directly increase parental knowledge and awareness about the early childhood care and education choices and resources available.

Using the funds provided by this grant, we have developed a set of activities that will enable us to more effectively help families receive timely, accurate, and culturally-appropriate information about the scope, types, and quality of early childhood education and care services. Our plan includes the following activities: 1) Parent Education Initiatives via a Digital Media Campaign; 2) Online Screening Tool; and 3) Website Translations. The following sections describe our approach to each activity.

3.1.1 Digital Media Campaign – Timely & Accurate Information. Given that an estimated 77% of Americans go online daily – and that some 26% of those are online almost constantly (Pew Research Center) – raising the digital profile of our early childhood care and education services is the most effective way to reach parents where they are online. Ohio will create a digital media campaign in the state’s most common languages (i.e. English, Spanish, Somali and Arabic) through two interventions - Social Media and Search Engine Marketing - to: 1) Inform parents of SUTQ, e.g., what it is, how it helps children, the positive outcomes a quality rated program can have on a child’s readiness for Kindergarten, that it does not cost them more, and how to find a quality rated program; and 2) Inform parents of Ohio’s Bold Beginning website (boldbeginning.org) and our online child care search tool (childcaresearch.ohio.gov). Each of these sites is described in more detail in the sections following. Ohio will use all distribution vehicles possible to communicate about these sites, including co-branding sites, hot cards and phone/in-person referrals from our resource and referral (R&R) network as well as from any collaborative partner (including all of the ECAC members), agency or location that is connected



to or funded through the State or related programs, such as Head Start and the Head Start Collaboration Office.

Social Media: Social media marketing is an extremely cost-effective way to reach a very specifically defined audience. It also offers an array of analytics showing how effective the messaging is in reaching the intended audience. For instance, Facebook can tell us how many people clicked on an ad, how many people shared it, how many people the ad reached, how many people commented, and how many people reacted. It can also provide their detailed demographic information. We can examine our own web analytics to discover whether the ads had the intended result of driving people to our website, where they went on the website, and how long they stayed.

Research shows that 65% of the nation's population consider themselves to be visual learners (Mind Tools), that the brain processes visual information 60,000 times faster than text (3M Corporation), and that 80% of the public agrees that video conveys more powerful messages than written communication (Kaltura). Therefore, visual content, specifically, images and videos that show families in familiar images, will be used to stimulate engagement.

Social media graphics, infographics, and 15- and 30-second high-quality videos will be produced explaining the importance of early childhood care and education, why it is important for children to be in a quality-rated setting and where to find a rated provider. Ready-to-serve videos will be created at varying quality levels acceptable for different digital platforms and devices including: Facebook Desktop News Feed, Facebook Mobile News Feed, Instagram and YouTube.

Search Engine Marketing: The purpose of Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is to improve the visibility of a website on search engines such as Google. By purchasing paid advertising, we can



make Ohio’s Bold Beginning website appear prominently as a sponsored link when certain key words are searched for – for example, “child care” or “Step Up To Quality.” The SEM intervention will include different messaging subjects, with the ads directing parents to Ohio’s Bold Beginning website to find helpful resources and quality rated providers.

Target Populations: To reach our most vulnerable families, Ohio will direct ads to parents of young children, including pregnant women, new mothers and fathers, single parents, parents who speak English as a second language, and parents of young children with suspected or known developmental delays or disabilities. Ohio will also encourage local community resources, child-serving agencies, and family-serving agencies to include links to the Bold Beginning website on their agency websites. To target fathers, Ohio will engage with the Ohio Commission on Fatherhood to incorporate information on their website focusing on early childhood care and education including both the child care search and Bold Beginning website.

3.1.2 Online Screening Tool – Quality, Access & Affordability. In addition to the digital media campaign, Ohio will create an online-screening tool that can be used by families to identify the likelihood of being eligible for available services and programs through Ohio’s mixed delivery system. This tool will allow a family to input the number of people in the family unit, the amount of monthly earnings, establish if they have a qualifying activity (i.e. work, education, training); age of child, and concerns regarding their child’s development. With these basic data points, the screening tool will determine the likelihood of a family’s eligibility for PFCC, Ohio’s Early Childhood Education (publicly funded preschool), Early Intervention, Preschool Special Education, Home Visiting, and/or Head Start and provide the services that may be available in their area and how to apply. After a family has determined their likelihood



for eligibility, they will be provided contact information for local agencies where they can apply for these benefits or with referral information on how to initiate services.

With this information, the families can then make an informed choice based on the programs available in their area. This tool will also assist the local early childhood initiatives by increasing awareness of the likelihood for benefit eligibility to ensure the ultimate leveraging of funding is achieved. Because most local partnerships are required to be the payor of last resort this tool will help them to quickly determine the likelihood of other public programs potentially available to assist a child and his or her family.

3.1.3 Website Translations – Improved Cultural & Linguistic Competency. Ohio will also enhance the Ohio Bold Beginning and child care search websites to ensure cultural and linguistic competency by utilizing new technology, BrowseAloud. BrowseAloud will add speech, reading, and translation services to the website facilitating access and participation for people with Dyslexia, Low Literacy, English as a Second Language, and those with visual impairments. Through this technology Ohio will ensure all its citizens have access to the information available on its Bold Beginning website, including all State early childhood services and many educational videos, lists, and short articles. The site also includes the child care search function. This search page allows families to view the availability, variety, and quality of all programs. It also allows parents to identify programs that accept PFCC and Early Childhood Education funding.

Through the child care search function, parents can look for licensed quality child care from across Ohio's mixed delivery system, including providers offering PFCC, Head Start, Preschool Special Education, and Early Childhood Education. They can search by zip code, SUTQ rating, accreditation, meals being provided, and hours of operation. The search results will allow parents to choose a program and review the program's most recent state licensing inspection report. By



adding BrowseAloud it will ensure that parents can search, review and select the appropriate setting for their family's needs, in the language they are most fluent and comfortable reading or hearing.

3.2 Collaboration and Coordination. Led by the Governor's Officer for Early Childhood, Ohio will continue to collaborate through the cross-agency leadership meetings, as described in this application. Through cross agency collaboration this group launched Ohio's Bold Beginning website (Boldbeginning.org), a website that presents all the public health, child care, education, disabilities, and mental health information, service availability and basic needs resources in one online space, easily accessible to parents and families of young children prenatal to age eight.

The Bold Beginning website allows families to access age-specific video, graphic and text information on topics ranging from housing, food insecurity, parenting education, concerns about delays or disabilities, transitioning children among early childhood settings and into preschool, and options across the system for early childhood care and education. Families struggling with self-sufficiency and/or food insecurity can be routed to services such as an application for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly food stamps) or information on the nearest food pantry through the Family & Community tab. All State and Federal programs are included in a similar construct, with information about eligibility and program goals enabling parents to choose a routing to information about how to apply, including Medicaid, CHIP, Title V Maternal and Child Health programs, Healthy Start, CACFP and WIC.

We will continue to coordinate across Head Start, IDEA Early Intervention, and prenatal/pregnancy services through monthly cross-agency leadership meetings and the ECAC. Through the digital media campaign, we will ensure all families know how to access the websites and resources whether they have internet at home, by phone or public access.

3.3 Timeline. If awarded Ohio is prepared to immediately start work on the activities outlined above, with implementation of the digital media campaign and the website translations implemented early enough in the timeline to see improved outcomes as defined in the performance evaluation by the end of the grant. For more specifics please see the Project Milestones and Timeline section.

Approach - Activity Four: Sharing Best Practices

Ohio is asking for \$1,505,000 within Activity Four to further Ohio's collaboration and coordination efforts across the mixed delivery system. Ohio has worked hard to improve cross-program and agency collaboration and to increase efficiencies by focusing on the goal that *All of Ohio's children, especially those from low-income and disadvantaged families, have access to quality early childhood care and education and are ready for Kindergarten.* Ohio proposes eight specific activities to help share best practices across the ecosystem including: 1) identifying and leveraging best practices for transitions plans to help children move seamlessly from preschool to Kindergarten; 2). creating a single point of application for services; 3) enhancing resource and referral cross-agency partnerships; 4) enhancing marketing/outreach and use of existing technical assistance materials; 5) enhancing communications about Ohio's Professional Development System, 6) creating Coaching/Mentoring Opportunities; and 7) expanding Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant (ECMHC) services; and 8) deploying cultural and linguistic competency training.

4.1.1 Identify and Leverage Best Practices for Transition Plans. To reduce duplication and increase collaboration and efficiency across the B-5 system, Ohio will examine and identify best practices for transitioning children from preschool to Kindergarten. More specifically, programs participating in SUTQ at any rating level (i.e. PFCC, Early Childhood Education, Preschool



Special Education Early Head Start, Head Start) and Home Visiting programs are all required to provide families with written transition plans, and in some cases conferences, when children are transitioning into, within and out of the program. Ohio will create a workgroup of partners from the mixed delivery system, including Head Start, Early Head Start, and IDEA Early Intervention as well as PFCC programs, to evaluate the current policies and practices and establish what is similar and different in the practices. Once the common elements are identified the workgroup will recommend a cross-program, statewide best practice guidance; which will be disseminated in-person, online and within professional development opportunities. This will not only assist with reducing duplication but will also help families benefiting from multiple programs to have a consistent and coordinated experience by knowing and understanding what to expect when their child and family experience a transition from one program/setting to another.

4.1.2 Create a Unified Application. Another activity that will reduce duplication of effort for families and administrative burden for regulating agencies while increasing cross-program collaboration is to create a single application for services across the B-5 system. Ohio will begin the program collaboration and coordination process of identifying the information each program needs to determine eligibility (i.e., Early Head Start, Head Start, Help Me Grow, Preschool Special Education, Early Childhood Education and PFCC). During this first year, Ohio will work to collect the necessary information required by each program and begin to evaluate system possibilities for creating a joint cross-program, statewide application. This effort will be the first phase of work toward a single point of entry for all early childhood care and education programs.

4.1.3 Enhance Resource & Referral Cross-Agency Partnerships. Ohio currently contracts with nine child care resource and referral agencies. These nine agencies serve the twelve service delivery areas (SDA) that cover the entire State and include providers from all settings: Child



Care Centers, Family Child Care, programs participating in Head Start, Early Head Start, PFCC and Early Childhood Education. The R&R agencies are responsible for providing outreach to families, creating and conducting professional development across a range of topics, and providing licensing and SUTQ technical assistance to early childhood care and education providers.

In SFY 2018, a performance incentive payment was provided to individual R&R agencies if 40% of all providers in their SDA were participating in SUTQ by June 30, 2018. Four of the twelve areas earned this incentive demonstrating that several of the resource and referral agencies have been able to identify successful methods to assist providers with becoming rated. Ohio will work with the successful R&R agencies to document their tested practices and the resources available to support those activities. These agencies will then be partnered with agencies who did not meet the 2018 goal with a similar number of programs and children to share best practices and lessons learned. These best practices include door-to-door campaigns, the creation of sample documentation, knowledgeable staff conducting SUTQ program standard assessments to identify the gaps in current services, staff assisting with the registration process and uploading documents as well as identifying available resources, training and professional development opportunities when a gap in service is identified. Sharing these best practices will occur through State-facilitated monthly meetings and one-on-one sessions held between the R&R agency SUTQ coordinators, the individuals designated at each agency as responsible for promoting and assisting programs with the quality program. Through these coordinated meetings and bringing together of identified resources, efforts will be streamlined, and duplication reduced as the agencies learn and work from strategies that are achieving results.



4.1.4 Enhance Marketing and Use of Existing Technical Assistance Materials. The State has found that early childhood care and education professionals in Ohio have a 9% monthly turnover rate. With so much staff turnover, it is imperative that communications to providers go out often and in multiple media to prevent missed professional development opportunities and other free resources. The State has also found that many providers were unaware of the resources already offered free of charge which includes the following: free curriculums, assessments, training on the selected curriculum, statewide early childhood mental health services, and free professional development. These services were created/offered as the result of the State evaluating the needs of the mixed delivery system and leveraging the State buying power to ensure the best return on investment; however, because of inconsistent communication, some providers remain unaware of the opportunities. For instance, the State determined that since all programs are required to evaluate, acquire and utilize a curriculum and assessment to participate in SUTQ it made sense to leverage the statewide buying power and evidence-based criteria to offer curriculum options to providers free of charge. Since 2016, when the State contracted with curriculum and assessment vendors, it has provided 1,466 curriculums and 29,595 individual child level assessments for Ohio's most at-risk children (children receiving public assistance through PFCC, Early Childhood Education and/or Head Start). The 2017 SUTQ Validation Study recommended that the State not only expand support and assistance for child care providers, but that Ohio also help offset the cost of high quality. Through this grant, the State will improve communications to these resources by identifying new and impactful ways to communicate with Ohio's provider communities. This will include emails, news feeds, newsletters, text messaging, and in-person events.



4.1.5 Enhance Communication about Ohio’s Professional Development System. The prior section outlined communication avenues and resources to be utilized to more effectively communicate about Ohio’s approved professional development processes. The designation of “Ohio Approved” for professional development created statewide standards to ensure all opportunities with the Ohio Approved seal met requirements both for the trainers and the training materials. Moreover, these opportunities have been offered for free so that professionals can obtain quality professional development without a cost barrier. Often professionals are unaware of the options available to them because the State is not communicating in the ways that get the information to those who need it. Consequently, many providers pay people to come in to provide training to their teams on-site, which is an unnecessary expense. Ohio has 4,083 Ohio Approved trainings that the 102,324 early childhood care and education professionals can easily access, including through online means; however, they cannot access what they do not know about. Through this activity Ohio will leverage new communication avenues and tools to ensure the best return on the already existing State investments.

4.1.6 Create Coaching/Mentoring Opportunities. To increase program quality, Ohio will stand up a coaching/mentoring program as well as expand the capacity of the State’s Early Childhood Mental Health consultants to train on Trauma Informed Care and engaging families. *Coaching/Mentoring:* The Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA) piloted a successful coaching/mentoring program with fifty mentors/mentees where they partnered providers already participating in SUTQ with unrated providers. The pilot reported that success was contingent on a strong screening process to select the mentors/mentees. OCCRRA found it was critical to ensure the mentor/mentee relationship aligned individuals with similar backgrounds and circumstances.



In a family child care provider workgroup in 2016, the providers stressed that guidance and technical assistance is most beneficial when it comes from someone that is in a similar situation or that has already overcome the obstacles and challenges the individual is currently facing. As a result of this information, Ohio will work to establish a mentoring/coaching program that will build on the screening tools and lessons already established by the OCCRRA pilot. The goal will be to start with 100 mentors and 100 mentees, primarily targeting family child care settings during the grant year. Decisions about expansion in future years will be based on the evaluation of cost, capacity and outcomes achieved.

4.1.7 Expand Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants. Through the ELCG Ohio invested in Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants to assist with reducing preschool expulsion rates by providing professional development opportunities to train early childhood care and education professionals. Both techniques and resources were made available between consultant and teacher through a statewide toll-free number for licensed providers to call when challenges arise to get one-on-one classroom support. After the grant, the State invested more than \$5 million to continue this resource statewide. Ohio will leverage its statewide team of Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants as a resource for both providers and parents. Their capacity will be expanded in order to offer statewide Trauma-Informed Care training, followed with onsite in-person training and support to child care providers. The early childhood mental health Trauma-Informed model has already been successfully deployed in the State with over 600 Early Intervention providers, with more trainings scheduled throughout 2018 and 2019. This comes at a time when Ohio is living through the devastating consequences of a rampant Opioid epidemic and increasing numbers of young children dealing with the loss of a parent. In just a two-year period (2016 and 2017), the Ohio Head Start Association reported that 3,834 children



(almost 10% of their population) were directly impacted by the opioid epidemic through death or incarceration of a parent. This training will equip providers to recognize when issues are arising, assist with providing resources available, and educate providers on how to assist both the family and the child.

4.1.8 Deploy Cultural and Linguistic Competency Training. Building on the success of Ohio’s partnering state agency early childhood teams, resource and referral staff and early childhood mental health consultants, Ohio will also deploy a cultural and linguistic competency training that will aid early childhood care and education providers in understanding parents of young children. This knowledge will enable family child care and early education providers to meet policy and practice criteria under the family engagement SUTQ standard while increasing their success in engaging often hard-to-reach families. Ohio will leverage the already existing Understanding, Engaging and Appreciating Families training, a three-hour opportunity that teaches evidence-based strategies.

4.2 Timeline. If awarded Ohio is prepared to immediately begin engaging stakeholders to establish and promulgate best practices where necessary and facilitate open dialogue and improved communications. For more specifics see the Project Milestones and Timeline.

Approach - Activity Five: Improving Overall Quality

Ohio has worked diligently over the last 24 months to create a comprehensive B-5 needs assessment and the accompanying strategic plan to lead to a stronger mixed delivery system to provide quality early childhood care and education. As a result, Ohio plans to immediately begin work on Activity Five to improve the overall quality of early childhood care and education and is asking for \$8,900,000 in funding to accomplish these tasks.



5.1 Defining Quality. Ohio was a Race to the Top - ELCG grantee in 2012. The grant was used to improve the quality of early childhood care and education programs that serve high-needs children from B-5 by creating Ohio's five-star tiered quality rating and improvement system, SUTQ, and the design, development and implementation of an inter-agency statewide licensing and SUTQ system. Additionally, through the ELCG, Ohio completed the first validation study of the TQRIS. Ohio was able to define quality and confirm that as a result of the evidence-based curriculum, assessments and other required standards, participating programs have a statistically significant positive impact on child outcomes (Ohio SUTQ Validation Study, 2017). To solidify the State's commitment to quality, specifically to the SUTQ standard, the Ohio General Assembly set requirements in the Ohio Revised Code, which require providers serving PFCC to be participating in SUTQ by July 1, 2020 and Centers and large family child care homes (those serving 7 to 12 children) must be highly rated (meaning a 3, 4 or 5-star rating) by June 30, 2025 to continue to serve children receiving PFCC. This is a key goal area in our Strategic Plan.

Since the establishment of SUTQ and the statutory requirements, Ohio has been focused on moving all types of programs into SUTQ. Ohio has worked to integrate the licensing inspections with the SUTQ visits to ensure a streamlined approach to implementation. This reduces the burden on providers, ensures that providers achieved quality, and balances the Child Care Development Block grant (CCDBG) requirements. As part of the CCDBG requirements, Ohio created a pre-licensing training for early childhood care and education program owners and administrators which include modules on SUTQ and PFCC as well as CCDBG-required content. This training creates an opportunity for the owner and administrators to be educated on quality programming as well as on how payment for services to the at-risk population works, starting at

the time they apply to be licensed. As of July 2018, 39% of providers serving children in PFCC, serving 49% of Ohio's children participating in PFCC, were participating in the SUTQ rating system. Through the work accomplished in this grant, Ohio will strive to have 75% of all providers serving children through PFCC rated by December 2019 thus ensuring the majority of Ohio's vulnerable children will be receiving quality early childhood care and education long before the ambitious goals already adopted by the state.

5.2 Obstacles to Quality. In June 2017, ODJFS reached out to the 3,879 unrated providers, including centers, family child care and Head Start providers, and made connection with 47% of them. Through these conversations, ODJFS was able to identify the reasons providers were not participating in SUTQ. Out of the of respondents, 24% reported they were not participating because they were: 1) unsure of the process to become rated; 2) 11% reported that either the administrator or families did not see the value in SUTQ; 3) 5% stated they were not participating because staff could not meet the necessary qualifications; and 4) 5% were not eligible to participate because of non-compliances with licensing rules.

5.3 Approach to Improving Overall Quality. The following activities outline Ohio's approach to improving quality: 1) On-Site technical assistance; 2) SUTQ Fairs and Resource Packets, 3) Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Cohorts; and 4) Licensing Rapid Response training.

5.4 Activities to Address Barriers and Improve Overall Quality. To assist with removing these barriers, Ohio is proposing a number of activities as described in this section.

5.4.1 On-Site Technical Assistance. For providers who indicate they are unsure of the processes we will provide onsite technical assistance. The onsite technical assistance will help improve provider understanding of SUTQ and the process to become rated. In fact, Ohio will



offer on-site technical assistance to all unrated providers eligible to participate in SUTQ and any new programs requesting to be licensed, estimated at 3,000 providers. This will be hands on, one-on-one guidance on the SUTQ documentation and registration process, on-site support and SUTQ standard gap analysis. Knowledgeable staff will work with the provider to define areas that need improvement to meet the necessary standards to become rated. At the time the gap analysis is completed, the staff will work to identify resources to meet the needs of the program, whether that is assisting with enrolling the professionals in the appropriate credential coursework, establishing a wage scale, identifying or implementing a curriculum or simply providing the sample forms and assisting with the appropriate documentation. We believe this approach will be particularly helpful to rural counties which may have difficulty participating in group activities that tend to be held in more populated areas.

5.4.2 Step Up To Quality Resource Packet/Step Up To Quality Fairs “Your Roadmap to Quality.” Ohio will create a SUTQ packet that will contain the necessary forms to be completed to become rated, helpful tools and resources to assist with understanding and meeting the standards, and conduct SUTQ fairs. The fairs allow providers who have not yet had on-site technical assistance to participate in an event where stations will be set up to walk them through the documentation and registration process and to collaborate with other programs they may be able to learn from.

5.4.3 Child Development Associate Credential Cohorts. Cohorts to obtain a CDA credential will be created to assist up to 100 educators. To participate in SUTQ, the administrator must have at least a CDA and 50% of the lead teachers must also have a CDA. Ohio recognizes the CDA as the beginning of the career ladder for educators and the launching point for future career growth and degree attainment. By investing in Ohio’s educators, we will ensure they are

prepared and ready to teach in a quality educational setting, understand how to engage with families, and assess children with fidelity to ensure the curriculum is used to move children toward positive outcomes. Increasing the number of CDAs will also help more providers become SUTQ-rated.

5.4.4 Rapid Response for Licensing Non-Compliances. To register for SUTQ, a licensed program cannot have more than 18 serious or moderate risk non-compliance points. Examples of serious and moderate risk non-compliance include: provider refuses ODJFS access to the program, employee fails a background check and remains employed, child is left unattended, or chemicals such as bleach are left within reach of children. When a provider is not eligible for SUTQ, it means that during the previous twelve months a provider had enough serious and moderate risk non-compliances that they acquired 18 or more points. Currently there are 5% of programs not eligible to register for SUTQ and in SFY 2018, there were 58 rating reductions and 24 rating removals as a result of serious and moderate risk non-compliances.

To assist programs in becoming rated and maintaining the rating once earned, State licensing staff will begin a rapid rating support initiative to provide targeted technical assistance to unrated programs specifically on high non-compliance areas. Designated licensing specialists in all of Ohio's district offices will focus on providing targeted technical assistance to unrated programs serving children in PFCC. During the visit, the licensing specialist will provide the targeted non-compliance training and conduct a rating readiness scan. The staff will then work directly with the program to establish next steps to prevent serious and moderate risk non-compliances and to address the gaps to participating in SUTQ so that once eligible they can immediately begin the process of becoming rated.



5.5 Timeline. If awarded Ohio will immediately embark on the activities outlined in this section to improve quality. Work for all activities will begin to ensure Ohio meets the July 1, 2020 requirement to have all licensed PFCC programs participating in SUTQ. For more specifics see the Project Milestones and Timeline.

Organizational Capacity and Management

Designated State Entity. The ODJFS, in coordination with the ODE, will administer this grant. ODJFS oversees the largest component of early childhood programming in Ohio – the PFCC program – and develops and supervises the State’s public assistance, workforce development, unemployment compensation, child and adult protective services, adoption, and child support programs to improve the well-being of Ohio’s workforce and families by promoting economic self-sufficiency and ensuring the safety of Ohio’s most vulnerable citizens.

Lead Entity Roles and Responsibilities. Exhibit 7 outlines the key ODJFS staff who will manage and work on grant-funded activities, their role, and their relevant experience.

Exhibit 7. ODJFS Project Team Roles & Responsibilities

Name Agency Role	Grant Role	Experience
Michael McCreight ODJFS Assistant Director	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 years of state government experience • Oversees Child Support, Child Welfare, Child Care, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs
Kara Wente ODJFS Deputy Director	Leadership & Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 years of experience • Oversees Child Care, Cash and Food Assistance programs and \$2+ billion budget • Involved in overseeing ELCG, including the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of the inter-agency statewide licensing and tiered quality rating and improvement system ○ Validation study
Tracey Chestnut ODJFS Bureau Chief	Leadership & Subject Matter Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 years of Early Childhood experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Experience working in and managing a child care program



Name Agency Role	Grant Role	Experience
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides technical assistance to state-licensed programs, evaluates compliance, ensures policy, training and technical assistance materials are clearly written and culturally and linguistically sensitive • Ensured ELCG deliverables were met • Co-chaired Rural Child Care Advisory Council subcommittee
Jeffery Van Deusen ODJFS Bureau Chief	Leadership & Subject Matter Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 years of experience working at ODJFS in child care licensing, monitoring, and technical assistance • Served on several committees where he reviewed grant and contract applications • Ensured ELCG deliverables were met • ODJFS BUILD representative
Mindy Kowalski ODJFS Bureau Chief	Leadership, Project Manager & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 years of state government experience • Manages two project managers and the data reporting team; responsible for ad hoc requests, federal reports and state reports • Responsible for ELCG Validation Study, an in-depth review of Ohio’s Step Up To Quality program • Led workforce-related child care initiatives, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Developing the Professional Development Certificate ○ Updating the Career Pathways Model ○ Coordinating the Cross-Agency Child Care focus group
Matthew Cunningham ODJFS Bureau Chief	Financial Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 years of fiscal and grant management experience • Oversees fiscal/budget management and contract/grant management areas of the Office of Family Assistance for TANF, SNAP, Child Care, and Refugee Services
Krista Kinchen ODJFS Section Chief Program Agreements and Monitoring	Financial Oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13 years grant management and monitoring experience • Manages contract/grant management section that includes four staff who manage and monitor grants across the Office of Family Assistance
Kim Burton ODJFS Project Manager	Project Manager Activities 1, 2 4 & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 years of experience with state government in human services programs • Reviews grant and contract applications • Responsible for statewide programs



Name Agency Role	Grant Role	Experience
Rachael Moore ODJFS Project Manager	Project Manager Activities 3 & 5 & Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 years of experience in early childhood education, seven years of child care state government • ELCG subject matter expert for development of inter-agency statewide licensing and tiered quality rating and improvement system as a part of ELCG • Reviewed request for proposal

As seen in the Exhibit, all of our staff bring relevant experience managing similar HHS grants, notably the ELCG. Our team also has extensive rural experience through the former Child Care Advisory Council’s subcommittee co-chair’s participation. Collectively, our management team has a proven track record of developing, managing, and evaluating similar grant-funded programs and exercising appropriate control over the administration of grant funds.

Partner Experience. Working in collaboration and coordination with the lead agency, five other State agencies and the Governor’s office helped support Ohio’s early childhood system during and since ELCG. The Ohio Departments of Education, Job and Family Services, Developmental Disabilities, Health, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and Medicaid have been consistent and equal partners and served as contributing members of the Early Childhood Cross Agency Leadership team and Ohio’s ECAC (State Advisory Council in Ohio). They also helped create Ohio’s *Bold Beginning Early Childhood Strategic Plan*. The leaders of each of these agencies have committed to partnering with ODJFS to implement this grant’s proposed activities, as demonstrated in the attached Memorandum of Understanding provided in the application appendix. Exhibit 8 outlines our partner agency key staff members, their grant role, and relevant experience.

Exhibit 8. Partner Agency Staff Member Roles & Responsibilities

Name, Agency, Role	Grant Role	Experience
Wendy Grove, Ph. D. ODE	Oversight & Cross-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 years of experience in early childhood



Name, Agency, Role	Grant Role	Experience
Director of Early Learning and School Readiness	Agency Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees Preschool Special Education, Child Care Licensing and Step Up to Quality (SUTQ), and Early Childhood Education
Kim Hauck, M. Ed. DODD Deputy Director	Cross-Agency Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25 years of experience in the disability field, five years of which has been in state government Coordinates policy regarding subjects concerning children, autism, employment, transition, and early intervention
Sandy Oxley ODH Director of Maternal Child and Family Health/Title V	Cross-Agency Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 years of experience (her entire career) overseeing programs for women and their children Oversees Early Childhood Home Visiting, Maternal Child Health Assessment, Planning and Assessment Services, Perinatal and Women’s Health, Infant Vitality, School and Adolescent Health, Maternal Child Health Epidemiology and Analytics
Valerie Alloy, Ph. D. ODMHAS Mental Health Administrator	Cross-Agency Leadership & SME for the Early Childhood Mental Health work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 years of experience Leads the Department’s Early Childhood Mental Health Initiatives Administers Child Matters funding initiative
Icilda Dickerson, MSA ODM Bureau Chief	Cross-Agency Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 years of experience in public health, including Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, Health Equity, Children and Family Health Policy
Bonnie Hubbard-Nicosia ODM Medicaid Health Systems Administrator	Cross-Agency Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 years of experience working with Medicaid waivers and demonstration grant implementation

Capacity and Sustainability. With an annual budget of over \$4 billion, ODJFS is well-positioned to manage this grant. The grant activities align with the core mission and vision of the early childhood work ODJFS has already completed. In addition, ODJFS has significant experience managing the development and sustainability of many federal grants – including many with grant activities very similar to those that will be completed with these grant funds. ODJFS will support this grant with teams of experts in finance, data, contracts, legal, and grants



management. Moreover, the ODE, as a critical partner, is equipped to co-manage the program evaluation component of the grant. ODE will leverage its research and advanced analytics office, which is staffed with experts with the skills to effectively plan, monitor, and report progress on grant activities throughout the grant period.

Ohio has written this response to the Preschool Development Grant B-5 funding opportunity with its federal, state, and local early childhood system partners in mind. Those administering this grant, should it be funded, are the same key individuals who oversee the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Commodity Food Programs, the Refugee Services Programs, the Maternal and Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting program, the Every Child Succeeds Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Head Start State Collaboration grant.

Moreover, the ECAC, a key partner in the implementation of these activities, includes representatives from many of the major local preschool initiatives, including Dayton Learn2Earn, Cleveland's Pre4Cle, and Cincinnati's Preschool Promise. This same advisory group includes important early childhood advocates, state legislators, foundations, and partners, such as the Gund Foundation, Sisters of Charity, the United Way, the Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Ohio Board of Education, Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association, Ohio Head Start Association, and child care providers. These groups of stakeholders have provided critical input in the formation of our application. They have helped to ensure that the activities we have proposed are responsive to local and community needs. An appendix to this application provides a letter of commitment from these partners.

**State B – 5 Mixed Delivery System Description & Vision Statement**

Description of Ohio’s B – 5 Mixed Delivery System. Ohio is a locally-administered human services system comprised of 88 counties with over 11,000,000 residents. Of those, 2,558,132 are children under the age of 18, and 838,936 are children B – 5. In Ohio, 25.5% of children in the B – 5 age group live at or below 100% FPL. Half of all children in Ohio live at or below 200% FPL. In total, there are an estimated 419,468 children in Ohio at risk of going hungry, living in unsafe or inadequate housing, have unaddressed health, mental health or dental needs, or who spend their days in developmentally-poor environments. Ohio has one of the worst infant mortality rates in the nation, a figure that triples for our black babies (2016 Ohio Infant Mortality Report).

Ohio is not adequately preparing children to be successful in Kindergarten. Only 41.5% of Ohio’s Kindergarten students are demonstrating readiness at Kindergarten entry; a number that falls even lower when examining results of non-white students (25.2% demonstrating readiness for Black children; 24.9% for Hispanic; 33.8% for American Indian; and 36.3% for Multiracial, compared to 47.8% demonstrating readiness for White children). Only 27.5% of our Kindergarten students living in economic disadvantage demonstrate readiness at Kindergarten entry, compared to 57.3% of children who are not economically disadvantaged (2017 - 2018, KRA Report).

As these statistics demonstrate, Ohio needs to reach more of its vulnerable children in the significant early childhood period of growth and brain development. We need to do a better job of engaging families and communities, educating early, identifying children at-risk early, intervening early, and preparing our professionals across the early childhood system. This will help each child in Ohio have experiences that prepare them for school and build a solid foundation for lifelong success. We know that children who start behind are likely to stay

behind. If we miss the opportunities to engage, educate, identify, intervene, and prepare children in early childhood, then they are more likely to be unprepared for future learning. We know if children are not reading proficiently by third grade, they are much more likely to struggle academically and socially for the remainder of their school years. We also know that children whose health, mental health, and basic needs are not met are less able to fully engage in the learning environment and are much more likely to drop out of school, engage in criminal activity or drug use, and are much more likely to live in poverty as adults.

Progress and Challenges. Over the past eight years, Ohio has made tremendous progress. It has:

- Tripled its investment of funds in early childhood programs and services;
- Put an Early Childhood Officer into a leadership role within the Governor's office;
- Successfully laid the foundation to align policies, eligibilities, reporting, and data collection across the early childhood care and education arena;
- Successfully implemented one common application for services across PFCC and ECE;
- Eliminated the required PFCC co-payment for families under 100% FPL to align with ECE policies;
- Increased the FPL to 300% before a family is no longer eligible for PFCC;
- Create one set of Early Learning and Development Standards across the critical areas of development, replacing outdated Infant/Toddler Guidelines and Preschool Program standards.

The State also created a statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA), aligned to these Early Learning and Development Standards, which has provided readiness information since 2014 across language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional learning, approaches toward learning, and physical well-being and motor development.



The challenges that exist in Ohio are largely the same as they are elsewhere, but here we have a very diverse population running the gamut from rural Appalachia to large urban centers, where engagement that works in one area does not work in another. We have many local success stories where partnerships across government, foundations, and social services have increased parent knowledge and engagement. But, as shared above, we have not seen the overall needle move in our most devastating statistics. To that end, there are federal and state requirements for public funds that create obstacles to finding, enrolling, and serving a parent and young child. For example, the CCDBG, which was reauthorized in 2014, has placed numerous new regulations on states for things like immunizations, background checks, and training. While these are good policies in theory, they create a situation where a Head Start provider or preschool teacher in a public-school district – who has already met health and safety requirements – must now have a second or third set of forms that document their compliance. This has caused some of our providers to stop accepting children who gain access to quality settings through PFCC, due to the increased burden of meeting multiple sets of requirements.

Another challenge across our B-5 programs is that different criteria impact eligibility. These include the extent to which a parent is required (or not) to meet work or student activities or contribute with a co-payment, length of stay, and exit criteria. These varying eligibility requirements challenge our ability to reduce duplication of efforts given each program's mandate to meet its statutory requirements. It also creates duplication of efforts for both the parents of young children, who must provide what feels like the same information to each program or service, as well as for state administrators, who all work to collect, house, use, and report data for their own needs.

Ohio has come a very long way. In 2011, very few early childhood care and education providers were participating in the SUTQ system, despite the financial incentives available to do so. The quality of our early childhood care and education environments were lacking, with family- and center-based settings meeting minimum health and safety standards to operate. Seven years later, we have seen the State go from minimal participation to almost 100% of its Early Childhood Education preschool grantees, Head Starts, and Preschool Special Education classrooms achieving ratings in the 1 – 5-star system. The State’s PFCC providers must be participating by July 1, 2020 to be eligible for the public funding. By 2025, centers and large family child care providers must achieve and maintain a 3, 4, or 5-star rating. One challenge to this legislation is that there is no consequence for non-participation until the deadline of July 1, 2020. As the statistics have shown, although the legislation has been in place since September 24, 2012, only 39% of programs are currently in SUTQ. To maintain the diversity currently available in our B-5 mixed-delivery system for early childhood care and education, we must help our providers meet these quality standards. The good intentions, passion, and commitment to do right by children is a given; but the statistics demonstrate that the state needs to help providers meet the requirements to not only operate but operate at a high level of quality.

Key Partners. Interested stakeholders have been engaged over many years, but Ohio had several additional conversations to directly ask state and local service providers what they wanted to see the State target both for this opportunity and as we move forward. Our partners have been described throughout this application and represent a diverse set of experiences. We have also described our intent to bring parents and families – as well as technical assistance and early childhood care and education providers – to the ECAC table to strengthen our strategic plan and include them in grant activity planning, implementation, continuous improvement, and reporting.



Each partner brings their experience in the mixed delivery system, which we will leverage to make measurable progress to achieve the State’s vision for each child in Ohio.

Vision for Early Childhood. As the landscape for early childhood care and education has been described, Ohio has a strategic plan to accomplish its vision that *Each child in Ohio will have a Bold Beginning in life by engaging in high-quality early learning and healthy development experiences that prepare that child for school and build a solid foundation for lifelong success.*

The population targeted in this work is each Ohio child and that language is intentional. When we say, “all children” we do not always see the set of circumstances, obstacles, or challenges that present for each child. When we examine statistics by groups we miss the needs of individuals. Therefore, Ohio’s vision is for each child B – 5 and their parents or caregiving adults, such that:

- Each family has access to knowledge and resources to support their child’s education and healthy development;
- Each child has access to safe, healthy, high-quality early learning experiences led by skilled professionals;
- Each child begins school healthy and ready to learn;
- Early childhood care and education professionals are ready to receive, educate, engage, and involve each child and family;
- Public and private stakeholders partner to advance the early childhood vision; and
- Communities and policy makers understand and actively support the development of each young child.



Ohio’s vision will increase the quality, coordination, alignment, and efficiency of programs and services, because it brings together the work across the system. Our vision binds people together in pursuit of a singular goal. If Ohio is to progress, grow, and prosper, it must continue to build upon the strong system it has started and take it to the next level. We will accomplish this vision through a thoughtful and articulated set of goals, strategies, and activities that we will monitor for continuous improvement and adjustment, as needed. The gaps have been identified through our needs assessment and strategic planning processes. We understand what opportunities we have for alignment and coordination and the breaking down of barriers for both parents of young children and providers of services and early childhood care and education. We now need to implement our plan and monitor our progress toward the vision we have for each Ohio child.

Project Timeline & Milestones

Exhibit 9 presents our proposed project timeline.

Exhibit 9. Project Timeline

Grant Activity	Year 1: Quarter 1 (Jan. – March 31)	Year 1: Quarter 2 (April - June 30)	Year 1: Quarter 3 (July – Sept. 30)	Year 1: Quarter 4 (Oct. – Dec. 31)
Timeline & Milestone Targets				
Activity 1: B – 5 Needs Assessment				
1. Report on number of programs rated <i>Baseline: 39%</i>	By 3/31/2019 Target: 45%	By 6/30/2019 Target: 55%	By 9/30/2019 Target: 65%	By 12/31/2019 Target: 75%
2. Report on unduplicated number of children served <i>Baseline: 49%</i>	By 3/31/2019 Target: 55%	By 6/30/2019 Target: 60%	By 9/30/2019 Target: 70%	By 12/31/2019 Target: 75%
Activity 2: B – 5 Strategic Plan				
2.1. Identify; invite sub -committee members	Complete By 1/15/2019 Target: At least 30 families, technical assistance and early childhood care & education providers invited and commit to participating in ECAC sub-committee who represent Ohio by diversity, geography, and setting type			
2.2. Contracts for travel/stipends in place	By 2/15/2019 Target: 100% of the contracts to pay for travel and teacher stipends are in place			
2.3. Meeting 1/5	By 2/28/2019 Target: Meaningful engagement on Strategic Plan; Input on strengthening parent and provider voice, perspective and meaningful change gathered and put into plan			



Grant Activity	Year 1: Quarter 1 (Jan. – March 31)	Year 1: Quarter 2 (April - June 30)	Year 1: Quarter 3 (July – Sept. 30)	Year 1: Quarter 4 (Oct. – Dec. 31)
2.4. Meeting 2/5		By 4/30/2019 Target: Updated Strategic Plan finalized		
2.5. Meeting 3/5		By 7/31/2019 Target: Meaningful engagement on grant activities; continuous improvement		
2.6. Meeting 4/5		By 9/30/2019 Target: Meaningful engagement on grant activities; continuous improvement		
2.7. Meeting 5/5		By 11/30/2019 Target: Meaningful engagement on grant activities; continuous improvement		
Activity 3: Maximizing Parent Knowledge and Choice				
3.1. Digital Media Campaign: Social Media	Target: Identify and contract with vendor	Target: Gather input from ECAC sub-committees and parent survey	Target: Launch campaign; collect analytics	Target: Increase outreach; examine analytics for reach
3.2. Digital Media Campaign: Search Engine Marketing	Target: Identify and contract with vendor	Target: Gather input from ECAC sub-committees and parent survey	Target: Launch campaign; collect analytics	Target: Increase outreach; examine analytics for reach
3.3. Online Screening tool	Target: Identify program screening items across B – 5 publicly funded programs	Target: Completed specifications for tool; Start building tool	Target: Disseminate tool on Bold Beginning website; Collect analytics on use & program enrollment	Target: Increase use of tool by 25% and report on program enrollment across B – 5 publicly funded programs
3.4. Bold Beginning website translation	Target: Contract with vendor for Browse Aloud	Target: Implement BrowseAloud on Bold Beginning site	Target: Increase website use and length of stay by at least 25%	Target: Increase website use and length of stay by at least 25%
Activity 4: Sharing Best Practices				
4.1. Transition Alignment	Target: Identify partners from across B – 5 system to analyze various practices	Target: Identify best practices for successful transitions within early childhood and to kindergarten	Target: Complete a best practice guidance document that can be deployed across B – 5 early childhood care and education providers	Target: Report on use and usefulness of best practice guidance document across B – 5 early childhood care and education providers
4.2. Single Point of Application	Target: Identify partners from across B – 5 system to analyze various practices	Target: Meet to discuss the needed elements in a single point of application	Target: Identify and document the feasibility, including time, effort, cost, and data sharing of creating a single point of application across the B – 5 system	
4.3. Pair successful R&Rs to share practices for increasing the number of programs rated in SUTQ	Target: Pairs made; communicated & given charge: 1/31/2019	Target: Report on increases in rated programs by region and practice employed; adjust if needed	Target: Report on increases in rated programs by region and practice employed; adjust if needed	Target: Report on increases in rated programs by region and practice employed; adjust if needed



Grant Activity	Year 1: Quarter 1 (Jan. – March 31)	Year 1: Quarter 2 (April - June 30)	Year 1: Quarter 3 (July – Sept. 30)	Year 1: Quarter 4 (Oct. – Dec. 31)
4.4. Leverage state supports (Curriculums & assessments)	<u>Target:</u> Continue contract to provide curriculums and assessments	<u>Target:</u> Report on number of curriculums and assessments accessed for increase	<u>Target:</u> Report on number of curriculums and assessments accessed for increase	<u>Target:</u> Report on number of curriculums and assessments accessed for increase
4.5. Leverage state supports (Communications to programs)	<u>Target:</u> By 2/28/2019: Identify Provider liaison by 3/31/2019: Identify communications plan	<u>Target:</u> Gather input from ECAC sub-committees on best practices for communications to strengthen plan	<u>Target:</u> Deploy communications plan strategies; Collect information on outreach of communications; Examine and Report on analytics for reach and increase in registration and completion of Ohio Approved Professional Development	
4.6. Coaching & Mentoring program	<u>Target:</u> By 1/31/2019: Outline process; By 3/31/2019: Identify 100 mentors and 100 mentees	<u>Target:</u> By 5/1/2019: Train mentors; By 5/15/2019: Deploy mentors	<u>Target:</u> Collect information on program and report out success rate for achieving rating across mentees; adjust if needed	<u>Target:</u> Collect information on program and report out success rate for achieving rating across mentees; adjust if needed
4.7. Deploy ECMH trainings: Trauma-Informed Care (6 hr.) and Understanding Families (3 hr.)	<u>Target:</u> By 12/31/2018: Complete Ohio Approved; By 1/21/2019: Order training packets; By 1/31/2019: Schedule trainings across state for year	<u>Target:</u> Complete six two-day trainings, with two of those for family child care	<u>Target:</u> Complete six two-day trainings, with two of those for family child care; Report on training evaluations for increased knowledge and change in practice	<u>Target:</u> Complete six two-day trainings, with one of those for family child care; Report on training evaluations for increased knowledge and change in practice
Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality				
5.1. Onsite technical assistance by state and regional teams	Awaiting finalization of the strategic plan, anticipated by 4/30/2019.	<u>Target:</u> Complete initial outreach to all unrated programs and complete standards assessment and progress through registration in at least 25% of those programs.	<u>Target:</u> Complete standards assessment and progress through registration in at least 25% of unrated programs; Report on progress; Adjust if needed	<u>Target:</u> Complete standards assessment and progress through registration in at least 25% of unrated programs; Report on progress; Adjust if needed
5.2. SUTQ Resource Packets & SUTQ Quality Fairs	Awaiting finalization of the strategic plan, anticipated by 4/30/2019.	<u>Target:</u> Conduct 2 Quality Fairs (1 – Center, 1 – Family Child Care); Report on progress	<u>Target:</u> Conduct 2 Quality Fairs (1 – Center, 1 – Family Child Care); Report on progress; Adjust if needed	<u>Target:</u> Conduct 2 Quality Fairs (1 – Center, 1 – Family Child Care); Report on progress; Adjust if needed
5.3. Staff Qualifications: Child Development Credential Cohorts	<u>Target:</u> Identify up to 100 early childhood care and education professionals who want to obtain a CDA; Guide them	<u>Target:</u> Identify up to 100 early childhood care and education professionals who want to obtain a CDA; Guide them	<u>Target:</u> 100 early childhood care and education professionals are enrolled in a CDA program; Report on progress	<u>Target:</u> 100 early childhood care and education professionals are progressing through a CDA program; Report on progress



Grant Activity	Year 1: Quarter 1 (Jan. – March 31)	Year 1: Quarter 2 (April - June 30)	Year 1: Quarter 3 (July – Sept. 30)	Year 1: Quarter 4 (Oct. – Dec. 31)
	in enrolling into a program; Establish financial support mechanism	in enrolling into a program; Establish financial support mechanism.		
5.4. Not eligible to register: Licensing Non-Compliance Rapid Response	Awaiting finalization of the strategic plan, anticipated by 4/30/2019.	<u>Target:</u> Deploy guidance to regional offices for the technical assistance to respond to programs not eligible to register for SUTQ.	<u>Target:</u> Report on outcome of programs helped by technical assistance; Number of Rating Readiness Scans conducted; Adjust if needed	<u>Target:</u> Report on outcome of programs helped by technical assistance; Number of Rating Readiness Scans conducted; Adjust if needed
Activity 6: Program Evaluation				
6.1. Conduct a program evaluation of grant activities 1 - 5	<u>Target:</u> Identify process, methods, and vendor who will conduct evaluation of program performance	<u>Target:</u> Establish all needed data sharing agreements to report on metrics for evaluation; Report on process and outcome measures	<u>Target:</u> Report on process and outcome measures established in program evaluation plan	<u>Target:</u> Report on process and outcome measures established in program evaluation plan
Activity 7: Sustainability Plan				
7.1. Create a sustainability plan for grant activities 1 - 5	<u>Target:</u> Identify potential sources of funds for after the grant to sustain activities 1 - 5	<u>Target:</u> Identify planned activities that could be continued (if evaluation shows successful); Draft a written plan for sustainability	<u>Target:</u> Gather input on drafted plan for sustainability from ECAC and sub-committees	<u>Target:</u> Finalize plan for sustainability from ECAC and sub-committees, including Year 2 grant application and continuation/discontinuation of activities based on evaluation/outcomes
Activity 8: Dissemination Plan				
8.1. Disseminate information as a result of grant activities 1 - 5	<u>Target:</u> Identify calendar of public reporting dates for reports, places to post, and communications methods	<u>Target:</u> Gather input on drafted plan for dissemination of information from ECAC and sub-committees; Post first quarter reports	<u>Target:</u> Post second quarter reports; Adjust plan if needed	<u>Target:</u> Post third quarter reports; Adjust plan if needed

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

As noted in the logic model, Ohio’s vision is that each child in Ohio will engage in quality early learning and healthy development experiences that prepare that child for school and



build a solid foundation for lifelong learning. The five strategies described in this application are inputs that will result in outcomes at the state, early childhood care and education provider, and parent and child levels. Building on the outcomes identified in the logic model, the outcome measures and process indicators will be used to monitor Ohio’s progress on achieving its vision.

Exhibits 10 and 11 present our proposed outcome measures and process indicators.

Exhibit 10. Outcomes Measures

Outcome	Measure	Baseline May 2018	Dec 2019	July 2020	June 2025
1 - Increase the percent of rated early childhood care and education providers	Percent of providers serving publicly funded children in Step Up to Quality (SUTQ)	39%	75%	95%	100%
2 - Increase the percent of vulnerable children served by rated providers	Percent of publicly funded children served by SUTQ rated providers	49%	45%	50%	100%
3 - Increase the percent of children receiving publicly funded early care and education demonstrating readiness for kindergarten	Percent of publicly funded children served by Centers and large family child care homes participating in SUTQ at a 3, 4 or 5-star rating	29%	45%	50%	100%
4 - Increase the percent of early childhood care and education professionals credentialed	Percent of early childhood care and education professionals receiving an Ohio Professional Development certificate (completed at least 20 hours of Ohio Approved professional development over a two-year period)	22%	50%	75%	100%
5 - Increase the percent of parents who understand the importance of early childhood care and education	Parent survey results on their understanding of SUTQ and the importance of early childhood care and education	Baseline Target: March 2019	+20% from baseline	+25%	75%



Exhibit 11. Process Measures

Process Indicator	Measure	Baseline May 2018	Dec 2019	July 2020	June 2025
1 - More efficient alignment of resources for better outreach coordination to parents	1.1 - Data analytics on the use of Ohio’s Bold Beginning Website, including numbers using the website, the BrowseAloud translation, and the online-screening tool once implemented	12,529 users; 2:45 minutes	+ 25% users; 3:00 minutes	+ 25% users; 3:30 minutes	+ 25% users; 5:00 minutes
	1.2 - Once developed, the number of times the online screening tool is utilized	TBD	+10% From Base-line	+20%	+50%
2 - Improve the use of existing state investments in high quality care	2.1 - The number of curriculums requested and issued to licensed providers	1,466	2,000	2,500	3,000
	2.2 - The number of assessments provided for each child receiving PFCC	25,595	30,000	35,000	40,000
	2.3 - The number of Ohio Approved trainings made available to early childhood care and education professionals	4,083	4,100	4,125	4,200
3 - Reduce barriers to becoming a rated program	3.1 - The number of providers that have accepted on-site technical assistance and registered for and earned a SUTQ rating	TBD	+10% From Base-line	+20%	+50%
	3.2 - The number of programs that attend the SUTQ fairs and registered for a SUTQ rating	200 People; 40% Rated	4 fairs; 300 People; 60% Rated	6 fairs; 600 People; 100% Rated	N/A: All providers must be rated



Process Indicator	Measure	Baseline May 2018	Dec 2019	July 2020	June 2025
	3.3 -The number of programs that attend the SUTQ fairs and earned a SUTQ rating	35%	55%	95%	N/A: All providers must be rated
4 - Improve professionals’ knowledge in trauma-informed care and engaging families in a culturally and linguistic manner.	4.1 - The number of providers receiving Trauma Informed Care training	200 people trained	400 people trained total	800 people trained	1,600 people trained
	4.2 – The number of providers receiving the Understanding Parents training	0	100 people trained	200 people trained	500 people trained
5 - Increase the number of early childhood care and education professionals who have a voice in Ohio’s strategic plan and implementation of this grant.	5.1 - The number of early childhood and education professionals participating in the ECAC	2	15	15	15
6 - Increase the number of parents who have a voice in Ohio’s strategic plan and implementation of this grant	6.1 - The number of parents participating in the ECAC	0	15	15	15

Existing Data Collection. This section describes the data needed for outcome measures and the process indicators already collected at the state, early childhood care and education provider, and family and child levels.

State level metrics are collected by the child-serving state agencies across the B – 5 system related to eligibility and utilization of programming, allowing for child counts of program participation. Children are assigned a SSID upon entry into PFCC, Early Intervention, Home Visiting, Preschool Special Education, Early Childhood Education, or public kindergarten. This allows us to count enrollment across the B – 5 system of services and programs. The one



exception to this is Early Head Start and Head Start as state law do not currently allow for assignment of SSIDs in these programs. Instead, local providers collect, maintain, and report their own data directly to the Federal government. The Ohio Head Start Association, a key partner in the B-5 system, is in constant contact with Ohio's Head Start grantees and provides the state with the same metrics reported federally into the program information report, as well as other child count metrics, as requested.

The state also collects access and registration, attendance, and completion of professional development opportunities through a data system that is required of every early childhood care and education professional. The Ohio Professional Registry is a one-stop shop for the more than 120,000 Ohio early childhood care and education professionals to document their work and education credential history. It also allows professionals to locate and register for training, professional development, and conferences across more than 4,000 offerings. Data are maintained by the OCCRRA and available upon request.

Early childhood care and education provider level metrics are collected by the Ohio Departments of Job and Family Services and Education. Specifically, SUTQ ratings for all programs licensed by ODE and ODJFS (i.e., preschool special education, early childhood education, and PFCC) are tracked in Ohio's statewide Child Licensing and Quality System, which is maintained by a joint partnership between ODE and ODJFS.

In addition to ratings, ODJFS tracks the number of curriculums and assessments requested and issued to providers by age group and setting, as well as the number of providers who attend SUTQ fairs and technical assistance events. The nine Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies across the state collect intensive technical assistance outreach, connections, and outcomes related to becoming SUTQ rated. The R&R agencies report these data monthly to



ODJFS, which holds the R&R agencies accountable for outreach through annual performance contracts.

Family and Child level metrics are collected by local providers and reported via various systems to the child-serving state agencies. For example, licensed providers report child care utilization data via a Time, Attendance, and Payment system. This allows ODJFS to see monthly use of child care services. Education settings report enrollment and attendance data directly to ODE via two systems: the Education Management Information System (EMIS), for public and community school settings, or the Enterprise Application System (EAS), for non-school settings licensed by the department.

Ohio's Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) scores are reported directly from public and community schools into EMIS, for every child in public kindergarten. Children are assessed each fall, between the start of school and November 1 into a vendor data system, KReady. Then, public and community schools export each child's scores into the state's EMIS system and go through a review and approval (or, appeal, if corrections are needed) process.

The Bold Beginning website collects many analytical measures, such as the number of users who look at the website, number of website sessions by those users, as well as number of pages viewed, and average length of duration on the website. These data will continue to be accessible as new enhancements are added to the website. We will be able to see how these data change after the enhancements funded by this grant are made, including the BrowseAloud transition and online screening tool features.

New Data Collection. Several grant strategies will require collecting data for the first time. The following sections describe the data we will begin collecting at the state, early childhood care and education provider, and family and child levels.

State level metrics that will be newly collected include analytics around reach, delivery, engagement, and clicked links that result from the digital media campaign. As the social media and search engine activities are created and rolled out, we will examine the impact and outcome of those activities that are directly related to accessing provided links and traffic to and within the Bold Beginning website. A second piece of newly-collected information is the analysis of cost. By tracking expenditures on each of the grant activities and examining the expected outcomes, we can report on the return on investment. Each grant activity has identified target metrics for either implementation, outcome, or both.

Early childhood care and education provider level metrics will include a survey to track ease, usefulness of technical assistance, and areas of needed improvement in the SUTQ ratings process. This survey will be created by the ODJFS and ODE. The survey will gather input from the early childhood care and education providers engaged as part of the ECAC sub-committees. Each provider who accesses technical assistance via a R&R agency, or state licensing/SUTQ specialist, will be asked to complete the survey. We will then use these data to inform our continuous improvement processes for these activities throughout the grant year and beyond.

Family and child level metrics that will be newly created include a survey for families whose child is participating in a PFCC- or Early Childhood Education -funded program. Parents will receive this survey to assess their understanding of SUTQ and the importance of early childhood care and education in their child's early development. ODJFS and ODE will create this survey. As we create the survey, we will seek input from the parent and family members engaged as part of the ECAC sub-committees.

Data Analysis. As data are collected across various systems, ODJFS will lead the state's grant team in analyzing the data needed for the quarterly reports to the ECAC. The data manager



at ODJFS, as named previously in this application, will take the lead in coordinating data needed from other non-ODJFS sources. We will identify a calendar of needed data and monthly team meetings will discuss the data needs, deadlines, and reporting. We will populate a single reporting template to share with the ECAC at its quarterly meetings, and then post the template for public information. As a means to determine successful implementation strategies and areas needing improvement, and to inform the state's continuous improvement processes, we will organize the data will by the twelve service delivery areas for all metrics where possible.

Data Reporting. We will examine process, cost, and program implementation reporting throughout the grant year, with quarterly reports provided by the cross-agency early childhood leadership team identified in this grant to the ECAC and its sub-committees. Using the timeline, project milestones, estimated and actual costs and identified outcome measures and process indicator targets as described in this application, Ohio will use a consistent written format for reporting during quarterly in-person meetings. Additionally, Ohio will publish these progress reports for the public on its Bold Beginning website.

Short and Long-Term Evaluation. To evaluate the extent to which the grant strategies and activities have a measurable impact on reaching Ohio's articulated goals, and ultimately, the vision; long term the state will contract with a third-party evaluator. Building on the strengths of Ohio's 2017 Step Up to Quality Validation Study (<http://earlychildhoodohio.org/sutq/pdf/SUTQValidationStudy2017.pdf>), Ohio will use the identified inputs (five strategies and grant activities) and expected outcomes at the state, early childhood care and education provider, and family and child levels. We propose using a similar multi-method study design, which includes data provided by the state, classroom observations, and teacher and parent surveys. We will use a sampling method that includes representation of early childhood care and education providers at



each star rating, including non-rated; geographic type (urban, suburban, rural, Appalachian); classroom type (PFCC, Preschool Special Education, Early Childhood Education); license type (Centers and small or large family child care homes) and setting characteristics (preschool only, multi-age, part-day, full-day).

Children’s KRA scores will be examined by the setting in which they spent preschool and the rating that early childhood care and education provider had at the time of the preschool year. The 2017 Validation Study established an important set of relationships showing that rated early childhood care and education providers had a positive impact on children’s readiness for Kindergarten, even while holding vulnerabilities such as economic disadvantage and disability constant. The evaluation planned here will re-examine those relationships, with the system enhancement activities proposed in the grant as the new input (or intervention) metrics. During year one of the grant, this evaluation will provide updated baseline metrics so the grant activities aimed at strengthening Ohio’s B – 5 system can be established. Then, the child level Kindergarten readiness measure will be used as the key measure between 2020 and 2025.

Expected Outcomes. As more early childhood care and education providers become rated in SUTQ, we expect to see children in these rated centers performing at the demonstrating readiness level on the KRA. Therefore, we should see higher numbers of children demonstrating readiness at kindergarten entry. We should also see reduced gaps between vulnerable populations and non-vulnerable populations – a critical metric for achieving Ohio’s vision for early childhood. Moreover, as a direct result of grant activities proposed, we expect that providers who are rated have a higher level of family engagement, demonstrate higher quality classroom practices, and have smoother transitions from preschool to kindergarten, as measured by parent and teacher surveys.



Logic Model

Ohio Preschool Development Grant B-5

Vision What we do	Goals The aspiration	Strategies Inputs to success	Activities Actions to meet goal	Objectives Goal outputs	Short-Term Measures Process Indicators	Long-Term Outcome Expected Outcomes
<p>Each child in Ohio will engage in quality early learning and healthy development experiences that prepare the child for school and build a solid foundation for lifelong learning.</p>	<p>Goal One All of Ohio's children, especially those from low-income and disadvantaged families both urban and rural, have access to quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) programs and are ready for Kindergarten.</p>	<p>1 - Each child in Ohio has access to high - quality ECCE.</p>	<p>1a - On-Site Technical Assistance (TA) 1b - Step Up To Quality Resource Packet & Fairs 1c - Licensing Rapid Response</p>	<p>1- Increase % of rated ECCE providers. - Increase % of vulnerable children served by rated providers. - Increase % of children receiving publicly funded ECCE demonstrating readiness for Kindergarten.</p>	<p>1 - Reduce barriers to becoming a rated program resulting in more rated programs.</p>	<p>1. Higher numbers of children demonstrating readiness at Kindergarten entry.</p> <p>2. Reduced gaps on Kindergarten readiness between vulnerable populations and non-vulnerable populations.</p> <p>3. Providers who are rated have a higher level of family engagement, demonstrate higher quality classroom practices, and have smoother transitions from preschool to Kindergarten, as measured by parent and teacher surveys.</p>
	<p>Goal Two Ohio's families understand the importance of ECCE, and have the necessary resources and information to make an informed choice about their child's ECCE setting.</p>	<p>2 - Ohio's families, communities and other stakeholders receive accessible, timely and relevant information to help them make the best decisions for their children. 3 - Ohio's family and community voices, across diverse populations, are included in the development of State policies, procedures and services.</p>	<p>2a - Digital Media Campaign 2b - Online Screening Tool 3a - Translations 3b - Unified Application</p>	<p>2 & 3 - Increase % of parents who understand the importance of ECCE to make an informed choice.</p>	<p>2 - More efficient alignment of resources for better outreach coordination to parents. 3 - Increase number of parents who have a voice in Ohio's strategic plan and implementation of this grant.</p>	
	<p>Goal Three Ohio's early childhood delivery system increases the participation of children in quality settings through more efficient alignment of resources (federal, state and local) and better outreach coordination among state and local agencies.</p>	<p>4 - All Ohio Early Childhood (EC) professionals receive timely high-quality Professional Development, Technical Assistance, and Coaching to continuously build their knowledge, skills, and competencies to drive positive child outcomes. 5 - Ohio EC professionals have specialized knowledge and skills in the areas of equity, cultural, linguistic, inclusion, disability, and Trauma-Informed Care competency/practice.</p>	<p>4a - Transition Plans 4b - R&R Partnerships 4c - Enhanced Marketing & TA 4c - Improved Communication for Prof. Dev. 4e - Coaching & Mentoring 5a - ECMH Consultants 5b - Cultural & Linguistic Competency Training 5c - CDA Cohorts</p>	<p>4 - Increase % of rated ECCE providers 5 - Increase % of EC professionals credentialed.</p>	<p>4a, b, d & e - Improve use of existing state investments in high quality care. 4c - Increase number of EC professionals who have a voice in Ohio's strategic plan and implementation of this grant. 5 - Improve EC professional's knowledge in trauma-informed care and engaging families in culturally and linguistic manner.</p>	



Sustainability Plan

Through this grant opportunity, Ohio will continue to build on existing infrastructure and personnel to ensure all benefits from the federal funding can be maintained at the close of the grant period. Most importantly, the ECAC and child-serving state agencies will continue its work to improve the mixed delivery system for children and families B – 5. We will remain consistently accountable for the work as it is in progress, implemented, refined, and sustained after the grant.

Ohio identified the tools and guidance that programs need to become quality providers. We will use the media campaign, communication tools, screening tool, and best practices for the years to come to assist with the goal to have all programs participating in SUTQ by July 1, 2020 and Centers and type A homes highly rated (3 stars or higher) by June 30, 2025.

Where system improvements have been included, Ohio was careful to ensure the enhancements could be completed in the 12-month timeframe and standalone upon implementation (i.e. translations and screening tool). The team also will ensure items requiring annual updates, such as the FPL, are designed in a way that in-house staff can revise the amounts annually to reflect cost of living or eligibility changes.

On-site technical support is a component the State already invests in through the resource and referral associations. However, through this work the State can accelerate and expand the path for ensuring all providers participate and maintain a star rating in SUTQ. Additionally, at the point all current providers are participating in SUTQ the cost, will be significantly reduced because all new providers will be aware of the SUTQ standards and the requirement to meet the standards at the point they apply for licensure.



The same premise will be used for the work of the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants as the on-site technical assistance. Ohio already invests in the work of the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants, and through the grant we will be able to evaluate if the trauma informed care, cultural and linguistic competency trainings and cross training should be the new focus of their work, or if additional resources are necessary to maintain the current services.

Dissemination Plan

Ohio will disseminate its plan using the Bold Beginning website, social media, and other information-sharing outlets. Ohio is not asking for any funding specific to dissemination, because the Bold Beginning website is already live and the social media campaign is included in the grant. The goal of the dissemination plan will be to share information about grant activities with stakeholders and garner parent, family, and community engagement in early childhood programs. We also seek to increase parental knowledge and choice on the importance of quality when choosing early care and education for their children. We will place the plan and progress reports on these public spaces and use our communication systems across the government to share information. The ECAC will continue to meet quarterly and will focus their energies on the activities outlined in this application and the accompanying progress updates. We will include the updates from the sub-committees, the website, and digital media campaign usage analytics and progress on all ongoing activities. The grant application, with its planned goals and objectives, budget, engagement strategies, and evaluation plan will be made publicly available. Moreover, we will include summary documents that make the information easily accessible and understandable. The State will also provide a way for the public to contact us for ways to be involved, communications they can share locally, and to comment on the plan as well as the progress reports.



As many grant activities are focused on communication to child care providers and families, dissemination will be a part of all planning conversations. Staff involved with grant activities also will be involved in disseminating information and progress reports. We also will use the communication paths that each state agency has to share information about their programs.

We will evaluate the effectiveness of the dissemination plan by continuing to monitor the number of families engaged with SUTQ rated programs and the number of programs becoming rated. An increase in these numbers will show that the information on becoming rated and the importance of quality for children is reaching target audiences.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Funds

The fiscal components of this project will be managed by ODJFS Agreements & Monitoring Section, which has an organizational records system that relates financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds. This allows effective control over and accountability for funds. The Agreements and Monitoring Section will also compare outlays with budget amounts through monthly reconciliation of budgeted amounts and actual expenses and require accounting records such as invoicing to be supported by source documentation before they will distribute payment. A staff person from the Agreements and Monitoring section (Fiscal Manager) will be assigned to oversee invoicing and budget compliance for the grant, creation of contracts with all subcontractors and will be responsible for monitoring programmatic and fiscal activities of the subcontractors.

Krista Kinchen (discussed under Organizational Capacity) oversees the Agreements and Monitoring section. Krista will continue to supervise the staff who oversee project activities and handle accountability of funds.

Budget & Budget Justification

Exhibit 12 presents our proposed project budget.



Exhibit 12. Project Budget

Component	Object Class	Federal Resources	Non-Federal Resources	Total Budget
Activity 1	B – 5 Needs Assessment	\$0		
	Head Start Use of State System (see Personnel)	\$0		
Activity 2	B – 5 Strategic Plan	\$35,000		
	Updates & Revisions	\$15,000		
	Subcommittee	\$20,000		
Activity 3	Maximizing Parent Knowledge & Choice	\$3,760,000		
	Digital Media Campaign	\$750,000		
	Bold Beginning Landing Page and Website - Translation	\$10,000		
	Screening Tool	\$3,000,000		
Activity 4	Sharing Best Practices	\$1,505,000		
	Coaching and Mentoring	\$500,000		
	R&R best practices	\$5,000		
	Leveraging State supports (text messaging)	\$500,000		
	ECMH Statewide Trauma Informed Training/Engagement/Transition	\$500,000		
Activity 5	Improving Overall Quality	\$8,900,000		
	On-Site Technical Assistance	\$7,800,000		
	CDA Cohorts	\$1,000,000		
	Step Up to Quality Resource Kit & Fair (Roadmap to Quality)	\$100,000		
	Professional Development/Curricula (messaging - see Leveraging State Supports)	\$0		
Evaluation	Grant required evaluation activities	\$200,000		
Travel	Travel expenses to Washington, DC meeting (4 team members)	\$11,000		
Personnel	Salaries, fringe for staff working on grant activities	\$401,000		
Match	State Matching Funds – 30%		\$4,443,600	
Total		\$14,812,000	\$4,443,600	\$19,255,600

Budget Justifications:

Activity 1: No estimations as Ohio considers the need assessment completed. No funds are needed for this activity.

Activity 2:

Updates & Revisions: Estimation assumes activity progress and necessary updates, which includes continued stakeholder feedback up to 20 hours a month by an existing ODJFS project manager at an estimated hourly rate, including 34% fringe at \$65.49/hour.

Subcommittee: The stipend is for travel and food but no overnight stays. The subcommittee funding assumes travel expenses and substitute teacher costs for 30 individuals for 4 meetings. A teacher stipend for a substitute is estimated at \$120/day plus travel expenses (estimates approximately \$165/person).

Activity 3:

Digital Campaign: This estimate assumes messages to be created for social media and search engine marketing in English, Spanish, Somali and Arabic and the accompanying cost for advertising.

Translations-Browse Aloud: This cost estimate is for the purchase of the “Browse Aloud Web Screen Reader” translation software.

Screening Tool: Build and operation cost estimate for a tool that allows parents to search for available activities and services based on where they live. This could be done by contractors or State. If awarded resources will be identified.

Activity 4:

Coaching/Mentoring: This cost estimate is based on previous pilot costs for the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association.

R&R Best Practices: Includes the estimated travel costs for the R&Rs to meet in-person with their partners from like areas.

Leveraging State Supports: This cost is based on a vendor estimate under state term contract to communicate the State resources to providers through text messaging.

ECMH Trauma Informed Care & Cultural/Linguistic Training: The grant funds will support the development of Trauma Informed early childhood cross-trained teams to provide at least seventeen 2-day trainings and follow-up technical assistance collaboration to implement this shared best practice across twelve service delivery areas of the State of Ohio and support ongoing follow-up at the provider level.

Activity 5: *On-Site Technical Assistance:* At the time of the grant application Ohio had 2,856 providers not participating in SUTQ. In the next year Ohio hopes to work with the unrated providers, and the newly licensed providers to move them toward quality. The total number of providers to be served is estimated at 3,000. The estimated cost per provider is \$2,600. The estimated cost is based on 50 contact hours at \$52/hour, which includes the cost of fringe benefits (hourly \$33.80, fringe 35% or \$18.20 = \$52/hour).

SUTQ Resource Kit & Fairs: This is the cost it will take after the staff have identified the necessary information to be included to work with a graphic designer to establish a final product and the rental costs for space it will take to hold meetings to rollout out the toolkit through SUTQ fairs.

Evaluation: Ohio estimated the evaluation based on staffing and data available compared to the data that must be gathered.

Personnel: This estimate uses the hourly rate for 15 existing staff dedicating 20% of their time to activities, technical assistance and documentation of grant activities outside of the strategic



plan updates. It assumes 5 staff at \$57.26/hour, 2 project managers at \$51.91/hour and 8 business analysts at \$41.34 plus 34% fringe. The total cost estimate is \$401,000.

Matching Funds: Ohio is requesting \$14,812,000, of which the 30% match is \$4,443,600. Ohio will invest \$4.5 million in non-matched State general revenue funding, known as the casino settlement funds, to match the federal commitment.



JOHN R. KASICH
GOVERNOR
STATE OF OHIO

November 1, 2018

Mr. Richard Gonzales
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Care
330 C Street, S.W., Suite 4010-4012
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Gonzales:

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five, HHS-2018-ACF-OCC-TP-1379. Please consider this my official designation of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) to be the executing entity for this grant on behalf of the State of Ohio.

The ODJFS is best situated to administer this grant because they oversee the largest component of early childhood programming in the State through Ohio's publicly funded child care program. Further, this cabinet level agency is responsible for the licensing and regulation for more than 7,000 providers serving more than 119,000 children each month. In state fiscal year 2017, the ODJFS managed the payment and integrity of over \$639 million for direct services. In addition, the ODJFS has a designated seat on Ohio's Early Childhood Advisory Council and works closely with the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Head Start Association and other early childhood stakeholders ensuring collaboration among all delivery systems serving Ohio's children.

As the state's application will demonstrate, Ohio and ODJFS have a strong track record of implementing continuous improvements and efficiencies within Ohio's early care and education system. With our stakeholder community, we are working to meet the goal established in state law that requires all programs serving children in publicly funded child care to be rated in Ohio's tiered quality rating system, Step Up To Quality, by July 1, 2020.

Ohio is committed to ensuring all children are ready for kindergarten and look forward to working with our federal partners on this grant opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John R. Kasich", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

John R. Kasich
Governor

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT – BIRTH THROUGH FIVE**

SECTION 1: PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding is made by and between the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and the other early childhood and education serving agencies: Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Medicaid and Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services as they relate to the design, development and implementation of Ohio's Preschool Development Grant – Birth to Five.

SECTION 2: AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

ODJFS shall oversee the subgrant activities of the Preschool Development Grant. Subgrant activities and approaches developed by ODJFS to execute identified strategies shall be done in coordination with the Early Childhood Cross Agency Leadership team when benefits cross the mixed delivery system or statewide programs. Subgrant activities include, but are not limited to, the development and delivery of family engagement strategies, the identification and coordination of basic need supports and services to support the whole family and message development to ensure consistency and widespread delivery.

SECTION 3: MODIFICATIONS

This MOU may be modified or terminated by the Parties at any time, upon giving a 60-day notice, obtaining mutual consent and executing a written amendment hereto.

All Parties agree to the provisions of this MOU in order to identify responsibilities and protect the interests of all Parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have cause this MOU to be duly executed as of the date of the last signature below.



Cynthia E. Dungey, Director
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services



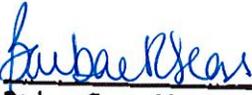
Paolo DeMaria, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Ohio Department of Education



Lance Himes, Director
Ohio Department of Health



Dr. Mark Hurst, Director
Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction
Services



Barbara Sears, Director
Ohio Department of Medicaid



John Martin, Director
Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

ECAC

Early Childhood Advisory Council

October 16, 2018

Mr. Richard Gonzales
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Care
330 C Street, S.W.
Suite 4010-4012
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Letter of Commitment: Ohio's BOLD Beginning! Preschool Development Block Grant

This letter serves as the Early Childhood Advisory Council's commitment to participate in the implementation of Ohio's BOLD Beginning: Preschool Development Grant. The Early Childhood Advisory Council provides input and guidance to the administration of Governor John R. Kasich on early childhood programs. The Early Childhood Advisory Council membership includes a diverse array of stakeholders from early childhood programs, schools, health, social services, unions, philanthropy, Head Start and other groups who will be called upon to ensure Ohio utilizes evidence-based practices for change with a continued focus on cultural and linguistic competencies.

Representatives from local initiatives in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, Canton, Columbus, and Appalachia in Southeast Ohio are committed to supporting and implementing grant activities at the local levels.

The Early Childhood Advisory Council is committed to the Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five opportunity and agrees to provide guidance and support to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services through the creation of the Family Engagement Toolkit, the Basic Needs Toolkit, the promotional campaign for BOLD Beginning, and ongoing decision making.

The Early Childhood Advisory Council believes our full support and commitment will significantly improve the availability of high quality early education and care through Ohio's mixed delivery system and look forward to working on this exciting endeavor.

Sincerely,



Joni T. Close, Chair

Early Childhood Advisory Council



Ohio Child Care
Resource & Referral
Association

October 31, 2018

Mr. Richard Gonzales
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Care
330 C Street, S.W.
Suite 4010-4012
Washington, DC 20201

Letter of Commitment: Ohio Preschool Development Block Grant

This letter serves as the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association's (OCCRRA) commitment to participate in the implementation of Ohio's Bold Beginning, Preschool Development Grant. OCCRRA provides professional development and technical assistance to early learning and development programs and is responsible for managing several statewide quality initiatives.

OCCRRA is excited to be a part of the State's commitment to this opportunity by developing and implementing a coaching/mentoring program, supporting the resource and referral agencies to provide consistent technical assistance, and any additional professional development needs that are identified. OCCRRA would also provide additional support by continuing to maintain and support the Ohio Professional Registry, Career Pathways Level, Professional Development Certificate, School-Age Professional Endorsement, and Ohio Approved training.

We believe our commitment will significantly improve the availability of high-quality care in Ohio and we look forward to working with you on this exciting endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Barnhouse", is written over a white background.

Todd Barnhouse
Chief Executive Officer

2760 Airport Dr., Suite 160
Columbus, OH 43219
614-396-5959 • 877-547-6978
614-396-5960 Fax • occrra.org



October 16, 2018

Kara Wente, Deputy Director
Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
4020 East 5th Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43219

Re: Letter of Commitment: Ohio's BOLD Beginning! Preschool Development Block Grant

This letter serves as the Ohio Head Start Association, Inc.'s commitment to participate in the implementation of Ohio's BOLD Beginning! Preschool Development Grant. The Ohio Head Start Association is the membership organization for all sixty-one providers of Head Start services in the state and our work is dedicated to Leadership Development, Professional Development, Research and Advocacy on behalf of Head Start and its providers across Ohio and the nation.

The Association is excited to have the opportunity to work with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services as a part of this effort in the following ways: by supporting the development of a screening tool to determine which programs offered in the state of Ohio a family might be eligible to receive; encouraging Head Start programs to participate in the state's quality rating system – Step Up to Quality – as a part of a mixed delivery system; and encouraging unrated programs to participate in intensive technical assistance. Further, we are looking forward to working with our Ohio partners to ensure a balanced delivery system where full enrollment is ensured for Head Start as well as public school preschool and all available slots are filled during any given year, avoiding competition and engaging in collaboration. We want to ensure that the neediest children, from prenatal to school age are being served with the best services possible including the extensive comprehensive services offered by Head Start.

We believe our support and commitment will significantly improve the availability of high-quality care in Ohio and we look forward to working with you in this exciting endeavor.

Best Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barbara Haxton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Barbara Haxton
Executive Director

The Voice of Head Start in Ohio



October 12, 2018

Mr. Richard Gonzales
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Care
330 C Street, S.W.
Suite 4010-4012
Washington, DC 20201

Letter of Commitment: Ohio Preschool Development Block Grant

This letter serves as Ohio Association of Child Care Providers' (OACCP) commitment to participate in the development and implementation of Ohio's Bold Beginning, Preschool Development Grant. OACCP represents the directors and business owners of more than 600 licensed child care centers throughout the state of Ohio.

Ohio Association of Child Care Providers is committed to the work outlined in this grant opportunity as the providers of Ohio's mixed delivery system which includes: participating in intensive technical assistance, the sharing of best practices to earn and maintain participation in Ohio's tiered quality rating system, Step Up To Quality and the continued mentorship program between rated and unrated programs. We believe our support and commitment will significantly improve the availability of high quality care in Ohio and look forward to working with our state partners in this exciting endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be 'Becky Ciminillo', is written over a faint, light blue circular watermark or background.

Becky Ciminillo, Chair
Ohio Association of Child Care Providers

The State of Ohio

Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five Organizational Outline



The State of Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Organizational Outline

