



Administration for Children and Families

Office of Child Care

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

HHS-2018-ACF-OCC-TP-1379

Application Due Date: 11/06/2018

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

Funding Opportunity Title:	Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)
Announcement Type:	Initial
Funding Opportunity Number:	HHS-2018-ACF-OCC-TP-1379
Primary CFDA Number:	93.434
Due Date for Applications:	11/06/2018

Executive Summary

Notice:

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

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), jointly with the Department of Education (ED) (the Departments), are soliciting applications from all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands (hereinafter referred to as "States", as defined in this FOA) for the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Initiative.

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

I. Program Description

Statutory Authority

This grant is authorized by Section 9212(c)(1) of Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. 114-95 (Dec. 10, 2015), Note to 42 U.S.C. 9831.

Description

Program Purposes

The new PDG B-5 grants will assist States to develop, update, or implement a strategic plan that facilitates collaboration and coordination among existing programs of early childhood care and education in a mixed delivery system across the State, designed to prepare low-income and disadvantaged children to enter kindergarten, and to improve transitions from such system into the local educational agency or elementary school that enrolls such children by:

- more efficiently using existing Federal, State, local, and non-governmental resources to align and strengthen the delivery of existing programs;
- coordinating the delivery models and funding streams existing in the State's mixed delivery system; and
- developing recommendations to better use existing resources in order to improve the overall participation of children in a mixed delivery system of Federal, State, and local early childhood care and education programs, improving program quality while maintaining availability of services, expanding parental choice and knowledge about existing programs, and enhancing school readiness for children from low-income and disadvantaged families, including during such children's transition into elementary school.

A second purpose is to encourage partnerships among Head Start providers, State and local governments, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, private entities (including faith and community-based entities), and local educational agencies to improve coordination, program quality, and delivery of services.

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

In summary, the PDG B-5 grants will support States in their efforts to analyze the current landscape of their ECE mixed delivery system and implement changes to the system that maximize the availability of high-quality early childhood care and education options for low-income and disadvantaged families across providers and partners, improve the quality of care, streamline administrative infrastructure, and improve State-level early childhood care and education funding efficiencies.

Program Activities

In order to achieve the purposes stated under the previous section, all States must apply to use PDG B-5 grant funds for each of the five required activities. Specific to funding for Activity Five, States must seek funding appropriate to the anticipated grant time remaining after the statewide birth through five needs assessment and related strategic plan that meet the descriptions and requirements in this FOA have been completed, submitted, and approved by the Departments. States that already have a statewide birth through five needs assessment and related strategic plan meeting the descriptions and requirements in this FOA at the time of application, or that expect to have completed these activities early in the grant period, must seek funding with a focus on Activity Five, since there would be a longer duration for Activity Five implementation than for a State that needs a much longer portion of the grant period to conduct

the needs assessment and prepare the strategic plan.

Activity One:

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

Activity Two:

Develop or update a strategic plan that recommends collaboration, coordination, and quality improvement activities (including activities to improve children's transition from early childhood care and education programs into elementary schools) among existing programs in the State and local educational agencies. Such a plan shall include information that identifies opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among existing programs in the State, including among State, local, and tribal (if applicable) agencies responsible for administering such programs. The strategic plan shall recommend partnership opportunities among Head Start providers, local educational agencies, State and local governments, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and private entities (including faith and community-based entities) that would improve coordination, program quality, and delivery of services. The strategic plan shall build on existing plans and goals with respect to early childhood care and education programs, including improving coordination and collaboration among such programs, of the State Advisory Council while incorporating new or updated Federal, State, and local statutory requirements including the requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) and, when appropriate, information found in the report required under section 13 of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-186; 128 Stat. 2002). Finally, the strategic plan describes how accomplishing each of these previously mentioned requirements will better serve children and families in existing programs and how such activities will increase the overall participation of children in the State.

Activity Three:

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

Activity Four:

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

Activity Five:

After activities one and two are completed, improve the overall quality of early childhood care and education programs in the State, including, but not limited to, developing and implementing evidence-based practices (as defined in this notice), improving professional development for

early childhood care and education providers, and enhancing learning opportunities for children.

Program Requirements

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

Additionally, the applicant must submit a letter on the Governor's letterhead designating the State entity that will have responsibility for execution of this grant. This letter should include a description of why the State entity chosen is best suited to easily and successfully oversee and manage the grant, and facilitate collaboration and coordination among the full range of programs, services, and funding streams, thereby leading to the improvement of an early childhood care and education mixed delivery system serving children from birth through age five.

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

Grantees will be required to include travel costs to send at least 4 individuals to Washington, D.C. to attend a 3-day PDG B-5 grantee meeting.

Program Approach

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

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

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

needs of families and their children.

Early childhood care and education stakeholders include custodial and non-custodial parents, and/or parent council or association representatives, as well as representatives of relevant community partners, advocacy organizations, think tanks, philanthropic organizations, and business or public/private partners, and any and all other partners deemed appropriate; State and local early learning councils, if applicable; program directors and staff across child-serving agencies and programs, including preschool and K-12 school districts, Medicaid/CHIP, Head Start, child care, special education and early intervention, health, mental health, and child welfare; and representatives of Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations within the State.

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

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

States may not expend funds on Activity Five until the needs assessment and strategic plans are completed, submitted to, and reviewed by the Departments. Review of such documents will not take longer than 10 business days.

For a State that has updated an existing needs assessment and strategic plan, the Departments encourage states to submit a description of these updated items as part of the application. The peer reviewers will score the descriptions of the needs assessment and strategic plans, proposed as completed. Should the State be selected for award, based on the reviewers' assessments that they have met the requirements, the State will be asked upon award to send a copy of the actual documents to the Departments for review and approval. Should the documents receive approval, the State would be given permission to begin spending on Activity Five along with all other spending. If the documents are not approved, the State will be instructed to go back and do more work, as needed, before being allowed to spend funds on Activity Five.

For states that need to develop a new needs assessment or strategic plan, or if the existing documents require significant updates, the State should update these items as part of the grant, and follow the separate submission and review process before beginning to spend funds on

Activity Five. (See *Program Activities* earlier in this section.)

Post-Award State Reporting Requirements

The OCC will be seeking approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for information collection under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) on the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Initiative data indicators for post-award reporting. Data indicators to be collected from PDG B-5 grantees, as part of a final report to the Secretary not later than 6 months after the end of the grant period, include, but are not limited to:

- (A) how, and to what extent, the grant funds were utilized for activities described in subsection (f), and any other activities through which funds were used to meet the purposes of this section, as described in subsection (a);
- (B) strategies undertaken at the State level and, if applicable, local or program level, to implement recommendations in the strategic plan developed under subsection (f)(2);
- (C)(i) any new partnerships among Head Start providers, State and local governments, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and private entities (including faith and community-based entities); and (ii) how these partnerships improve coordination and delivery of services;
- (D) if applicable, the degree to which the State used information from the report required under section 13 of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 to inform activities under this section, and how this information was useful in coordinating, and collaborating among, programs and funding sources;
- (E) the extent to which activities funded by the initial grant led to the blending or braiding of other public and private funding;
- (F) how information about available existing programs for children from birth to kindergarten entry was disseminated to parents and families, and how involvement by parents and family was improved; and
- (G) other State-determined and voluntarily provided information to share best practices regarding early childhood education programs and the coordination of such programs.

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

Definitions

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

B-5 Early Childhood State System. -- The term “B-5 Early Childhood State System” refers to core early childhood care and education programs, including the Child Care and Development Fund and State child care, which may include center-based, family child care, and informal care providers, Early Head Start and Head Start, the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, and other State or locally funded home visiting services, Part C and Section

619 of Part B of IDEA, State preschool programs, and programs funded by Title I of the ESEA. In addition, it also includes a wide range of early childhood care and education programs and services that strengthen, engage, and stabilize families and their infants and young children including supports that target health and wellness, such as Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Title V Maternal and Child Health Programs, Healthy Start, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the infrastructure components that support these programs and services.

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

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

Evidence-based. -- This term is defined by Section 8101(21)(A)(i) in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Pub. L. 114-95. The term “evidence-based” means an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on— (I) strong evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented experimental study; (II) moderate evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or (III) promising evidence from at least 1 well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias.

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

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

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

Local educational agency. -- The term “local educational agency,” as defined by section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, means (A) a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an

administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools; (B) Administrative Control and Direction.—The term includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary school or secondary school; (C) Bureau of Indian Education Schools.—The term includes an elementary school or secondary school funded by the Bureau of Indian Education but only to the extent that including the school makes the school eligible for programs for which specific eligibility is not provided to the school in another provision of law and the school does not have a student population that is smaller than the student population of the local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act with the smallest student population, except that the school shall not be subject to the jurisdiction of any State educational agency other than the Bureau of Indian Education; (D) Educational Service Agencies.—The term includes educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies; (E) State Educational Agency.—The term includes the State educational agency in a State in which the State educational agency is the sole educational agency for all public schools.

Mixed delivery system. -- The term “mixed delivery system,” as defined by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Pub. L. 114-95, Section 9212(b)(5), means a system of early childhood care and education services that are delivered through a combination of programs, providers, and settings, such as Head Start, licensed family and center-based child care programs, public schools, and other community-based organizations, that is supported by a combination of public and private funds.

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

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

State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care. – The term "State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care" is taken directly from Section 642 B(b)(1)(A)(i) of The Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, 42 USC 9837B(B)(1)(A)(i) requiring the Governor of each “State”, as defined in Section 637.25, to designate or establish a council to serve as the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care for children from birth to school entry (referred to as State Advisory Councils). The overall responsibility of the State Advisory Council is to lead the development or enhancement of a high-quality, system of early childhood care and education that ensures statewide coordination, alignment, and collaboration among the wide range of early childhood programs and services in the State, including child care, Head Start, IDEA preschool and infants

and families programs, and pre-kindergarten programs and services.

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

Tribal organizations. -- The term "tribal organizations" shall mean both "tribal organizations" and "urban Indian organizations", as defined by Section 4 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, Pub. L. 94-437. Here are the definitions from the legislation:

- "Indian tribe" means any Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or group or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (85 Stat. 688), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.
- "Tribal organization" means the elected governing body of any Indian tribe or any legally established organization of Indians which is controlled by one or more such bodies or by a board of directors elected or selected by one or more such bodies (or elected by the Indian population to be served by such organization) and that includes the maximum participation of Indians in all phases of its activities.
- "Urban Indian organization" means a nonprofit corporate body situated in an urban center, composed of urban Indians, and providing for the maximum participation of all interested Indian groups and individuals, which body is capable of legally cooperating with other public and private entities for the provision of health care and referral services.

Pre-Application Webinar/Teleconference

The ACF Office of Child Care and ED's Office of Early Learning will conduct a pre-application webinar/teleconference on Tuesday, September 18, 2018 from 2-3:30 pm, EST. The goal of this webinar/teleconference is to walk interested parties through the FOA to point out the different sections and what is contained in each. Pre-application webinar/teleconference materials and webinar/teleconference link, phone line, and access code may be accessed on the OCC website at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/occ/resource/pdg-b-5-initiative> after Wednesday, September 12, 2018.

Joining and participating in the webinar/teleconference is voluntary. Only the information provided in this FOA will be presented. No question and answer portion will be conducted during the session. **Participants will remain anonymous.** Because only 300 lines will be available, and to begin the collaboration expected throughout this grant process, we encourage interested parties to gather around the same phone line to the degree possible. Please note that opting not to participate in the webinar/teleconference will not affect eligibility, application scoring, or the selection process. Applicants unable to attend can access the recording and transcript at the website referenced in the previous paragraph after the webinar/teleconference has concluded.

Future Eligibility for Renewal Grants

States that are awarded a PDG B-5 Initial Grant, as well as existing PDG Development and Expansion Grantees, will be eligible to apply for PDG B-5 Renewal Grants for years 2-4. Contingent upon the appropriation of funds by Congress in 2019, the Departments will issue a new FOA for PDG B-5 Renewal Grants. States deemed eligible will have the option to apply for Renewal Grants to expand upon activities described in their initial application and to carry out new activities, including awarding subgrants to programs in a mixed delivery system across the State designed to benefit low-income and disadvantaged children, including children living in rural areas, prior to entering kindergarten to:

- expand or improve access to existing programs and to the full range of services that support the development, growth and school readiness of infants, toddlers and young children; and
- enable programs to implement other activities addressing areas in need of improvement; as determined by the State, and
- develop new programs to address the needs of children and families eligible for, but not served by, such programs, if the state ensures that (1) the distribution of subgrants under this subparagraph supports a mixed delivery system; and (2) the funds will be used to supplement, and not supplant, any other Federal, State, or local funds that would otherwise be available to carry out related activities.

A State will be eligible for a Renewal Grant if the State received a PDG B-5 Grant or a Development or Expansion Grant under the previous Preschool Development Grant program authorization - and the grant project period for such grants has concluded.

A State that did not receive a PDG B-5 Initial Grant, but had a Development or Expansion Grant under the previous Preschool Development Grant program, will be eligible to apply for a PDG B-5 Renewal Grant. If awarded a Renewal Grant, such grantees must first address the requirement for a periodic, statewide B-5 needs assessment and related strategic plan before proceeding to spend funds on improving the quality and availability of early childhood care and education programs in the State.

A State that did not receive 2018 PDG B-5 funds, and did not have a Development or Expansion Grant under the previous Preschool Development Grant program, will not be eligible to apply for a PDG B-5 Renewal Grant and, presently, the Departments do not intend to issue another round of Initial Grants after this competition.

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

In the event that an eligible State receives a PDG B-5 Renewal Grant, the grantee will be required to refine and implement their finalized strategic plan and proposed plan for State data collection and evaluation. It is intended that States or territories will use a percentage of the total amount of their grant award during years 2 through 4 to conduct the proposed process, cost, and outcome evaluations, and to implement a data collection system that will allow them to collect, house, and use data on the populations served, the implementation of services, the cost of providing services, and coordination across service partners. Evaluation plans will be expected to describe activities appropriate for the funding level and timeline of the Renewal

Grants.

II. Federal Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Estimated Total Funding:	\$242,500,000
Expected Number of Awards:	40
Award Ceiling:	\$15,000,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$500,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$5,000,000 Per Budget Period
Anticipated Project Start Date:	12/17/2018
Length of Project Periods:	
Length of Project Period:	12-month project period and budget period

Additional Information on Awards:

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

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

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

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

All States must apply to use PDG B-5 grant funds for each of the five required activities. Specific to funding for Activity Five, States must seek funding appropriate to the anticipated grant time remaining after the statewide birth through five needs assessment and related strategic plan that meet the descriptions and requirements in this FOA have been completed, submitted, and approved by the Departments. States that already have a statewide birth through

five needs assessment and related strategic plan that meet the descriptions and requirements in this FOA at the time of application, or expect to have completed these activities early in the grant period, must seek funding, appropriate to the grant time remaining, with a focus on Activity Five, improving the overall quality of early childhood care and education programs in the State.

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

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include all 50 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the United States Virgin Islands.

Applicants must submit a letter on official letterhead, signed by the Governor or an authorized representative, designating the State entity that will have responsibility for execution of this grant. This letter must include a description of why the State entity chosen is best suited to easily and successfully oversee and manage the grant, and facilitate collaboration and coordination among the full range of programs, services, and funding streams, thereby leading to the improvement of an early childhood care and education mixed delivery system serving children from birth through age five.

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

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: Yes

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

For awards that require matching by statute, recipients will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications by budget period, or by project period for fully funded awards, even if the projected commitment exceeds the amount required by the statutory match. **A recipient's**

failure to provide the statutorily required matching amount may result in the disallowance of federal funds. Recipients will be required to report these funds in the Federal Financial Reports.

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

Grantees are required to meet a non-federal share of the project cost, in accordance with Pub. L. 114-95 SEC. 9212. NOTE: 42 USC 9831 (c)(4).

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

To meet the match requirement, States can use non-Federal sources that are not being claimed as matching sources for another Federal award. States are expected to meet their match requirement by the end of this 12-month project period. For example, States cannot use Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Child Care Development Fund Maintenance of Effort (CCDF MOE) funds to meet their match requirement.

States must meet their match requirement by the end of the 12-month project period.

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

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

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

III.3. Other

Application Disqualification Factors

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

Award Ceiling Disqualification

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

Required Electronic Application Submission

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

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

Missing the Application Deadline (Late Applications)

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

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

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

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

PDG B-5 Application Disqualification Factor

The applicant must submit a letter on official letterhead, signed by the Governor or an authorized representative, designating the State entity that will have responsibility for execution of this grant. This letter should include a description of why the State entity chosen is best suited to easily and successfully oversee and manage the grant, and facilitate collaboration and coordination among the full range of programs, services, and funding streams, leading to the improvement of an early childhood care and education mixed delivery system serving children from birth through age five.

Failure to provide a letter from the Governor designating the State entity, and providing a description of why the State entity chosen is best suited to easily and successfully oversee and manage the grant, and facilitate collaboration and coordination among the full range of programs, services, and funding streams, will disqualify the application from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Notification of Application Disqualification

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

IV. Application and Submission Information

IV.1. Address to Request Application Package

Richard Gonzales
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Care
330 C Street, S.W.
Suite 4010A
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (202) 401-5138
Email: richard.gonzales@acf.hhs.gov

Electronic Application Submission:

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

Applications in Paper Format:

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

Federal Relay Service:

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

IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission

FORMATTING APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS

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

FOR ALL APPLICATIONS:

Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)

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

Point of Contact

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

Application Checklist

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

Accepted Font Style

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

English Language

Applications must be submitted in the English language and must be in the terms of United States (U.S.) dollars. If applications are submitted using another currency, ACF will convert the

foreign currency to U.S. currency using the date of receipt of the application to determine the rate of exchange.

Page Limitations

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

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

Application Elements Exempted from Double-Spacing Requirements

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

Adherence to FOA Formatting, Font, and Page Limitation Requirements

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

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

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

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

Corrections/Updates to Submitted Applications

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

Copies Required

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

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

Signatures

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

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

Accepted Application Format

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

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

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

PAGE LIMITATIONS AND CONTENT FOR ALL SUBMISSION FORMATS:

The application should be submitted in two files with the total submission limited to 75 pages for all the components in the two files. Pages exceeding 75 will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed.

File 1 (Project Description) must include the following:

- Project Summary/Abstract - limited to 1 page
- Table of Contents - suggested 1 page
- Project Description - suggested no more than 65 pages
 - Approach: Activities One Through Five
 - Organizational Capacity and Management
 - State B-5 Mixed Delivery System Description and Vision Statement
 - Timeline
 - Program Performance Evaluation Plan

- Logic Model
- Sustainability Plan
- Budget and Budget Justification

File 2 (Appendices) – suggested no more than 8 pages

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

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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

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

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

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

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

Adherence to the Two-File Requirement

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

Application Upload Requirements

ACF strongly recommends that electronic applications be uploaded as Portable Document Files (PDFs). One file must contain the entire Project Description and Budget Justification; the other file must contain all documents required in the Appendices. Details on the content of each of the two files, as well as page limitations, are listed earlier in this section.

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

Applicants must ensure that the version of Adobe Professional they are using is compatible with Grants.gov. To verify Adobe software compatibility please go to Grants.gov and click on “Support” at the top bar menu and select “Adobe Software Compatibility”, which is listed under

the topic “Online Answers.” The Adobe verification process allows applicants to test their version of the software by opening a test application package. Grants.gov also includes guidance on how to download a supported version of Adobe, as well as troubleshooting instructions if an applicant is unable to open the test application package.

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

Required Standard Forms (SFs) and OMB-approved Forms

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

Naming Application Submission Files

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

Use only file formats supported by ACF

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

ACF supports the following file formats:

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

Do Not Encrypt or Password-Protect the Electronic Application Files

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they are encrypted or password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be reviewed. This

removal may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make awards based on an incomplete application.

FORMATTING FOR PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:

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

Format Requirements for Paper Applications

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

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

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

Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications

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

Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

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

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
SF-424 Key Contact Form	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.

SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non- Construction Programs	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project.
SF-Project/Performance Site Location(s) (SF-P/PSL)	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications. In the SF-P/PSL, applicants must cite their primary location and up to 29 additional performance sites.
Unique Entity Identifier (DUNS) and Systems for Award Management (SAM) registration.	Required of all applicants. To obtain a DUNS number, go to http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform . Active registration at the Systems Award Management (SAM) website must be maintained throughout the application and project award period. SAM registration is available at http://www.sam.gov .	See <i>Section IV.3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)</i> for more information.
Certification Regarding Lobbying (Grants.gov Lobbying Form)	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of the certification is required for all applicants.

Mandatory Grant Disclosure

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

Disclosures must be sent in writing to:

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

And to:

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

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

Email: MandatoryGranteeDisclosures@oig.hhs.gov

Non-Federal Reviewers

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

The Project Description

The Project Description Overview

Purpose

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. It should address the activity for which federal funds are being requested, and should be consistent with the goals and objectives of the program as described in *Section I. Program Description*. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. When appropriate, applicants should cite the evaluation criteria that are relevant to specific components of their project description. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

General Expectations and Instructions

Applicants should develop project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description

Introduction

Applicants must prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria in *Section V.1. Criteria*. The text options give a broad overview of what the project description should include while the evaluation criteria identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

Table of Contents

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers. The table of contents must be single spaced and will be counted against the total page limitations.

Project Summary/Abstract

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

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)
- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

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

Expected Outcomes

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

Expected outcomes should align with the applicant's vision statement, logic model, and all activities proposed in the planned approach to a program performance evaluation plan.

Approach

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed project will be accomplished. Applicants must account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Describe any design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and/or community involvement in the project. Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals that will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

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

Organizational Capacity and Management

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

The applicant is required to:

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

State B-5 Mixed Delivery System Description and Vision Statement

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

The applicant is required to clearly describe:

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

coordination, alignment, and delivery of high quality services – and proposed strategies to address each; and

- Populations of children targeted – and intended short-term and long-term outcomes for those populations.

B-5 Statewide Needs Assessment Plan

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

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

The peer reviewers will score the descriptions of the needs assessment and strategic plans, proposed as completed. Should the State be selected for award, based on the reviewers' assessments that they have met the requirements, the State will be asked upon award to send a copy of the actual documents to the Departments for review and approval. Should the documents receive approval, the State would be given permission to begin spending on Activity Five along with all other spending. If the documents are not approved, the State will be instructed to go back and do more work, as needed, before being allowed to spend funds on Activity Five.

The needs assessment must:

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

childhood care and education services and supports, and identify opportunities for more efficient use of resources; and

- Address transition supports and gaps that affect how children move between early childhood care and education programs and school entry.

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

B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan

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

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

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

Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge

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

Additionally, the applicant is required to:

- Describe how they will collaborate and coordinate with the wide range of early childhood care and education programs and services that strengthen, engage, and help stabilize children, including the various health and mental health and wellness supports such as Medicaid, CHIP, Title V Maternal and Child Health Programs, Healthy Start, CACFP, WIC, and the infrastructure components that support these programs and services;
- Describe how they will collaborate with IDEA programs in the State to ensure that families who have concerns about their child's development and may suspect a developmental delay or disability are connected to the IDEA Part C early intervention program or Part B Section 619 preschool special education program and ensure infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities have access to high-quality inclusive early childhood care and education programs;
- Describe how the State will ensure collaboration occurs with the state agency administering CCDF, Child Care Resource and Referral agencies, early learning councils or similar entities, State Head Start Collaboration Office, and any other collaborative partners, as identified by the State; and ensure efficient coordination of the State's efforts to maximize parental choice and build on and enhance existing strategies and activities;
- Describe how the State will empower parents and programs to facilitate smooth transitions for children from birth through preschool, and into elementary school; and
- Describe how parent education initiatives will target particular populations of parents, including fathers, parents who speak a home language other than English, and families who are identified as most vulnerable.

Sharing Best Practices among State Early Childhood Care and Education Providers

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

The applicant is also required to:

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

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

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

As described earlier in this notice, all States must seek funding for Activities One through Five, but States that already have a statewide B-5 needs assessment and related strategic plan meeting the descriptions and requirements in this FOA at the time of application, or that expect to have completed these activities early in the grant period, must seek funding with a focus on Activity Five, due to the fact that there is a longer period of time remaining to carry out these activities.

The anticipated amount of remaining time should direct which activities within Activity Five will be identified, described, and completed within the remaining months.

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

Project Timeline and Milestones

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the accomplishments to be achieved for each function, or activity, in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished. Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological

order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

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

Applicants must describe the systems and processes that will support the organization's performance management requirements through effective tracking of performance outcomes, including a description of how the organization will collect and manage data (e.g. assigned skilled staff, data management software) in a way that allows for accurate and timely reporting of performance outcomes. Applicants must describe any potential obstacles for implementing the program performance evaluation and how those obstacles will be addressed.

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

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

If collection of new data is deemed necessary, the State is required to describe in their program performance evaluation approach how they have already developed, or anticipate developing, a data system to support the collection of key data elements in accordance with the evaluation approach.

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

- Identify, refine, and finalize, based on findings from the needs assessment, the target population or geographic areas identified in the strategic plan that will benefit most from implementation of early childhood care and education and coordinated services;
- Include a refinement of the project logic model, and identify associated process and cost indicators and outcomes;
- Identify short and long-term child, family, and program/service implementation outcomes linked with proposed strategic plan activities;
- Identify and finalize indicators and metrics necessary to examine proposed process, cost, and program implementation reporting;

- Identify existing data systems and data elements aligned with proposed metrics and gaps in data needs to be able to address proposed process and implementation reporting;
- Identify new data sources to complement, as necessary, program and service data to address proposed implementation reporting and, as necessary, plan for the development of a new data system;
- Identify an appropriate methodological approach that includes a strategy for data collection, sampling, measurement, and analysis;
- Work with technical assistance providers to finalize implementation reporting plans; and
- Identify how implementation reporting findings will be used to inform continuous learning and improvement efforts.

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

Additional Eligibility Documentation

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

The applicant must submit a letter on official letterhead, signed by the Governor or an authorized representative, designating the State entity that will have responsibility for execution of this grant. This letter should include a description of why the State entity chosen is best suited to easily and successfully oversee and manage the grant, and facilitate collaboration and coordination among the full range of programs, services, and funding streams, thereby leading to the improvement of an early childhood care and education mixed delivery system serving children from birth through age five.

Logic Model

Applicants must submit a logic model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a tool that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the linkages among program elements. While there are many versions of the logic model, they generally summarize the logical connections among the needs that are the focus of the project, project goals and objectives, the target population, project inputs (resources), the proposed activities/processes/outputs directed toward the target population, the expected short- and long-term outcomes the initiative is designed to achieve, and the evaluation plan for measuring the extent to which proposed processes and outcomes actually occur.

Project Sustainability Plan

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

Describe the approach to project sustainment that will be most effective and feasible. Describe the key individuals and/or organizations whose support will be required in order to sustain program activities. Describe the types of alternative support that will be required to sustain the planned program. If the proposed project involves key project partners, describe how their cooperation and/or collaboration will be maintained after the end of federal funding.

Dissemination Plan

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

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

Third-Party Agreements

Third-party agreements include Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and Letters of Commitment. General letters of support are **not** considered to be third-party agreements. Third-party agreements must clearly describe the project activities and support to which the third party is committing. Third-party agreements must be signed by the person in the third-party organization with the authority to make such commitments on behalf of their organization.

Collaboration/consortia applicants must provide letters of commitment or MOU identifying the primary applicant that is responsible for administering the grant. The primary applicant must provide documentation of the commitments made by partnering organizations and describe in detail their roles and responsibilities as partners in the collaboration/consortia.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds

Provide a plan describing how oversight of federal funds will be ensured and how grant activities and partner(s) will adhere to applicable federal and programmatic regulations. Applicants must identify staff that will be responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and partner(s). Applicants must describe procedures and policies used to oversee staff and/or partners/contractors.

Describe organizational records systems that relate financial data to performance data by identifying the source and application of federal funds so that they demonstrate effective control over and accountability for funds, compare outlays with budget amounts, and provide accounting records supported by source documentation.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is entered on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C, according to the directions provided with the SFs. The budget justification consists of a budget narrative and a line-item budget detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Applicants must

indicate the method they are selecting for their indirect cost rate. See Indirect Charges for further information.

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

Special Note: *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018, (Division H, Title II, Sec. 202), limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary of an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the "Rates of Pay for the Executive Schedule" is \$189,600. This amount reflects an individual's base salary exclusive of fringe benefits and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties of the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards and subcontracts under an ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a budget using the 424A and/or 424C, as applicable, for each year of the proposed project. Provide a budget justification, which includes a budget narrative and a line-item detail, for the first year of the proposed project. The budget narrative should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

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

The applicant must indicate the amount of their grant funding needed to conduct the program performance evaluation plan which includes implementation reporting and data system planning activities during this one-year period, along with a description of how these funds will be used. The applicant must also indicate the amount of their grant funding that will be used to support related technical assistance activities leading to successful implementation of grant requirements. In addition, the applicant must include travel costs for at least 4 individuals to attend a 3-day meeting in Washington, D.C.

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

- Describing and submitting appropriate evidence of a credible plan for obtaining and using non-Federal matching funds, cash, or in-kind services to support PDG B-5 implementation, identifying the source(s) of its cost match; and
- Indicating that the required match of at least 30% will be met by the end of the first year's PDG B-5 funding.

Note: The PDG B-5 initiative intends for States to sustain their PDG B-5 work beyond the scope of this potential four-year Federal grant by identifying funding sources independent of federal resources, including State and local funding, as well as support from public-private partnerships. Matching funds for this grant cannot be duplicative of another program's required matching funds. At present, because this grant is a one-year grant, the applicant is required to provide evidence of a credible plan to sustain PDG B-5 activities after this year has ended should the applicant choose not to apply for a Renewal Grant or should the applicant apply for a Renewal Grant, but not be selected.

General

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both federal and non-federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-federal resources" are all other non-ACF federal and non-federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, federal budget; next column(s), non-federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

Personnel

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. Contractors and consultants should not be placed under this category.

Fringe Benefits

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

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

Travel

Description: Costs of out-of-state or overnight project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. Do not include in-state travel or consultant travel.

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

Equipment

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

Justification: For each type of equipment requested applicants must provide a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use of the equipment in the project; as well as a plan for the use, and/or disposal of, the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

Supplies

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

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

Contractual

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations (with budget detail), including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant. This area is not for individual consultants.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients are required to use 45 CFR 75.328 procedures and must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed by 41 U.S.C. § 134, as amended by 2 CFR Part 200.88, and currently set at \$150,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc., available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each contractor/sub-contractor, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions. If the applicant plans to select the contractors/sub-contractors post-award and a detailed budget is not available at the time of application, the applicant must provide

information on the nature of the work to be delegated, the estimated costs, and the process for selecting the delegate agency.

Other

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: consultant costs, local travel; insurance; food (when allowable); medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs (including audit charges); space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

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

Indirect Charges

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

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

Note: An applicant must enclose a copy of the current approved rate agreement. If the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

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

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

Commitment of Non-Federal Resources

Description: Amounts of non-federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3521, the public

reporting burden for the Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification is estimated to average 60 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description and Budget/Budget Justification information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, expiration date is 01/31/2019. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Application Submission Options

Electronic Submission via www.Grants.gov

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

Electronic Delivery

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

How to Register and Apply through Grants.gov

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

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

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

How to Submit an Application to ACF via Grants.gov

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

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

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

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

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

Issues with Federal Systems

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

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission

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

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

Paper Format Application Submission

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

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

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

Dates and Times in this announcement.

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

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

Obtaining a DUNS Number may take 1 to 2 days.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

IV.4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications: **11/06/2018**

Explanation of Due Dates

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

Electronic Applications

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

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

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

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

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

Mailed Paper Format Applications

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

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

Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications

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

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

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

Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission.

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

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

Emergency Extensions

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

Acknowledgement from www.Grants.gov

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

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

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

Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:

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

Acknowledgement from ACF of receipt of a paper format application:

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

IV.5. Intergovernmental Review

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

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

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

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

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

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

IV.6. Funding Restrictions

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

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

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

IV.7. Other Submission Requirements

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

Submission By Mail

Tim Chappelle
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Administration
Office of Grants Management
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20201

Hand Delivery

Tim Chappelle
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Administration
Office of Grants Management
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20201

Electronic Submission

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

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

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Criteria

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

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

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

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

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

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

Approach - Activity Three: Maximizing Parent Knowledge and Choice

Maximum Points:7

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

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

Approach - Activity Four: Sharing Best Practices

Maximum Points:7

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

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

Approach - Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality

Maximum Points:8

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

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

Organizational Capacity and Management **Maximum Points:8**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

Timeline **Maximum Points:7**

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

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

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

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

Maximum Points:12

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Logic Model

Maximum Points:9

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

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

Sustainability Plan

Maximum Points:4

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

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

Budget and Budget Justification

Maximum Points:11

The reviewer will determine the extent to which:

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

Bonus Points

Maximum Points:5

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

V.2. Review and Selection Process

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

Initial ACF Screening

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

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

Objective Review and Results

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

Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. Scores and rankings are only one element used in the award decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of federal funds in its award decisions.

PDG B-5 Priority Preference

Applicants that have not previously received Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) or Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funding and that obtain a score of 70 or better will receive 10 bonus points, since they have not benefitted from prior federal RTT-ELC or PDG funding.

- The 24 States eligible for these 10 bonus points are Alaska, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, West Virginia, and Wyoming, plus the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

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

The Departments shall review all applications to determine if the program requirements have been satisfied and will confirm that the applicant, as of the date of the application's submission, has a mixed delivery system in place. The Departments will also add 10 bonus points to any applicant who has not previously received a Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Grant or a Preschool Development or Expansion Grant, after confirming that the applicant has received a score of 70 or above, prior to any other bonus points being awarded.

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

Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants

As required by 2 CFR Part 200, the Uniform Guidance, effective January 1, 2016, ACF is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the Federal

Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIS), www.fapiis.gov/, before making any award in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000) over the period of performance. An applicant may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency has previously entered into FAPIS. ACF will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to other information in FAPIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR § 200.205 Federal Awarding Agency Review of Risk Posed by Applicants (http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1205&rgn=div8).

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

Approved but Unfunded Applications

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

V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

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

VI. Federal Award Administration Information

VI.1. Federal Award Notices

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

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award

costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.6. Funding Restrictions*.

Grantees may translate the Federal award and other documents into another language. In the event of inconsistency between any terms and conditions of the Federal award and any translation into another language, the English language meaning will control. Where a significant portion of the grantee's employees who are working on the Federal award are not fluent in English, the grantee must provide the Federal award in English and in the language(s) with which employees are more familiar.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

HHS Grants Policy Statement

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

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

VI.3. Reporting

Performance Progress Quarterly
Reports:

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

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

Financial Reports: Quarterly

VII. HHS Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Program Office Contact

Richard Gonzales
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Child Care
330 C Street, S.W.
Suite 4010-4012
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (202) 401-5138
Email: richard.gonzales@acf.hhs.gov

Office of Grants Management Contact

Tim Chappelle
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Administration
Office of Grants Management
330 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20201
Phone: (202) 401-4855
Email: tim.chappelle@acf.hhs.gov

Federal Relay Service:

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

VIII. Other Information

Reference Websites

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

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

ACF Funding Opportunities Forecast www.grants.gov/.

ACF Funding Opportunity Announcements ami.grantsolutions.gov/.

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

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

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

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

Application Checklist

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

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

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

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