Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Renewal Grant
Louisiana Department of Education

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I.   PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Title: Early Childhood Preschool Development B-5 Renewal Grant Application
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Louisiana PDG B-5 Renewal Grant Application Approach: The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is applying for a $12.5 million PDG B-5 award. While Louisiana has made significant progress on unifying its birth-to-five system and improving the quality of care, too few children in need can access a high-quality, affordable seat. Louisiana will build on the focus of its initial PDG grant to (1) increase access to quality early care and education (ECE) with a focus on economically disadvantaged infants and toddlers; (2) improve the quality of ECE programs; and (3) build the capacity of local governance and infrastructure to meet the needs of young children in communities across the state, leveraging successes and lessons learned from the state's current approach to its mixed-delivery system. Funding will be used for additional early care and education seats and to build state ECE system infrastructure as follows:
Seat Funding: Louisiana will allocate $7.5M in PDG funds for local community Ready Start Networks (RSNs) pilots to create new birth-to-three year-old seats in diverse delivery settings that respond to community needs and align with local community plans. These seats will prioritize programs that provide infant care, meet teacher certification requirements, and reach minimum quality rating scores in child care centers and family child care (FCC) homes; and create new three-year-old seats in diverse settings aligned with the LA-4 state pre-K program.
State Infrastructure Funding: Louisiana will use $5M in PDG funds to support the state's birth-to-five mixed delivery system, with a focus on increasing efficiencies and the sustainability of services in three areas:

1. **Improve local coordination and services across the mixed-delivery system** by supporting three cohorts of RSNs. These local community networks are charged with increasing access to high-quality ECE in their communities, and are critical to sustainably solving Louisiana's birth-through-three seat crisis.
2. **Maximize family choice** by piloting community-based Early Childhood Guide position(s) in approximately 13 RSNs across the state. These guides will recruit and support families to apply and recertify for child care assistance and build a community-level waiting list of eligible children for seats. By locating this function closer to families, Louisiana will pilot a strategy that reduces barriers for economically disadvantaged families and increases funding efficiencies.
3. **Retain and increase providers and partnerships:** Louisiana will continue two pilots from the first year of PDG B-5 focused on FCC and shared services. These pilots support existing and new providers to retain and increase the number of children they serve and drive statewide strategy for scaling. The FCC pilot will establish or strengthen regional FCC networks, measure the quality of participating providers, and offer providers quality improvement supports. The shared services pilot will expand support for centers to improve their service delivery.

II. GLOSSARY

Act 3 (2012)	The Early Childhood Education Act created a Statewide Early Childhood Care and Education Network to improve kindergarten readiness and unify the early childhood system.
Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)	The policy making body for all Louisiana early childhood programs and public elementary and secondary schools
Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)	A federal program that assists economically disadvantaged families to obtain child care so they can work or attend school. LDOE is the state's Lead Agency for the grant.
Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP)	LDOE program administering CCDF subsidies to eligible families.
Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)	Contracted agencies that support families in finding child care, and support child care centers through training and coaching.
Child Count	The unduplicated count of all birth-to-five publicly-funded children by site, age, and funding source, in each community.
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®)	Research-based, nationally regarded system of measures that assesses children's experiences and interactions in the classroom through intensive observations.
Community Network	The local consortia of all publicly-funded early childhood providers with a local lead agency that serves as fiscal agent.
Coordinated Enrollment	Every community network implements an annual community-wide coordinated enrollment process intended to reduce burdens on families and to create efficiencies that maximize access to early care and education.
Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)	The Louisiana state agency responsible for child welfare, child support enforcement, and economic stability programs.
Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC)	A professional credential for child care teachers, and the new minimum credential for lead teachers in Type III centers.
Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council (ECCE Advisory Council)	Created by Act 868 (2014) to provide input and guidance to BESE on matters related to all publicly-funded ECE programs.
Economically Disadvantaged	Children in families below 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL), foster or migrant children, and children experiencing homelessness, with identified needs, or dual language learners.
Family Child Care	Provider of child care services for six or fewer unrelated children, in a private residence other than the child's residence.
Informational Metrics	Included on each site's performance profiles are metrics on use of best practices, such as curriculum and assessment.
LA 4	Louisiana's primary state-funded pre-K program. Other pre-K programs offered in mixed settings include 8(g) and Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development Program (NSECD).
Lead Agency	Fiscal agent that is approved by BESE to coordinate the duties and responsibilities of the community network.

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDH)	State agency lead for the IDEA Part C and MIECHV programs.
The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)	Agency responsible for all public and nonpublic preschool, child care and Head Start, and K-12 education programs.
Louisiana's Early Childhood Care and Education System	Comprised of publicly-funded school-based pre-K, Head Start and Early Head Start, and center care
Louisiana Pathways	Contracted agency that manages a career development system for child care staff and the Pathways Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships for teachers to receive an ECAC.
Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA)	Louisiana school districts administer Teaching Strategies *GOLD*® or the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) to assess the readiness of every child entering kindergarten.
Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)	A no-cost, voluntary program that supports the health and well-being of pregnant women and parenting families with young children ages birth to kindergarten entry; housed in LDH
Performance Profile	Each publicly-funded ECE site receives a performance profile annually, with a rating and informational metrics related to the quality of the program.
Performance Profile Rating	Performance profiles have a rating (Excellent, High Proficient, Proficient, Approaching Proficient, Unsatisfactory) based on CLASS®.
Ready Start Network (RSNs)	Community networks empowered to develop strategies to drive improvement in ECE at the local level; each RSN brings together partners to continuously improve the quality of and access to ECE opportunities in their community.
School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC)	A package of refundable state tax credits for families, child care providers, staff, and businesses that support Type III centers.
Type III Early Learning Center	An early learning center licensed to receive public funds from any source other than federal food and nutrition programs.
Unified Quality Rating System	The state's system of rating the quality of all publicly-funded birth to five ECE sites, in which the state issues an annual performance profile rating and informational metrics for each site.
Young Child Wellness Collaborative	The state-level cross-disciplinary EC advisory team for a group of federally-funded infant and maternal health programs managed by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.

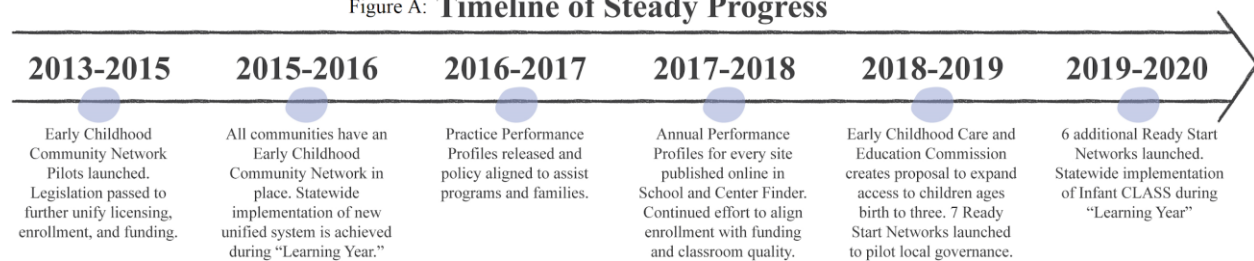**III. EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION IN LOUISIANA: BACKGROUND**

Recent History of Early Childhood Care and Education in Louisiana

To address a fragmented early childhood system that prepared roughly half of its children for kindergarten, Louisiana's legislature unanimously enacted the Early Childhood Education Act of 2012 (Act 3). Louisiana's vision is for all children to arrive in kindergarten ready to succeed. Through the state's birth to five mixed delivery system, publicly-funded programs now are unified under Louisiana's statewide ECE network. Local communities measure classroom quality, count publicly-funded children served, and coordinate enrollment and family engagement across programs. By coordinating delivery models and funding streams, Louisiana can use existing resources more efficiently to serve economically disadvantaged children; increase partnership between school systems, Head Starts, and child care centers; and improve ECE quality. By the 2017-2018 school year, Louisiana achieved the initial implementation goals of Act 3 and subsequent supporting legislation. This included the full transition of the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) to LDOE, full implementation of the state's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS), and the alignment of resources to support quality improvement.

While Louisiana has made significant progress by unifying the early childhood landscape, increasing coordination across programs, and promoting the importance of quality in ECE, the state has not reached its ambitious vision of all children ready for kindergarten. Upwards of 150,000 economically disadvantaged children birth to five are still unable to access ECE, and often the seats available at the youngest ages are not high quality: while 86% of the state's economically disadvantaged four-year-olds are served through public funds in sites rated Proficient or above, only 21% of three-year-olds and less than 5% of children younger than three are served through public funds in Proficient or above sites. While a collaborative structure

facilitated by a lead agency now exists in every parish of the state, more development and support for local governance structures is needed to drive significant change in quality and access. Through the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant, Louisiana will improve its ECE system in order to reach the state's goal of kindergarten readiness for all children.

Figure A: **Timeline of Steady Progress**

2013-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
Early Childhood Community Network Pilots launched. Legislation passed to further unify licensing, enrollment, and funding.	All communities have an Early Childhood Community Network in place. Statewide implementation of new unified system is achieved during "Learning Year."	Practice Performance Profiles released and policy aligned to assist programs and families.	Annual Performance Profiles for every site published online in School and Center Finder. Continued effort to align enrollment with funding and classroom quality.	Early Childhood Care and Education Commission creates proposal to expand access to children ages birth to three. 7 Ready Start Networks launched to pilot local governance.	6 additional Ready Start Networks launched. Statewide implementation of Infant CLASS during "Learning Year"

Louisiana's Mixed Delivery System

Louisiana's ECE landscape is comprised of programs that are funded and accountable at the local, regional, state and federal levels. Due in part to increased coordination at the state and local community network level, many programs now operate in conjunction with each other. For example, a child care center may accept children funded through CCDF, Head Start, and public preschool dollars; a school may serve children in a licensed classroom through Head Start funding. Despite efforts to maximize existing funding, there remain huge gaps in access and quality. Louisiana seeks PDG B-5 funding to increase access to high-quality ECE seats in its mixed delivery birth-to-five system, while leveraging diverse public and private funding, and establishing structures for sustainability.

Child Count per Funding Type: Table A below shows children served in the 2018-2019 school year by funding type.

State Pre-K Programs: Louisiana has made significant progress in providing voluntary, high-quality full day preschool for four year-olds, using multiple funding sources to serve more than 20,000 economically disadvantaged children annually. In 2014, Louisiana was awarded a legacy Preschool Development Grant, which expanded pre-K for 4,600 economically disadvantaged

four-year-olds in 18 communities over four years; the legislature appropriated funding to sustain these seats when the grant expired.

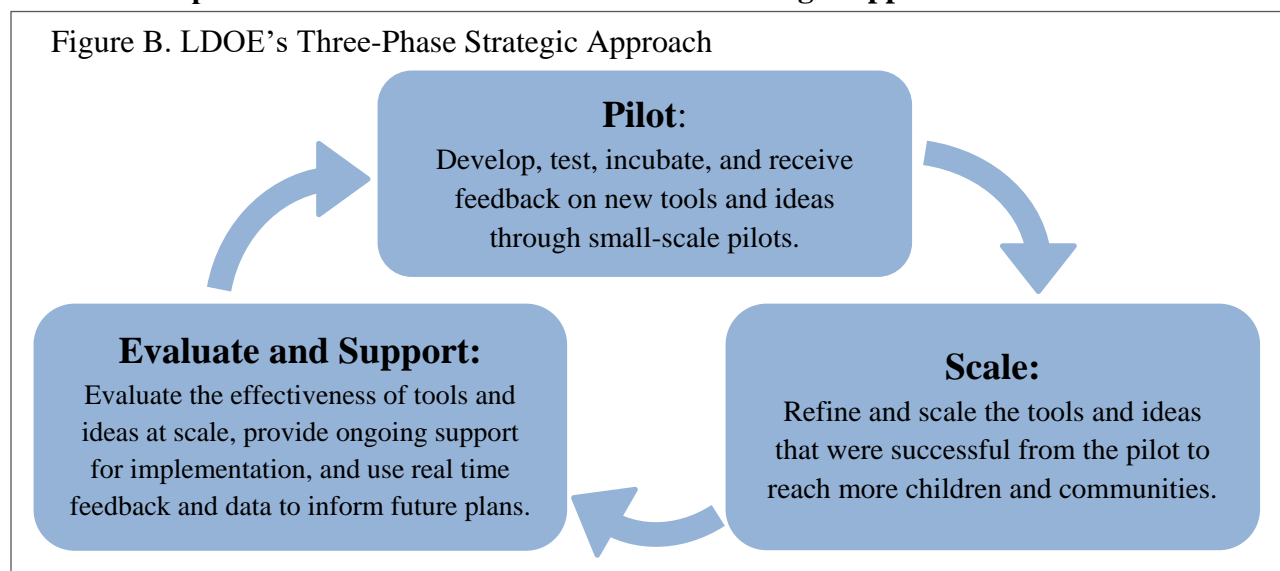| Table A: Children Served by Program/Funding Type, 2018-2019		
Program/Funding Type	**Location**	**Child Count**
State pre-K: LA 4,8(g), NSECD, PDG	Public and Nonpublic Schools, Type III Early Learning Centers	20,378 (age 4-5)
Head Start and Early Head Start	Public Schools and Type III Early Learning Centers	15,963 (age 3-5) 2,540 (age 0-2)
Child Care Assistance in Type III Centers	Type III Early Learning Centers	8,734 (age 0-5)
Child Care Assistance in Family Child Care	Family Child Care/In-Home Providers	367 (age 0-5)
Other school-based pre-K: Title I, EEF, RM, IDEA-only, local funds	Public Schools	9,755 (age 3-4)

Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships: There are 49 Head Start and 27 Early Head Start (EHS) grants active in Louisiana that serve more than 18,500 children in traditional school buildings or licensed Type III early learning centers. Grantees coordinate with the Louisiana Head Start Collaborative Office within LDOE and participates fully in the statewide ECE network. Many Head Start programs operate in partnership with schools. EHS programs leverage CCAP to serve more children in high-quality settings. LDOE supports these partnerships through a support liaison and prioritization for CCAP.

CCDF Program: As Louisiana's CCDF Lead Agency, LDOE establishes all requirements and licenses and monitors programs that accept CCAP funding. The LDOE has enacted policies to reduce enrollment barriers for economically disadvantaged families by lowering hourly work requirements, recognizing full-time enrollment in accredited educational institutions, increasing program reimbursement rates, and lowering family co-payments. Since 2017, the state has managed a waiting list to better capture the demand for ECE for economically disadvantaged children following a decade of state funding cuts to the program. Additional CCDF funding in 2018 served 4,500 children on the CCAP waiting list and state funding allocations made by the

Louisiana legislature in 2019 served 1,400 more. As of October 2019 the waiting list included 3,826 Louisiana children and 2,697 families. LDOE has authorized the following programs to accept CCAP for birth-to-five children full day: (1) The state's 988 licensed Type III early learning centers, which must participate in the statewide ECE network and maintain a minimum level of quality; and (2) 156 FCC providers, which serve fewer than seven unrelated children in a home and are registered and monitored for minimum health and safety standards.

Other ECE Funding Sources: Local communities use other funding sources to support ECE, including Title I (LEAs currently offer 5,741 pre-K seats aligned with LA-4 requirements), IDEA Part B (1,401 full-day seats in inclusion classrooms or reverse mainstreaming), Education Excellence Fund dollars (386 seats in 10 communities), and local funds (1,724 seats in 37 communities). With the exception of FCC, all sites with publicly-funded seats are required to participate in the statewide ECE network, including the QRIS.

Louisiana Department of Education's Three-Phase Strategic Approach

Figure B. LDOE's Three-Phase Strategic Approach

Pilot:
Develop, test, incubate, and receive feedback on new tools and ideas through small-scale pilots.

Scale:
Refine and scale the tools and ideas that were successful from the pilot to reach more children and communities.

Evaluate and Support:
Evaluate the effectiveness of tools and ideas at scale, provide ongoing support for implementation, and use real time feedback and data to inform future plans.

LDOE uses a three-phase strategic approach to improve outcomes for children and students birth-12th grade. LDOE will use this approach for the PDG B-5 grant to learn from strategies to improve access to quality ECE through pilots before scaling them, as shown in Figure B.

IV. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Key expected outcomes at the end of the three-year grant period are that Louisiana has (1) created and sustained **new seats for economically disadvantaged birth through three-year-olds**, developing innovative methods to incentivize the creation of new high-quality seats in diverse settings; (2) **built the capacity of local urban and rural Ready Start Networks (RSNs)** where the majority of the state's economically disadvantaged children reside to improve access and quality in ECE programs; (3) **increased access to and participation rates in CCAP** for economically disadvantaged families with the help of local ECE Guides; and (4) **increased the number of providers operating high-quality ECE programs** that efficiently and affordably prepare children for kindergarten, particularly in child care deserts.

APPROACH

V. ACTIVITY ONE

   A. Ongoing, Established Data Collections

Louisiana collects data on access, quality, and community-level structures at multiple points each year as part of a continuous cycle of assessment and reporting. This includes a twice annual child count, CLASS® observations at least once per semester in every publicly-funded ECE classroom, and performance profile informational metrics. These three data sources allow local and state leaders, advocates, and stakeholders to understand the quality of every publicly-funded ECE seat in the state, identify where gaps in access and quality are most persistent and inequitable, and use these data to develop strategies to expand access and improve quality.

Child Count: The lead agency for each local community network is required to coordinate the enrollment process for all publicly-funded ECE programs in its community. Each lead agency reports an unduplicated count (child count) of all publicly-funded children by site, age, and

funding source, as of October 1 and February 1. LDOE analyzes these data by zip code, parish, and community network. Together with each community network, LDOE uses these data to identify gaps in access, track family demand, understand barriers for families and programs (including space, capacity and funding), and support local efforts to meet families' needs.

Table B: Performance Profile Rating Ranges		
Range	Performance Rating	Percent of Sites (2018-2019)
6.00-7.00	Excellent	7.0%
5.25 - 5.99	High Proficient	37.6%
4.50 -5.24	Proficient	39.6%
3.00 -4.49	Approaching Proficient	15.7%
1.00-2.99	Unsatisfactory	0.1%

Performance Profile Ratings: Louisiana collects information on the quality of every classroom in every school, Head Start, and publicly-funded child care center, and reports it annually to help parents, community, providers, LDOE and partners understand the quality of ECE programs and align supports to drive improvements as part of its QRIS. State policy requires local and third party observers use the CLASS® scoring system in every infant, toddler and pre-K classroom in every publicly-funded site in Louisiana as the basis for the QRIS performance profile ratings. The CLASS® is a research-based, nationally regarded tool that assesses children's experiences and interactions in the classroom through intensive observations. Louisiana requires all observers to meet and maintain the certification requirements of Teachstone, the makers of the CLASS® tool, which include a two-day intensive training, annual reliability test, and semesterly shadow scoring and calibration activities. CLASS® scores inform a performance profile for every site, which is made available to the public through Louisiana School and Center Finder (Center Finder), a searchable website for families that is explained in greater detail in Activity Three.

Louisiana aligns both incentives and consequences to sites' performance in the QRIS. Child care providers, directors, and families at sites that achieve a higher rating on their

performance profile may be eligible for higher state tax credits. Child care centers receive CCAP

bonus payments aligned to their Performance Rating. To incentivize and support improvement,

sites that score below 3.75 must participate in a Site Improvement Planning (SIP) process. Sites

that score Unsatisfactory for two years within a three-year period may lose public funding.

Performance Profile Informational Metrics: In addition to using the CLASS®, Louisiana also

measures sites' and networks' use of best practices and reports these data annually as

informational metrics alongside each site's performance profile. These metrics include the use of

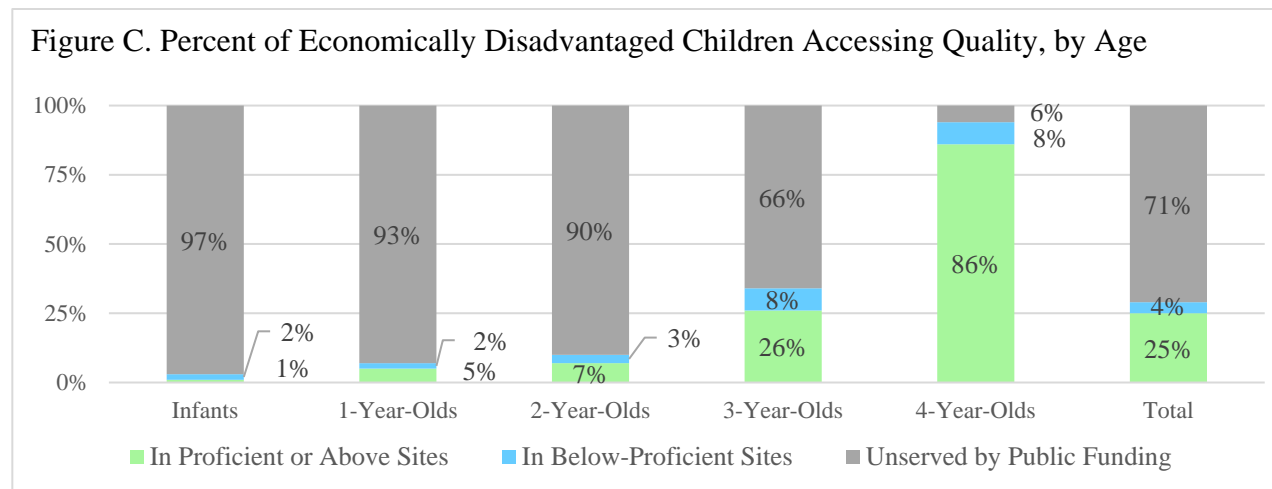child assessments, high-quality curriculum, and teachers' degree and credential attainment.

B. PDG B-5 Needs Assessment: Status and Process

Louisiana consistently reviews available data to determine the needs of the statewide mixed

delivery ECE system and the children and families it serves. For the initial grant, LDOE

compiled existing data and collected additional information to create one centralized needs

assessment, which was submitted to the Administration of Children and Families in September

2019. Input and feedback for the PDG B-5 Needs Assessment came from a series of stakeholder

input sessions with the Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Commission and

Advisory Council, community roundtables in six cities across the state, and the three-day 2019

Teacher Leader Summit, which included 600 ECE leaders and teachers representing every

community. Both ECCE Commission and Advisory Council have diverse representation from

parents, healthcare professionals, ECE educators and center directors, and community members.

The PDG B-5 Needs Assessment delivers a comprehensive view of ECE systems in

Louisiana. It incorporates data on quality and access as noted above; qualitative input received

from stakeholder input sessions; definitions of key terms; information about vulnerable children

and children in rural areas; data needs; facilities gaps; information on collaboration; and more. The PDG B-5 Needs Assessment will be updated annually as new data are collected.

C. PDG B-5 Needs Assessment: Findings

Figure C. Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Children Accessing Quality, by Age

Age Group	In Proficient or Above Sites	In Below-Proficient Sites	Unserved by Public Funding
Infants	1%	2%	97%
1-Year-Olds	5%	2%	93%
2-Year-Olds	7%	3%	90%
3-Year-Olds	26%	8%	66%
4-Year-Olds	86%	8%	6%
Total	25%	4%	71%

The PDG B-5 Needs Assessment shows that while Louisiana's ECE system has improved access to quality ECE for children birth to age five, persistent challenges remain, particularly for infants and toddlers. Overall, the quality of ECE in Louisiana, as measured by CLASS® in pre-K and toddler classrooms, has increased over the past three years. Louisiana will use Infant CLASS® during the 2019-2020 school year, and provide that data in real time to improve quality experiences for infants. As shown in Figure C, Louisiana's QRIS and child count reveal that while 86% of economically disadvantaged four-year-old children are served with public funds in quality sites, **only 1% of economically disadvantaged infants are being served through public funds in quality sites**. Additionally, registered **FCC providers do not participate in the QRIS**, which has informed FCC pilots described in Activity Two.

Growing access to quality ECE in Louisiana is a challenge of enormous scale. Upwards of **150,000 economically disadvantaged children under age four do not have access to a publicly-funded ECE**. While the majority of Louisiana children living in poverty are in urban

areas, **many poor children live in rural parts of Louisiana where there are child care deserts**, which require unique community-level strategies to address.

Existing partnerships with LDH and DCFS have broadened the support systems for vulnerable children, but much of the **data remain siloed**. LDOE has used multiple, fragmented data systems that do not share data easily across platforms. Similarly, only specific LDH and DCFS data is shared across agencies, which prevents children and families from receiving timely developmental services. The process of aggregating and sharing data across departments and within LDOE is the focus of EdLink, a multi-year effort to create a longitudinal statewide data system for birth through twelfth grade, as described in Activity Six. These and other findings identified in the needs assessment have guided the design of this proposal.

VI. ACTIVITY TWO

Louisiana has leveraged the initial PDG B-5 grant to take important steps to increase access to quality ECE. These include:

A. <u>The Louisiana Early Childhood Care and Education Commission:</u> Through Act 639 (2018), Louisiana established ECCE Commission, comprised of 38 legislators, government officials, providers, advocates, and community representatives, including the First Lady of Louisiana. In 2019, the Commission released the bold LA B-3 plan which called for an investment of $86 million more annually for the next decade to close the state's access gap for economically disadvantaged children birth-through-three.

B. <u>New State Funding:</u> In June 2019, the Governor and legislature responded to the Commission's plan by dedicating an additional $20.8 million to ECE, the first increase in state funding in a decade. This funding: 1) continued seats funded by the legacy PDG grant, 2) increased CCAP reimbursement rates to meet minimum federal requirements,

and 3) funded a portion of the birth-through-three-year-olds on the CCAP waiting list. The legislature also dedicated two funding sources for the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund, which provides state funding as a dollar-for-dollar match to local funds raised to increase access to high-quality ECE for CCAP-eligible infants and toddlers.

C. <u>Access and Quality Improvements:</u> The Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) improved access to quality ECE in Louisiana by: 1) establishing rules to incorporate infant classrooms into the QRIS; 2) separating the CCAP infant and toddler rates to better reflect the increased cost of care for infants; 3) raising the minimum CCAP reimbursement rates to the 25th percentile; 4) designating 13 community networks as RSNs to create local solutions to increase access to quality; and 5) approving funding for supports to improve quality across the state's ECE system, including infant CLASS® supports, classroom materials grants, and FCC pilot supports.

PDG B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan: Status

Louisiana's statewide ECE strategic plan leverages this progress to continue improvement focused on three key areas outlined in LDOE's Initial PDG B-5 application: empowering local governance, increasing access, and improving quality. The state has identified specific goals, activities and strategies for each of these three areas. As additional data are collected, LDOE will refine these strategies and establish new ones as needed. LDOE will finalize its PDG B-5 strategic plan in December 2019. To complete its strategic plan, Louisiana is leveraging annually available data that informs the needs assessments, lessons learned from activities and pilots funded through the initial grant, collaboration and partnership with agencies and communities, and regular engagement with providers and families. LDOE will complete the PDG B-5 Strategic Plan following the performance profile release and the first round of data from the FCC pilot.

LDOE has gathered input from the full range of stakeholders impacted by the Strategic

Plan, including all CCR&Rs, RSNs, and community lead agencies. LDOE also has convened an

FCC workgroup and engaged with advisory groups to inform the plan, including the ECCE

Advisory Council, the ECCE Commission, and the Young Child Wellness Collaborative - each

of which has a diverse representation of parents, teachers and ECE directors, LDH, DCFS, and

other early childhood stakeholders. LDOE will disseminate PDG strategy and solicit feedback at

collaborative meetings with community networks, parents and providers, as well as the Teacher

Leader Summit, to continue to inform and refine the strategic plan in future years.

Initial PDG B-5 Work to Date

Louisiana has made significant progress in grant activities related to the three strategies in its

strategic plan and the four major targets in the Initial PDG B-5 Grant: 1) Establish local

infrastructure via RSN; 2) Increase alignment and improve ECE quality; 3) Incorporate FCC into

the statewide ECE network; and 4) Improve systems that inform the statewide ECE network.

1. Establish local infrastructure via Ready Start Networks

Since 2013, Louisiana has established collaborative leadership for the statewide B-5 system

through local community networks that make up the statewide ECE network. There are now 65

local community networks funded by the state through designated lead agencies that are the

community network's fiscal agent, coordinate its duties and responsibilities, meet with program

partners at least quarterly, and act as the liaison between the community network and LDOE.

While there have been improvements in quality and access to ECE opportunities

statewide, significant community-level gaps persist. Since every community's population,

challenges, and context are unique, addressing these gaps requires local communities to respond

to the specific and changing needs of their families and children. In January of 2019, LDOE

launched the RSN pilots to empower and support local community networks to develop

strategies to improve ECE access and quality in their communities. Each RSN develops four

pillars to maximize their impact, detailed below in Table C.

Table C: Ready Start Network 4-Pillar Model	
Blueprint	A network's **blueprint** will establish the strategic plan for the community's early childhood work and communicate clearly what will be true for their community if the RSN model is successfully executed.
Coalition	Each RSN will develop a **coalition**, a group of community members committed to the cause of improving early childhood education quality and access for families; these coalition members will primarily serve as advocates and external champions to promote the RSN's cause.
Governance	From their coalition, RSNs will establish a **governance** structure as a decision-making authority to support the network's blueprint as the RSN works to achieve its goals.
Fundraising	RSNs will create a **fundraising strategy** to survey resources available to support their strategic plan and secure additional resources needed to achieve the RSN's vision.

As shown in Figure D, the first two cohorts of RSNs represent 13 Louisiana communities that

reflect the state's diversity and nearly half of its economically disadvantaged children birth-to-

five, and include both large urban areas and small rural communities. In October 2019, LDOE

launched a Get Ready cohort to support 27 additional community networks in preparing to apply

for a third RSN cohort in spring 2020. In addition to the four pillars, each RSN sets and

addresses priorities that uniquely impact ECE access and quality in their community. All RSNs

receive funding, training and technical assistance from LDOE, which includes collaborative

training for leaders; in-person consultation visits from LDOE staff; and bi-weekly check-in calls

and Community of Practice webinars to share ideas, best practices, and concerns to inform state

policy and practice. All RSNs receive access to experts contracted by LDOE, including a ab ECE

communications strategy firm, a local nonprofit organization specializing in governance, and a

systems thinking training organization. RSNs have used grant funds to contract additional

experts to build awareness; engage parents, families and community; conduct strategic planning;

and explore partnerships. The LDOE is supporting RSNs to integrate comprehensive services into their approach, including home visiting programs, community-wide screening practices, ECMHC services, and other supports family require.

Figure D: Map of Ready Start Networks and Get Ready Cohort
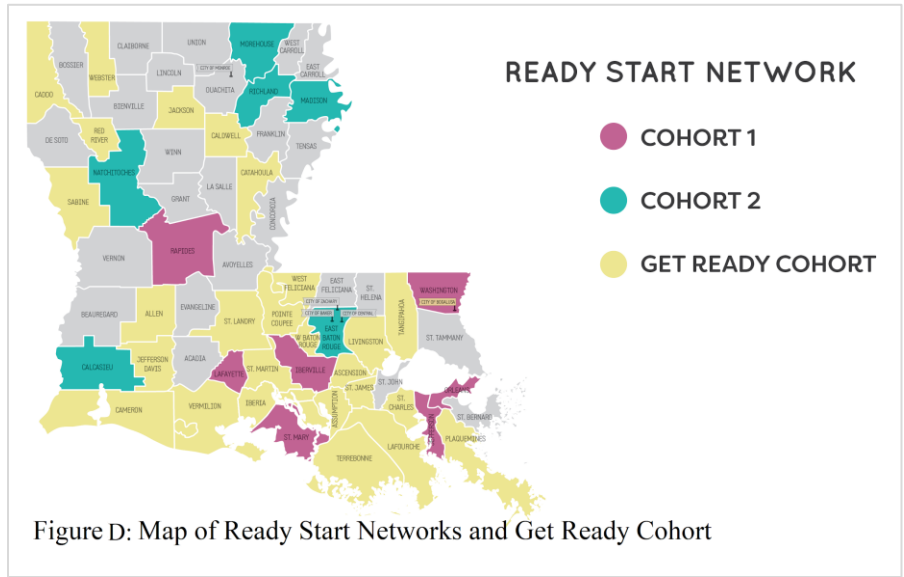
Based on the experiences of the first cohort of RSN, LDOE developed the four pillar model, which will be used for all future cohorts. LDOE has also learned from the first two cohorts of RSNs that the most successful RSNs leverage their resources and local coalition partners to address community needs and improve access to quality, and is coaching other RSNs based on their path to success. LDOE used the initial grant to launch the RSN pilots; continued funding will support the first two cohorts to implement all four pillars and create a third cohort to expand the number of RSNs, modeling after the successes and lessons learned from the first two cohorts.

2. Increase Alignment and Improve Quality

Louisiana's unified QRIS has used the CLASS® tool to measure teacher-child interactions as a primary indicator of instructional quality in every publicly-funded toddler and pre-K classroom in the state since the 2015-2016 school year. LDOE has aligned all quality supports to the QRIS,

which has driven new investments in both access and quality. With the initial PDG grant, LDOE built on this work as detailed below.

Infant CLASS® Supports: Following a successful pilot, all infant classrooms will be observed in 2019-2020 using the Infant CLASS®. 2019-2020 will be a learning year, in which scores are released publicly but not incorporated as part of a site's rating. In 2020-2021, the Infant CLASS® will be incorporated fully into the performance profiles. To ensure teachers, directors, and coaches are prepared to provide high-quality care in infant classrooms, LDOE funded infant-focused professional development (PD) and supports for teachers, directors, and staff in 28 communities serving approximately 79% of all publicly-funded infants in the state. As a result, more than 1,200 teachers, coaches, and district staff in both urban and rural communities will receive training in Infant CLASS®. Many are receiving coaching training or are becoming train-the-trainers, which ensures that quality coaching and PD continues after the initial grant.

Louisiana Early Childhood Key Training Modules (KTMs): KTMs are accessible, high-quality trainings designed by experts on early childhood best practices. These high-quality ready-to-go trainings are shared with CCR&Rs, community networks and RSNs, and other child care PD organizations across the state, along with clear guidance on how to use them. Over the past year, LDOE has worked with vendors to develop 12 modules on early childhood tools and standards and high-quality adult-child interactions. All content is high-quality, aligned to Louisiana standards and competencies, and easy to understand. Leveraging lessons learned on structuring content and supporting vendors, LDOE will request applications for expert vendors to develop trainings in a third priority area, management and leadership, this winter.

Early Childhood Ancillary Certificates (ECAC) - Scholarships and Evaluation: Louisiana established the ECAC as the new minimum credential for child care lead teachers in publicly-

funded early learning centers beginning July 2019 (see Activity Four for more information on the ECAC requirement). With the initial grant, LDOE provided scholarships for child care teachers to receive their ECAC and developed an ECAC program evaluation. LDOE is implementing this evaluation to measure the effectiveness of the state's 23 preparation programs through an onsite review process aligned with Louisiana's K-12 teacher preparation evaluation system. Louisiana will pilot this process in November and December and apply lessons learned to full implementation in 2020. This will improve the quality of ECE teacher preparation, enable teachers to select the most effective ECAC programs, and directors to make more informed hiring decisions while providing data on approved programs to communities.

3. Incorporate family child care providers into the statewide early childhood network

FCC is key to increasing access to high-quality ECE programs for the state's disadvantaged birth to five population. FCC providers represent an important source of child care for economically disadvantaged families across the state, particularly in rural communities with child care deserts. Currently, Louisiana's FCC providers are not included in the state's ECE network and do not participate in the QRIS. As a result, FCC providers do not have the same access to supports for improvement or opportunities for network collaboration as other publicly-funded providers, and little is known about FCC quality. In addition, there are approximately 9,000 FCC providers, with the capacity to serve up to 50,000 children, receiving benefits through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) that are not monitored for health and safety by licensing staff. The needs assessment identified the integration of FCC into the state's ECE strategy as an important lever for improving access to high-quality ECE for economically disadvantaged children.

With initial PDG B-5 grant funding in 2019, LDOE implemented an FCC pilot to gather information about the quality of children's experiences in 38 FCC providers from two regions of

the state. Pilot participants are observed using the CLASS® and the FCCERs environmental

rating scale, and receive coaching, monthly PD, support from local infant-toddler mental health

consultants, and participate in FCC Network meetings facilitated by their regional CCR&Rs.

LDOE has partnered with researchers from Louisiana State University to evaluate this approach.

The study aims to establish a baseline understanding of FCC and their quality and support needs,

and assess the impact of the pilot supports. Results from the pilot and study, including results

from the CLASS® and FCCERS observations, will inform LDOE's strategic plan.

4. Improve State Systems that Inform the Statewide Early Childhood Network

Since the passage of Act 3, LDOE has established a statewide ECE network that relies on

collaborative leadership and a unified QRIS to support improved access to a statewide, mixed

delivery system of high-quality, publicly-funded birth-to-five programs. Through the initial PDG

B-5, LDOE sought to strengthen this system by investing in shared services infrastructure to

reduce costs and increase efficiencies for child care centers and by conducting a QRIS validation

study to drive long-term strategy and improvement.

Shared Services: Louisiana is building efficiencies for early learning centers in three categories:

(1) state-sponsored shared services, (2) a knowledge hub, and (3) several regional shared

services initiatives. These initiatives save directors time and money through the consolidation of

resources, increased economies of scale, and expanded administrative capacity through shared

staffing. The initial grant has provided center directors executive coaching for improving

business operations; substitute teaching pools for staffing emergencies and planned absences;

administrative support for participation in the CACFP; state contracts to reduce costs on

everyday items and large purchases, from milk and paper to vehicles and furniture; and three

online toolboxes with customizable resources for commonly needed documents that strengthen

operations, like job descriptions and handbooks. From the initial planning and engagements with providers and experts, LDOE is changing practices related to initial licensing training, CCR&R scope and supports, and is making the shared services pilots more concrete to support scaling.

Unified Quality Rating System Validation Study: LDOE contracted the University of Virginia (UVA) to conduct an external validation study of Louisiana's unified QRIS. This study builds on previous UVA research to: (1) provide new evidence on the validity of Louisiana's fully-implemented QRIS; (2) assess the extent to which the quality of Louisiana's ECE programs have improved from the state's focus on systems-building, teacher-child interactions, and accountability; and (3) explore the role of specific malleable factors at the state and program-level, such as PD, curricular supports, leadership, and work environment, in promoting quality and children's learning and development. UVA is directly assessing children in two larger RSN communities (Rapides and Jefferson Parishes); analyzing existing LDOE data; and surveying ECE community network leaders. This multi-year study will provide LDOE with actionable data for continued improvement and result in a final report released in spring 2021.

A timeline of key milestones for the initial PDG B-5 grant is as follows in Table D:

Table D: Initial PDG B-5 High-level Milestones in 2019	
Month	**Milestones**
January	● RSN cohort 1 established and work begins ● Additional scholarships for teachers to attend ECAC programs added
February	● Systems thinking training for RSN cohort 1 leadership ● LDOE staff consults national expert on shared services
March	● KTM 1: Early Childhood Tools & Standards creation begins
April	● UVA validation study, research aims/scope of work finalized ● Early Childhood Roundtables hosted around the state
May	● Early Childhood Roundtables continued around the state ● LDOE staff and director-led shared service coalition attends National Shared Services Conference in Detroit ● LDOE partners with national consulting expert to clarify RSN vision
June	● BESE approves cohort 1 RSN allocation for materials/supports in centers ● Teacher Leader Summit held in New Orleans for 600+ ECE leaders and teachers ● RSNs receive training and TA on four pillars

	• State-sponsored shared services launched • CCR&Rs recruit FCC providers to participate in the pilot • KTM 2: High-Quality Interactions creation begins
July	• LDOE develops FCC strategy with multiple state and national stakeholders • LDOE begins developing ECAC Program Evaluation and selects pilots • UVA validation study recruits teachers and leaders to complete survey
August	• BESE approves six more RSNs in cohort 2 • BESE approves allocations to 28 lead agencies for Infant CLASS® Supports • Lead agencies begin conducting PD, training, and coaching for infant teachers, directors, and district staff • FCC Pilot launches • Focus groups for ECAC Programs and stakeholders held • Human Resources tool kit for center directors developed
September	• Systems thinking training for RSN cohort 2 leadership • Substitute teacher pool pilot launches in Baton Rouge • Network leader survey deployed for validation study
October	• BESE approves 27 community networks for the Get Ready Cohort • Get Ready Cohort begins participating in weekly webinars • Baseline CLASS® observations, coaching, and mental health consultation visits begin in FCC pilot, and FCC Network Meetings begin • LSU begins qualitative study in FCC Pilot • CACFP supports and business supports shared services pilots begin
November	• Formal guidance on RSN Four Pillars is finalized and shared • Statewide focus groups with FCC providers are held • CCR&Rs replace former trainings with the finalized KTMs from Round 1 • KTM RFA 3 is released • Onsite evaluation pilot of ECAC providers begins • Louise Stoney's ECE finance webinar series on "The Iron Triangle" begins • Network leader survey results and workforce profile reports received
December	• FCC work group reconvenes to discuss preliminary data from FCC pilot • CCR&Rs replace former trainings with the finalized KTMs from Round 2 • State Quality Improvement Report released from UVA validation study

VII. ACTIVITY THREE

A. Current and Proposed Family Engagement Activities and Partnerships

A primary goal of Act 3 was to establish a unified and coordinated statewide early childhood

system that maximizes family knowledge, choice, and engagement through a community

network model. Now implemented, this approach ensures that those closest to children and

families are empowered and held accountable to support the unique needs of families in their

communities. It also has created efficiencies that streamline the experience for families and

maximize the capacity of the ECE system. Louisiana's statewide ECE system is comprised of 65 community networks and 7 regional CCR&Rs. These community networks and CCR&R agencies drive family engagement and choice locally in two ways: (1) community networks implement a community-wide, mixed-delivery coordinated enrollment process annually; (2) CCR&R agencies support families through family resource centers that help them understand options and find resources that meet their needs. This statewide network touches every parish in the state, providing support and services to families where they live and work.

Community Network Coordinated Enrollment: In 2015, LDOE began requiring that every community network in Louisiana implement a network-wide coordinated enrollment process for all publicly-funded ECE programs, including school-based pre-K, Head Start and Early Head Start, and child care centers. Coordinated enrollment establishes a "no wrong door" model that streamlines the enrollment experience for families and creates efficiencies that maximize seat placements locally. Each January, every lead agency is required to complete and submit to LDOE a coordinated enrollment plan. With feedback and technical assistance from LDOE, each community network then implements this plan each spring. The plan consists of five key coordinated activities: an information campaign, eligibility determination, application, matching based on family preference, and self-assessment of the process.

1. **Coordinated Information Campaign**: Every community network conducts a community-wide information campaign designed to inform families about the importance of ECE, the availability and quality of publicly-funded options, and eligibility requirements. LDOE supports this by providing site-level Performance Information Profiles on Center Finder, a searchable online database for families at www.LouisianaSchools.com. The first-of-its-kind website is an interactive tool designed for families to learn about the quality and

offerings of every publicly-funded education option for their children, from birth through twelfth grade. The site, also available in Spanish, allows families to compare their children's program to the average performance of the other programs in their community and across the state. As part of the site, Louisiana released an [animated video](#) that helps families understand Center Finder, what quality ECE looks like and how it is measured. The Center Finder website includes all public schools, including pre-K; all nonpublic schools accepting public funds; all licensed Head Start and EHS; all child care centers; and all certified FCC providers accepting CCAP. For each site, Center Finder includes: 1) an overview of the school or center, including address, contact information, ages served, and hours of operation; 2) a map browsing view that shows schools and centers by zip code and neighborhood; 3) performance profiles and ratings showing classroom quality; 4) a link to health and safety monitoring reports; and 5) a comparison tool and filters for families to customize their search and compare sites. In the two weeks after the most recent performance profile release on Center Finder last October, more than 60,000 people visited the website; more than 65% of them used their mobile device. In addition to leveraging this centralized resource, community networks are required to demonstrate culturally-responsive practices and engage vulnerable families, including those whose primary language at home is not English; families who experience homelessness; are in the foster care system; and who have concerns about their child's development. They also are encouraged to communicate the eligibility requirements for all children, and, in particular, children who may be categorically eligible for assistance as a result of homelessness or child welfare system involvement, and children with disabilities.

2. **Coordinated Eligibility Determination**: Each community network establishes a process to ensure that families know what programs they qualify for, provide complete and timely documentation, and are referred to additional programs for which they qualify.

3. **Coordinated Application**: Community networks are required to adopt a unified community-wide application to collect family preferences regarding enrollment choices for publicly-funded programs. Many community networks have developed successful online application systems that allow families to apply across program/funding types.

4. **Matching Based on Preference**: Once families have completed the coordinated application, community networks make enrollment decisions based upon stated family preferences. This year, communities will be required to report on their internal matching and enrollment policies, including whether families of children with disabilities choose from multiple options, and whether siblings receive priority to keep families together.

5. **Self-Assessment and Improvement:** Each summer, community networks complete a self-assessment in which they rate their performance on key aspects of the process. The self-assessment guides community network planning, informs LDOE's technical assistance and support, and identifies promising practices to share across communities.

Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs): The regional CCR&Rs support families, particularly families who speak English as a second language and families who have a young child with a disability, by providing child care referrals, parenting classes, calendars of family events, resources to find specialized services, car seat safety checks, community gardens to promote healthy lifestyles, CCAP qualification assistance (including working with homeless families that are categorically eligible), and organizing food, clothing, supply and toy drives. They also partner with local hospitals, police, libraries, and pediatricians to empower families to

engage in their young children's care and education by connecting them to existing resources, services, and programs including breastfeeding, immunizations, child abuse, safe sleep practices, developmentally appropriate activities and books, and household safety.

Health Program Coordination and Developmental Screening and Service Partnerships: In Louisiana, the Title V block grant is administered by the LDH Bureau of Family Health (BFH). BFH has several ECE initiatives including evidence-based home visiting (family coaching and support program), infant and early childhood mental health consultation, developmental screening, Partners for Family Health, and the Young Child Wellness Collaborative (YCWC), amongst others (see organization chart). Through programs such as LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health*)* and the Early Childhood Coordinated System (ECCS), BFH trains health care providers and child care centers on developmental screening and infant and early childhood mental health consultation as well as referrals to resources such as IDEA Part C for infants and toddlers. To make this information centrally accessible for families and child care providers, LDOE and LDH collaborated to create the Early Childhood Developmental Screening Guidebook. The guidebook provides detailed information and access to resources related to: understanding healthy development, developmental monitoring and screening, talking with families about a child's developmental progress and areas of need, and available supports for families and providers concerned about a child's development. LDOE and LDH are updating this guidance and distributing a co-branded quick guide with information on key resources and local contacts along with free resources from the CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early.

LDOE and LDH also are partnering to expand the "no wrong door" approach for families across these two state agencies. The collaboration will support community networks in coordinating referrals and cross-enrollment between ECE and the regional MIECHV programs:

Nurse-Family Partnership and Parents-as-Teachers. Home visiting specialists provide support to build positive parenting skills and support early identification. Early childhood professionals create partnerships with families and can refer them to other community resources offered through myriad partners, including the different state agencies.

In addition to partnering with LDH to support developmental screening and services for infants and toddlers, LDOE is working to ensure school systems have the structures they need to coordinate screening and assessment processes from birth through third grade under IDEA Part B. To ensure all children receive the instruction, supports, and services that they need when they need them, LDOE created the Lighthouse Screening Pilot in 2018. Through this pilot, LDOE has helped five school systems build their capacity to improve the early and accurate identification of developmental delays and the delivery of effective support and intervention for children ages 3-5. The Lighthouse Pilot has three goals: coordinate screening, assessment, referral and evaluation to improve Child Find for children ages 3-5; use data systematically to improve special education services for children ages 3-5; and engage families and community partners through effective outreach and collaboration to support students across key transition points.

B. Family Input and Leadership

Louisiana has established multiple avenues to elicit the concerns of diverse families across Louisiana and ensure their leadership in improving the state's mixed delivery system. Louisiana has systems to regularly collect and respond to families and engage them directly in the decision-making and policy-making process through its advisory boards and collaboratives.

Louisiana Early Childhood Family Survey: Each spring, LDOE contracts with Louisiana State University (LSU) to administer a family survey. LSU samples roughly 600 sites (37%) across every community network with paper surveys, and hosts the survey online for responses from

families at all publicly-funded ECE sites. The survey allows families across the state to provide feedback directly to LDOE, and responses are used to refine and improve the state's strategic approach. Family feedback collected from this survey is reported publicly on two community-level family satisfaction indicators: satisfaction with the enrollment process and satisfaction with program quality. Additionally, networks receive this data to improve practices.

ECCE Advisory Council: The ECCE Advisory Council is comprised of 30 members as described in Act 868 (2014) and in Activity Six. In addition to representation from all ECE site types, other state agencies, higher education, special education advocacy organizations and healthcare, the Council includes parents and family advocates. The Advisory Council provides recommendations on all policies related to publicly-funded ECE programs, including updates to the mixed delivery system, refinements to the unified QRIS, and changes to the requirements for community networks. All ECE policy revisions must be brought before the ECCE Advisory Council for endorsement prior to BESE. The Council has established work groups to engage deeply on specific issues like coordinated enrollment and ECE accountability data. The Council receives five update reports from LDOE each year that provide summaries of data and activities taking place for all ECE programs, including data that comprise the PDG B-5 Needs Assessment. The Council's membership ensures that there are diverse perspectives for all Council activities.

Young Child Wellness Collaborative: The YCWC serves as an interagency early childhood advisory team for major ECE initiatives. The role of the YCWC is to provide leadership and informed recommendations to drive shared priority setting and strategic planning across Louisiana, particularly among LDOE, BFH, EarlySteps, DCFS, parent advocates, and other local and community partners. In 2019, the YCWC established several cross-agency working groups, including a family engagement and leadership workgroup to develop and implement an

interagency model for continuous family engagement and leadership. These workgroups are made of team members from offices that closely work or touch young children's lives, including LDH, LDOE, DCFS, and Office of Women's Policy, as well as nonprofits and family advocacy organizations that work closely with the agencies as community partners. The YCWC is working to establish a family leadership council this year, comprised of parents of young children, to provide leadership and advise on ECE policy and programs related to the work of the YCWC.

Family Voice in Ready Start Networks: The 13 established RSNs seek to address their communities' biggest challenges for economically disadvantaged and vulnerable children to access high-quality ECE and services. To do this, they set a shared vision for ECE in their community and their role in it, engage a diverse coalition of community leaders and families, establish governance structures to guide decision-making, and develop funding strategies to achieve their goals. With continued PDG funding, LDOE will add 11 more community networks in a third cohort of RSNs, establishing a total of 24 RSNs by July of 2020.

While the makeup of each network's coalition and governance reflects the uniqueness of each community, every RSN is encouraged to include parents in governance. Several are leveraging their Head Start Parent Policy Councils, which have recruited and trained parents to be leaders in ECE policy and administration. Current RSNs have addressed strategic communication and community engagement in their blueprints. Rapides, a network in the first Cohort, established a new network brand, logo, and website, with the intent of engaging more families, serving more children, and informing parent choice. Ready Start Jefferson is in the process of partnering with Sesame Street in a parent information campaign.

C. Opportunities to Improve Family Engagement

Louisiana will continue to build on and improve the efforts described above to inform and engage families as leaders in the statewide B-5 mixed delivery system. As Louisiana seeks to increase coordination and invest in a more effective, efficient mixed delivery system, PDG funds will support pilots of new Early Childhood Guides in RSNs. These Guides have three functions: 1) learn from families about their needs, and communicate them to RSNs and LDOE; 2) recruit eligible families to apply for publicly-funded seats in licensed centers and FCC; and 3) assist families to complete CCAP applications and ensure efficient processing.

Guides will improve the mixed delivery system by moving supports for a bureaucratic function closer to families. Guides will reduce barriers and burdens by serving as a personal champion for each family to ensure they have the information they need about their eligibility for each program, and complete the application correctly the first time. Placing this role locally supports families that have limited access to technology by providing forms in person, and support for the completion of the online application. By raising awareness of the availability of publicly-funded seats, the Guide will support Type III centers in recruiting and enrolling families so directors can focus on running high-quality ECE centers rather than family recruitment. The Guides will improve the efficiency of CCDF funding and the application process by reducing the back-and-forth between the state and families to obtain documentation and process ineligible applications.

Louisiana will pilot this Guide function through RSNs in conjunction with the B-3 seat pilots detailed in Activity Five. Community funding will be allocated based on need (the number of economically disadvantaged children), with an additional tiered reimbursement through CCDF based on their effectiveness recruiting families and supporting complete applications. Louisiana will evaluate the pilot at the end of the academic year to refine and scale it.

VIII. ACTIVITY FOUR

As noted above, LDOE leverages regional and local relationships through the statewide ECE network and the regional CCR&Rs. These entities, along with K-12 districts, facilitate sharing best practices and PD across the ECE mixed delivery system. All supports described below are designed to keep and increase the number of qualified providers serving publicly-funded children throughout the state, particularly in rural areas where they may be child care deserts.

Key Training Modules: The creation of KTMs was funded using the initial grant to offer high-quality PD and training opportunities for ECE providers. As described in Activity Two, KTMs are designed by experts on best practices in the field of early childhood and offered for redelivery to CCR&R agencies, local lead agencies, and other instructors, including LDH child care health consultants. The training objectives of each KTM are linked to the Louisiana Early Learning and Development Standards and training content reflects research, theory, and best practice. Each module focuses on a discrete practice in a key content area (e.g., implementing effective inclusion strategies for children with or at-risk for disabilities and delays, family-professional partnerships, trauma-informed care, early elementary school transition) and incorporates activities and presentation methods appropriate for adult learners. All modules ensure trainers, coaches, community leaders, and directors can provide the ECE workforce with consistent quality trainings on critical subjects that support child development.

Community Network and RSN Structure: Local community networks are expected to count all publicly-funded at-risk children from birth to age five, implement innovative approaches to increasing the quality of programs, and improve access to affordable ECE for families. However, within many networks, efforts to improve quality typically have reflected the availability of resources and the willingness of programs to share across the community. Louisiana's legislature

amended RS 17:407.23, Louisiana's Early Childhood Care and Education Network, during the 2018 regular legislative session, authorizing BESE to use available public and private funds to pilot strategies that increase access to and improve the quality of ECE programs by establishing RSN pilots. Each RSN blueprint includes goals and plans to improve access to high quality ECE for their community. In addition to conducting quality assessments of every classroom, each RSN assesses the needs of their ECE workforce and effectively supports skill improvement and credentialing with job-embedded PD that aligns with the CLASS® tool. Using education, credentialing, and performance data, communities develop systematic approaches to strengthen skills, raise credentials, and determine if and how targeted support for improvement reduces teacher turnover. Each RSN also seeks to build a continuous improvement system (e.g., opportunities for reflection and data-driven collaboration, rather than traditional PD).

CCR&R: To improve kindergarten readiness, CCR&Rs are tasked with sharing best practices with child care providers while increasing collaboration and efficiency of services. CCR&Rs build the capacity of center directors to serve as instructional leaders, while strengthening the skill level of the early childhood workforce and reducing teacher turnover. CCR&Rs provide:

1. **Differentiated Coaching:** Each CCR&R provides high-quality coaching for child care staff using a research-based model that supports child and teacher interactions and the use of high-quality instructional tools. Coaching is made up of short-term technical assistance (less than 30% of visits) and practice-based coaching (majority of visits), which builds on a data-driven plan for improvement over a series of visits.

2. **Group Training:** Each CCR&R provides trainings developed and delivered by content experts on critical information for operating a safe and healthy learning environment that

supports child and teacher interactions and uses high-quality instructional tools. Group training topics include KTMs and training modules created by CCR&Rs.

3. **Early Childhood Resource Centers:** Each CCR&R serves as a centralized source of child care information and resources for families and providers, ranging from subsidized housing information for families to best business practices for providers.

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: Louisiana partners with Tulane University to offer an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) program. This program matches a mental health professional with ECE professionals to improve the social, emotional and behavioral health of young children in early learning centers. The ECMHC program 1) promotes the healthy social-emotional development of young children as a component of healthy whole child development, 2) increases teachers' skills and knowledge to effectively support social-emotional development, and 3) refers for treatment and/or designs interventions for children exhibiting challenging behaviors, and developmental or mental health concerns.

Site Improvement Planning: LDOE supports low-performing sites through a SIP process in its unified QRIS to increase their awareness and use of available resources for improvement. Through SIP, sites work with LDOE staff to self-assess and reflect upon trainings and classroom practices to set attainable goals and develop a plan to reach proficiency. These sites receive monthly coaching from LDOE staff aligned to goals established at the beginning of the process, and receive priority for job-embedded coaching for their teachers and staff from their CCR&R and ECMHC. This process ensures that PD, coaching, and material resources reach the centers that need them most. SIP has been effective: 95% of sites participating in 2018-2019 showed improvement in CLASS® scores; 46% of these sites showed growth of one point or higher.

Teacher Survey: LDOE administers an annual statewide teacher satisfaction survey, which evaluates teachers' satisfaction with the supports they receive and assesses the PD needs of the ECE workforce. Teacher feedback is grouped based on supports provided regarding CLASS®, curriculum, and assessment. A summary of survey results is included in each community network performance profile and shared with lead agencies and CCR&Rs.

Louisiana's School Readiness Tax Credits (SRTC): The SRTCs are nationally recognized for improving ECE quality, increasing access for economically disadvantaged children, and encouraging workforce retention and advancement. They include five refundable credits:

1. **Teacher and Director Tax Credit:** Provides up to $3,358 for a teacher and/or director each year based upon their training, qualification and experience.

2. **Provider Tax Credit:** Provides centers up to $1,500 per eligible child based on their quality rating and the number of CCAP or child welfare children served.

3. **Family Tax Credit:** Supports families based on child care expenses, income, federal child care tax credit, state child care tax credit, and the quality rating of the center.

4. **Business Tax Credit:** Provides a credit for businesses that have donated funds to child care centers to support eligible expenses, based on the quality rating of the center.

5. **Child Care Resource and Referral Tax Credit**: Provides a refund of up to $5,000 for businesses that donate to a CCR&R.

Supports for Infant Classrooms: Infant CLASS® is being phased into the statewide ECE network with scores included in the 2020-2021 performance profiles for the first time. To prepare teachers for upcoming Infant CLASS® observations, LDOE offered lead agencies grants to provide teachers and directors with high-quality, evidence-based PD specific to infant-teacher interactions. See Activity Two and Bonus Point: Infants for additional information.

Louisiana Early Leaders Academy (LELA): LDOE piloted the first cohort of LELA, an executive-level program for directors of highly rated, publicly-funded early learning centers. The goal is to expand access to quality ECE by strengthening leaders in the field. LELA participants receive in-person training and job-embedded coaching focused on areas of need, and participate in virtual communities of practice to enhance instructional leadership and quality.

Professional Development Registry: The Pathways Early Learning Center Career Development System provides child care providers and trainers with:

1. Career ladder assignment: When a participant provides documentation of their credentials, certifications, and continuing education hours, Pathways assigns them to a rung on the career ladder. As participants engaged in PD and attain certifications, they move up the ladder and become eligible for additional SRTC funds.

2. Trainer approval: Eligible trainers must be approved through Pathways, based on their experience, education and completion of orientation training. A list of approved trainers is shared on the Pathways website and used by professionals across the state.

Louisiana Annual Teacher Leader Summit and Collaboratives: Quarterly regional collaboratives bring together all lead agencies and select teachers to participate in collaborative sessions focused on learning and practicing new strategies related to data analysis, coordination, and instruction. These sessions promote connections between leaders from various backgrounds and locations around the state and facilitate regional networking to address shared issues or collaborate for improvement. Each summer, LDOE hosts the Teacher Leader Summit, which convenes approximately 6,000 educators and content experts. At the Summit, LEA leadership, lead agency staff, directors, principals, and teachers participate in sessions and build connections.

Other coordination opportunities with LDH and DCFS: In Louisiana, the Title V block grant is administered by the Bureau of Family Health (BFH), within the LDH. BFH has several ECE initiatives including evidence-based home visiting, early childhood mental health consultation, developmental screening, Partners for Family Health, and the Young Child Wellness Collaborative amongst others (see organization chart). Through programs such as LAUNCH (*Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health)* and the Early Childhood Coordinated System (ECCS), BFH trains health care providers and child care centers on developmental screening and infant and early childhood mental health consultation as well as referrals to resources such as IDEA Part B. LDOE, in collaboration with LDH, designed the [Early Childhood Developmental Screening Guidebook](#) as a resource guide for child care centers and families. The guidebook provides detailed information and access to resources related to: healthy development, developmental screening, talking with families about a child's developmental progress, and supports when there are concerns about a child's development.

Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC): In 2014, Louisiana established the new ECAC and phased it in as the new minimum credential for child care lead teachers in publicly-funded early learning centers beginning July 2019. Teachers now must earn their ECAC at a BESE-approved teacher preparation program, which ensures all ECE teachers receive high-quality training and practical experiences and have the needed competencies. Through BESE-approved ECAC Programs, ECE teachers complete coursework to obtain a CDA, meeting the requirement for an ECAC. Louisiana currently offers 26 BESE-approved ECAC Programs located throughout the state, with available online and in-person options in both urban and rural communities. Through Louisiana Pathways scholarships, teachers can earn an ECAC for free.

Curriculum: For the past three years, LDOE has offered the Child Care Curriculum Initiative, which supports every publicly-funded early learning center in the state to purchase two high-quality curriculum kits annually by reimbursing 80% of the cost up to $4,000. To be eligible, centers must participate in their CCR&R's Curriculum 101 training and complete a curriculum implementation plan.

Pre-K through Third Grade Guidance: LDOE released Louisiana's Pre-K through Third Grade Guidebook to provide information to school systems about pre-K to grade three alignment. This guidebook provides guidance for schools to create strong plans that ensure quality and continuity of proven practices from pre-K through third grade so children and families experience smooth and effective transitions, thrive in early elementary school, and achieve mastery in reading and math in third grade and beyond. LDOE also created pre-K-2 back-to-school documents for school districts and communities to support families with children transitioning to elementary school.

Kindergarten CLASS® Pilot: LDOE is in its second year of piloting the CLASS® tool in Kindergarten and first grade classrooms statewide, which generates ongoing collaboration and PD opportunities for the early childhood and early elementary workforce.

Table E: Activities Supporting Best Practices Strategies	
Strategy	**Plan for Activities**
Develop or expand efforts to incorporate evidence-based practices into PD	● Louisiana KTMs are being developed and scaled statewide; each focuses on a discrete practice in key content areas (e.g., inclusion, family-professional partnerships, trauma-informed care, early elementary school transition).
Improve the training and experience of B-5 ECE providers in the state	● CCR&Rs, lead agencies, ECMHC, and Head Start TA agencies provide practice-based coaching, training, and technical assistance to ECE classrooms statewide. ● SIP provides intensive coaching and support to low-performing sites targeting interventions relating to improved teacher/child interactions, PD, teacher certification, and curriculum.
Assess professional development needs of	● The annual Lead Teacher Survey assesses the PD needs of the ECE workforce to improve outcomes for children. LDOE analyzes results

the ECE workforce	to measure the success of current supports and to build a strategy to meet the PD needs of teachers. ● Through the UVA validation study, a Network Survey is conducted to assess needs and priorities of each community.
Address workforce turnover	● High-quality coaching and training builds workforce competency and minimizes turnover. ● Monetary incentives, such as the SRTCs, encourage continued growth in PD and reduce workforce turnover.
Align credentials, certifications, and coursework across PD and higher education	● EC teaching credentials are aligned through the establishment of 22 BESE-approved ECAC programs. ● As of July 2019, the ECAC is the minimum credential for all lead teachers in Type III early learning centers. ● Pathways scholarships support individuals seeking an ECAC. ● Pathways provides a registry of all approved ECE trainers as well as the education and experience of the EC workforce.
Increase availability of qualified providers, especially in rural areas	● The expansion of ECAC programs and creation of online programs enables providers in rural areas to access high-quality training. ● The FCC pilot has expanded child care and education options in rural areas while piloting quality measures with these sites. ● RSNs seek to increase access of high-quality EC programs through the development of a community network blueprint.
Meet the needs of infants and toddlers, including meaningful inclusion of children with disabilities and special needs across the state's mixed delivery system	● KTMs include topics on supporting high-quality interactions in infant and toddler classes and inclusion of children with disabilities. ● CCR&Rs, lead agencies, ECMHC, and Head Start TA agencies provide training and support related to these topics. ● Grant funding has been provided to community networks to prepare providers for implementation of Infant CLASS® ● Topics in these areas are included during quarterly EC collaboratives and Teacher Leader Summit.
Build shared understanding and connections across ECE and HHS providers serving families with young children	● YCWC hosts regular meetings across state agencies. Work groups are organized relating to topics including, state longitudinal data system, early and accurate ID, and family engagement. ● Lighthouse Screening pilots are using ASQ as a developmental screener to identify children ages 3-5 for special education services. ● Through the utilization of a Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant, LDOE will extend EdLink to include health and education data on children and ensure connectivity between LDOE and LDH. ● Early Childhood Transition Process guidance is provided by LDOE as a guide for helping families of children with special needs transition from IDEA part C to IDEA part B.
Engage in PD strategies for the ECE workforce to support children's transitions into early elementary school grades	● Community networks include in their coordinated enrollment plans how they support children's transitions into early elementary school. ● Kindergarten CLASS® pilots align PD opportunities for the early childhood and early elementary workforce. ● LDOE has created and distributed guidance documents, such as Parent Pre-K-2 Back-to-School Guide, Pre-K to 3rd Grade

	Assessment Guidance, and Pre-K through Third Grade Guidebook. ● KTM training topics include "Supporting Effective Transitions into Kindergarten."

ACTIVITY FIVE

Seat Subgrant Overview

Louisiana intends to use the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant to build on existing work to increase access, improve quality, and establish local governance and infrastructure. By leveraging successes and lessons learned from the state's current community network approach to its mixed-delivery system and RSN pilots, Louisiana will use a seat funding strategy that supports local communities to expand access to birth through three-year-old seats in a manner that is sustainable after the conclusion of the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant, addressing the needs raised in Activities One and Two. If awarded, these seats will be offered for three years, in alignment with the school year, with the expectation that communities sustain these seats once the grant ends.

Louisiana collects data on the number of economically disadvantaged (200% of the FPL) children at each age group from birth to five who are enrolled in a publicly-funded child care program, Head Start and EHS, and state-funded pre-K. As noted in the state's needs assessment and illustrated in Table F below, this data demonstrates that while 94% of the state's economically disadvantaged four year olds are enrolled in publicly-funded pre-K, only 13% of economically disadvantaged birth through three year olds are enrolled in publicly-funded ECE programs. Additionally, while nearly all four year olds served are enrolled in programs that are rated as Proficient and above in the state's unified QRIS, fewer than 80% of the infants and toddlers served are enrolled in quality sites. This gap represents the most significant challenge that Louisiana faces in preparing all of its children for success in kindergarten and beyond.

Table F: Percent of Economically Disadvantaged Children Served by Age		
Age	Percent of Economically Disadvantaged (200% of the FPL) Served	Of those Served, Percent Served in High-Quality Sites
Infants	1,184 (3%)	906 (75%)
One Year Olds	2,834 (7%)	2,244 (78%)
Two Year Olds	3,967 (10%)	3,094 (77%)
Three Year Olds	13,278 (34%)	12,039 (90%)
Four Year Olds	36,042 (94%)	34,650 (96%)
Birth through Two Total	7,985 (7%)	6,244 (77%)
Birth through Three Total	21,263 (13%)	18,283 (86%)
Birth through Four Total	57,305 (29%)	52,933 (92%)

LDOE will use a portion of the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant funding as subgrants to pilot seat funding strategies for infants, toddlers, and three year olds that can be leveraged by RSNs in future years to serve additional economically disadvantaged children sustainably. The state will focus on three key priorities with its seat funding:

1. Community-led systems: Every parish in the state is unique, and closing Louisiana' ECE access gap will require nuanced community-driven strategies. With this in mind, Louisiana used initial PDG B-5 funds to establish RSNs (described in Activities Two and Three). Reflecting the 2018 legislation, Louisiana will prioritize RSNs for new seat funding, including PDG B-5 Renewal funding, in alignment with their blueprints. Current RSNs (see Figure D in Activity Two) contain nearly half of Louisiana's economically disadvantaged children. When a third cohort is on-boarded in July 2020, these RSNs will be home to the majority of economically disadvantaged birth to three year olds, including rural communities. RSNs represent a geographically diverse group of parishes. Of the 13 current RSNs, five (38%) are defined in the state's needs assessment as mostly rural, and the other eight (62%) are urban. One of the RSNs has an established partnership with a tribal school offering pre-K. RSNs are encouraged to think about and provided community-level data to understand their underserved populations to target

for service, including children experiencing homelessness, children with disabilities, and English learners.

Subgrantees will be determined based on the success of their RSN work to date and other community factors, which include the RSN's (1) articulation of how subawards will be used to support the goals presented in each community's blueprint; (2) ability to match subaward funding with local funding; (3) capacity and readiness to administer seats; and (4) community need, as defined by the percent of children living in economically disadvantaged households and other risk factors established annually in Louisiana's Risk and Reach Report.

2. Diverse delivery of high-quality care: Awards will be prioritized for diverse delivery of seats, with additional requirements for providing infant care, meeting teacher certification requirements, and achieving minimum quality rating scores. These B-3 seats will be allocated to RSNs that partner with providers to deliver fully funded seats. All decisions regarding placement of seats will be made locally through the RSNs' governance structure and process. All programs offering new seats will participate in the community's coordinated enrollment process (described in Activity Three) to engage families, which involves partnering with the LEA's homeless liaison to identify families experiencing homelessness and ensure they are aware of their categorical eligibility for all programs and connected to additional services and supports, including housing. All participating classrooms will receive job-embedded coaching through CCR&Rs and infant/toddler ECMHC. All programs receiving funding for new seats also will participate in the state's unified QRIS.

3. Meeting community need: Communities will fund B-3 seats at the rate they specify as needed for quality, which the LA B-3 plan sets at the 75th percentile of the Market Rate. LDOE will fund B-3 seats through the three primary strategies below, which respond to LDOE's needs

assessment. Communities will pilot these seats during the 2020-2021 school year, and adopt and sustain seats in alignment with their needs and blueprint, particularly focusing on in-need populations in their community, including children experiencing homelessness, living in rural areas, and with disabilities.

1. **Birth through three-year-old seats in child care centers**: The state will allocate B-3 seats for diverse delivery in child care centers. When public funding for a seat is already in place (e.g., CCDF), communities will braid funding up to the quality rate.

2. **Birth through three-year-old seats in family child care:** Communities with child care deserts, particularly rural communities, will be targeted to pilot high-quality seats in FCC settings that participate in a quality rating process, using a quality FCC rate.

3. **Three-year-old seats in child care centers aligned to LA 4 eligibility requirements:** Communities with demonstrated partnerships between LA 4 and child care will be eligible to pilot new three-year-old seats aligned with the state's pre-K program in diverse settings.

Projected New Seats: As a result of the grant, Louisiana will create new seats to serve additional economically disadvantaged children, ages birth through three across community subgrantees that represent the urban and rural diversity of the state. With such great need in Louisiana, this would only reduce the gap in access to quality for children ages birth through three by 1% in the first year of the grant. Yet, it will lay the groundwork for communities to pilot innovative strategies to address their greatest needs and expand seats that can be scaled in future years. In addition to serving more economically disadvantaged children immediately where there is the greatest need, this funding will seed multiple demonstrations of how communities can leverage local funds, address child care deserts, and leverage partnerships to expand access to quality early care and education. These lessons and promising practices will be shared across

RSNs, as noted in Activity Two. All programs will prioritize categorically eligible children, which includes prioritization of families experiencing homelessness, children in the child welfare system, and eligible children with disabilities.

Table G: Seat Subgrant Objectives	
Objectives	**Eligibility and criteria for seats**
Objective 1: Increase the number of fully-funded seats in child care centers	- Meet eligibility for CCAP - Located in an RSN - Rated Proficient and above - Offer infant care - Teacher with an ECAC - Use a Tier 1 curriculum and *GOLD*®
Objective 2: Pilot new fully funded seats in family child care centers in child care deserts, particularly in rural areas	- Meet eligibility for CCAP - Located in an RSN with no publicly-funded child care - Participate in FCC pilot, including QRIS and FCC network
Objective 3: Pilot LA 3 diverse delivery seats in communities with strong LEA-center relationships	- Meet family eligibility criteria for LA 4 (including no work requirement) - Turn three before September 30 - Rated Proficient and above - Licensed center with at least one classroom serving children fifteen months or younger - Through partnership with LEA - Bachelor degree teacher, with minimum ECAC 17:2 ratio or lower

Additionally, as described in Activities Two and Three the LDOE will 1) continue and expand RSN pilots, 2) pilot ECE Guides to promote family access to existing and new B-3 seats; and 3) fund FCC pilots to strategically include in the state's mixed delivery system. Louisiana will leverage initial investments, CCDF funding, and efficiencies created through grant activities to scale and sustain successful efforts from the renewal PDG B-5 grant activities.

X. ACTIVITY SIX

LDOE collects and evaluates data continuously and uses it to refine and improve the state's strategic approach, birth through twelfth grade. In addition to data collected through the state's

QRIS, coordinated enrollment processes, early elementary data systems, child care licensing, and CCDF-related systems, LDOE partners with multiple renowned universities to collect data from parents, providers, children and partners and evaluate programs and initiatives for opportunities to improve. LDOE also works closely with other state agencies to share and leverage relevant data to improve services for children, birth through twelfth grade, across systems. LDOE is making significant progress in building a statewide longitudinal data system that stores its birth-to-twelfth-grade work, comprised of both a warehouse and a transactional component.

Data Integration, Management, and Use

Louisiana's Integrated Data System (EdLink): While Louisiana has long had a statewide longitudinal data system for schools, the state is making significant progress to incorporate early childhood. This work is in the planning process, as Louisiana is currently developing an integrated statewide longitudinal data system that LDOE and its partners use to improve the ECE mixed delivery system and strengthen the ECE system as a whole. The key gap in Louisiana's transition supports for children moving from ECE to school entry is the lack of a centralized data system. Louisiana is in a multi-year process to create a centralized data system that aligns K-12 data with ECE data. This student longitudinal data system is called EdLink and will serve as a single source of information for state planning, while protecting children's confidential information. This system will strengthen the alignment between ECE and K-3rd grade, allowing LDOE to collect and use information from development screenings and transition activities for each child. With an enhanced data system, Louisiana will be better positioned to partner with families and organizations to improve transitions for children while ensuring the privacy of data. EdLink will be released in three phases with the first release in 2020 and full operation by 2022. LDOE has a proposal pending with the Institution for Educational Sciences through its Statewide

Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant program, requesting funding for EdLink to pilot

integration and interoperability between LDOE's early childhood data and LDH and DCFS data.

Collection of Specific Data Elements: LDOE is working to strengthen the connections between

multiple data systems used to monitor and evaluate the success of our work, and inform

continuous improvement across the agency. As noted above, LDOE's integrated data system,

EdLink, currently in development, will collect information on nearly every priority of the grant

including child care information such as licensing, monitoring, certification, payments, auditing,

quality ratings, and more. Information about participation and progress in both IDEA Part B,

section 619 and IDEA Part C, and the transitions for children between these programs, will be

collected, as well any child assessment data collected through *GOLD*®. All quality, enrollment,

and child assessment data for state pre-K, Head Start, and EHS will be included, as well as

public K-3 education. Louisiana also will work with its counterparts in other state agencies such

as LDH and DCFS to include information from TANF, Medicaid, SNAP, child welfare, and

other programs, both at the start and over time. Home visiting programs are targeted for potential

inclusion in future years through coordination with LDH and the state's RSNs.

Current Early Childhood Data Systems: In LDOE, there are multiple systems in place regularly

collecting data that informs decision-making, as described in greater detail below. Currently,

however, LDOE and its partners use multiple data systems that are fragmented and siloed.

Linking data and making connections between systems currently is done manually and is time-

consuming; for example, licensing and CCAP data currently are housed separately from the

quality rating system. LDOE also has MOUs with DCFS and LDH to share data related to

SNAP, Medicaid, and TANF, none of which are linked with other data sources. This is why

LDOE has prioritized the creation of the EdLink system to increase data efficiencies and centralize data access and storage across systems.

Using Data to Inform Decision Making: In spite of this fragmentation, the data LDOE continuously collects and shares is informative and significant, and used regularly by LDOE, district-level leadership, and university partners to inform policy and practice. Primary decision-makers who use these data include: LDOE staff and leadership; BESE, Louisiana Governor, the Louisiana Legislature and other state policy makers; school districts; community network leaders; parents and families; ECE program directors and teachers; partners and early childhood service providers in child welfare, education, health, and social services; and advocacy groups.

Louisiana uses data analysis to inform strategic approaches as well as policy recommendations to the ECCE Advisory Council and BESE. An example from this past year is the infant CCAP rate: in August 2019, BESE separated the infant rate from the toddler rate, and increased it. This policy change was the culmination of a research partnership with LSU on the state's market rates of care, engagement with ECE providers on the need for greater incentives for infant care and with families on the need for additional infant care providers, internal cost-modeling using access and quality data, and conversations with key stakeholders, including the ECCE Advisory Council who unanimously supported the policy change.

In addition to publishing performance profiles, as described in Activity Three, LDOE provides all community networks with data kits to drive local decision-making. Each data kit includes three years of data covering comprehensive CLASS® scores, including quality rating broken down by zip code; unduplicated child count numbers; kindergarten cohort data; kindergarten entry assessments; literacy assessments for K-3; and K-12 school scores. Community networks use these data kits to pinpoint local needs and make informed decisions,

especially RSNs and Get Ready networks which use these data in their blueprints that drive improvement. For example, CLASS® data paired with child count data inform local leaders about access to quality by zip code and drive focus areas for PD in the area; the kindergarten assessment data guides the creation of additional transitional supports.

Assessing and Supporting Data Literacy: LDOE hosts weekly webinars and office hours as well as quarterly, in-person collaborative meetings with community network leaders from across the state. LDOE staff often use these opportunities to present data to community network leaders and provide training to help them better understand their data and learn how to access, interpret, and use it. These sessions allow LDOE staff to assess in real-time the data literacy of key users. For one of the most frequently used data touchpoints, the CLASS® portal, LDOE has a dedicated FTE to manage the portal, answer technical questions from the field, and provide community networks and local ECE program staff assistance in understanding the data and reports as needed during the academic year. To strengthen the development of EdLink, LDOE has held focus groups with child care directors and others who will frequently interact with the system. As each phase of EdLink is rolled out, LDOE will host trainings to teach local communities and programs how to enter, access, and interpret the appropriate data in the new system.

Data Governance across State Agencies: Louisiana has an enterprise data governance structure in which all state agencies are represented. It is a three-tiered cross-agency model with the strategic level led by the Data Governance Influence Group (DGIG), the tactical level led by the Enterprise Data Governance Group (EDGG), and the operational level led by smaller teams. This data governance system establishes a framework for the efficient, effective, and secure management and use of data that aligns with the state's strategic objectives, supports agency business goals, recognizes agency data ownership rights, and promotes data sharing

opportunities. LDOE collaborates with DCFS, which collects and manages information on children in child welfare, families using WIC or SNAP benefits, and TANF; and LDH, which collects and manages information on Medicaid enrollment, Louisiana's Children's Health Insurance Program, MIECHV and other family support initiatives. LDOE has more than a dozen data-sharing agreements with other state agencies and departments. LDOE created an internal data governance system that mirrors the state's three-tiered structure- strategic, tactical, and operational levels- because of LDOE's guiding belief that data is an important asset and should be managed and protected as such. Decisions affecting the collection, quality, storage, retention, and reporting of data must be made in compliance with all relevant state and federal legislation and established roles and responsibilities as defined within LDOE policy and not on an individual basis. LDOE takes data privacy and security very seriously and has policies guiding the sharing of data both internally and externally. As it relates to internal data sharing, LDOE ensures 1) all staff are trained on privacy and security, 2) all staff sign a confidentiality agreement following training, and 3) staff access to data requires a description of how the data is applicable to their job and supervisor approval. For external data sharing, all requests are referred to the internal research committee to evaluate the request; if approved, an MOU is established and data is securely shared.

Unique identifiers: As part of the EdLink integration process, LDOE will extend the use of a secure ten-digit unique identifier- the Louisiana Secure ID (LASID)- across data systems. Currently the LASID is used by LDOE and LEAs for student records in the public pre-K-12 system. The LASID is more secure than a social security number and allows state agencies to securely store and align children's information for the purpose of implementing and/or improving services for children with diverse needs. The EdLink planning process - and a key

focus of the IES SLDS grant discussed above - focuses on expanding the use of LASID among

ECE providers and other state agencies like LDH and DFCS. This plan begins with a pilot with

children who are deaf or hard of hearing because they are screened at such a young age and

expands to include children in the child welfare system and all children enrolled in ECE by 2023.

The use of LASID across these agencies will ensure community network leaders, ECE providers

and policy makers can ensure children are receiving efficient and effective services and track

progress. The LASID will not share personally identifiable information in accordance with all

Louisiana and federal privacy laws and regulations. By using the LASID, providers will only be

able to access the essential information they need from EdLink to provide timely, coordinated

and efficient service to children and families, while maintaining maximum privacy.

Unduplicated Child Count: The unduplicated child count has been an established practice in ECE

settings across Louisiana since the 2015-16 school year. LDOE collects a count of all publicly-

funded children enrolled in ECE programs by site, age, and funding source, as of October 1 and

February 1 of every academic year. See Activity One for more information.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement

Since the passage of Act 3 in 2012, LDOE has worked to create an accountability system for the

provision of high-quality publicly-funded ECE seats that is aligned with a unified QRIS across

Louisiana's mixed delivery system. Louisiana uses CLASS®, a system of measures of adult-child

interactions, in every infant, toddler, and pre-K classroom in every site accepting public funds to

serve children, including Head Start, public schools, nonpublic schools, and child care centers, as

detailed in Activity One. These ratings are published alongside informational metrics related to

teacher degrees and credentials, the use of high-quality curriculum and assessment, and adult-

child ratios. For more about Louisiana's unified QRIS, including the delivery of observations,

promulgation of ratings to families and centers, alignment of incentives and consequences to the unified QRIS, and system of supports related to the ratings, see Activities One and Three.

LDOE has worked intentionally to create key areas of overlap across the mixed delivery system to increase alignment on improving adult-child interactions in ECE settings. For example, just as CLASS® is used for site accountability, it can also be used for the teacher evaluation required by law for public pre-K-12 teachers. This allows for alignment and simplicity in pre-K classrooms, rather than disconnect or duplication of effort. Similarly, the CLASS® observational tool is used nationally by Head Start for measuring quality, which ensures alignment between the quality measures of Head Start and LDOE for all Louisiana Head Start programs. This focus across multiple programs on improving adult-child interactions with multiple measurements taken each year has yielded sustainable improvement in CLASS® scores and created an unprecedented knowledge of and buy-in to the tool as a system of measures that supports classroom improvement among policy makers, advocates, center directors and teachers.

Perhaps one of the greatest fragmentations in Louisiana's ECE system may be the fact that FCC providers are not included currently in the state's unified QRIS. While Louisiana's current number of FCC providers certified to enroll children through public funds is limited, there are likely thousands more operating with various degrees of stability and size across the state. As noted above in Activity Two, through Louisiana's initial grant, the state piloted a new approach to FCC quality rating and support with 38 FCC providers, and engaged in strategic planning to incorporate FCC into the statewide ECE network and its QRIS. Louisiana will use PDG Renewal Grant funds to continue its multi-year strategy to reduce this fragmentation and integrate FCC providers into all aspects of the state's ECE network. LDOE will engage with

FCC providers and the families who attend these programs, measure the quality of FCC programs, and hold programs accountable that serve young children with public funds.

Program Performance Evaluation Plan: Louisiana is currently engaged in several research studies designed to evaluate the effectiveness of many of the strategies outlined in this grant. LDOE will use the evaluation data from these key research studies, which are described below, as well as annual measures of quality, access, workforce, and need that inform the needs assessment, to continually assess and inform the state's strategic plan and evaluate effectiveness. Louisiana will continue to refine its policy, protocols and performance plan using routine data analysis done by LDOE's strategic research team as well as partnerships with universities; ongoing field engagement with communities, providers, teachers, and families; and discussions with key stakeholders and partners, including the ECCE Advisory Council, LDH, and DCFS. Program evaluation is ongoing, and informs the state's strategic approach to improving access to high-quality care for Louisiana's economically disadvantaged families. Current research includes:

Unified Quality Rating System Validation Study: As described in Activity Two, Louisiana has partnered with UVA to study the validity of the state's QRIS across its mixed-delivery system in order to monitor, evaluate, and continuously improve the system in place.

ECAC Program Study: With 26 BESE-approved ECAC programs, LDOE is developing an evaluation system to measure the success of these preparation programs. The goal is to ensure that all ECAC programs can successfully graduate impactful candidates who can meet the needs of the ECE workforce. LDOE is partnering with UVA though a CCDF research grant to study the effectiveness of this credential and these programs, and discern best practices and improvements to ensure teachers are adequately prepared for their roles in early learning centers.

CCDF Usage Study: LDOE is partnering with LSU to conduct a study of the underutilization of CCAP services by authorized families. Since LDOE seeks to serve as many children and families as possible through CCAP in accordance with CCDF, the study seeks to 1) refine LDOE's understanding of the reasons families opt to not utilize CCAP; and 2) inform changes to policy, procedures and/or communications to ensure families utilize CCAP. The study gathers both quantitative and qualitative data by directly engaging with families that have not utilized CCAP services after a period of three months. Quantitative family data include demographics, income levels, primary language spoken in the home, and resident geography. Qualitative data sources include post-survey follow-ups with families to gather more detail on specific reasons they did not utilize CCAP. This program evaluation will inform policy and process solutions at LDOE to increase the efficacy and efficiency of the state's mixed delivery system.

FCC Pilot Study: LDOE is also partnering with LSU to conduct an evaluation study of the FCC pilot. The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to provide new information on the unique responsibilities and challenges of FCC providers and quantify a baseline of the quality of care provided to children in family homes, and (2) to determine whether participation in the FCC pilot affects the quality of care by FCC providers, and subsequently affects children's language, pre-academic, and socioemotional outcomes. The study includes a demographic questionnaire, pre and post surveys completed by FCC pilot participants, and pre and post interviews of FCC pilot participants regarding their work with children, challenges of the profession, quality of care, and overall pilot feedback. This research will inform LDOE's long-term strategy to incorporate FCC providers into Louisiana's statewide ECE system.

Progress from Previous PDG B-5 Activities: In initial PDG B-5 activities, as detailed in Activity Two, LDOE has four main areas of focus: 1) establish local infrastructure via RSNs; 2) increase

alignment and improve quality of ECE; 3) incorporate FCC into the statewide ECE network; and 4) improve state systems that inform the statewide ECE network. Activities Two and Four above discussed KTMs, Infant CLASS® supports, and piloting shared services, all of which were designed to create efficiencies to make high-quality service delivery easier for mixed delivery sites to provide. LDOE will not fund any additional KTMs or Infant CLASS® supports, but will continue to pilot and scale shared services through the renewal grant. LDOE will focus its PDG Renewal Grant funds on strengthening and expanding RSNs, increasing access statewide through seat funding with subgrants to established RSNs, improving efficiency of family access for seats through ECE Guides and continuing to pilot and study FCC networks. As referenced in the Project Sustainability section, all of these activities build on lessons learned from the initial grant, from the legacy grant, and from all ECE initiatives and are designed to increase efficiencies and partnerships to promote ECE access and quality in the mixed delivery system.

Meaningful Governance and Stakeholder Engagement

Louisiana's Governance Structure: The Louisiana Legislature has granted BESE the constitutional and statutory authority to adopt regulations that govern the administration of public education in the state. Acting in its capacity as a quasi-legislative body, BESE adopts policies and regulatory rules which have the force and effect of law. BESE is composed of 11 members: 8 members elected by region and 3 at-large members appointed by the Governor. LDOE operates under the BESE's authority with the leadership of the Superintendent of Education. The Louisiana Legislature created the ECCE Advisory Council to advise BESE in the discharge of its policymaking, supervisory control, and budgetary duties and responsibilities related to early childhood care and education. A subset of Advisory Council members

participates in a workgroup to provide feedback to policy changes and help LDOE shape the

framing of recommendations presented to the full Council.

As noted above, Louisiana is working to create strong local governance models for the ECE

system that are responsive to community needs and innovative in increasing access to quality

ECE for children, birth to age five, from economically disadvantaged families. Since the initial

PDG grant, LDOE has worked closely with RSNs to develop and scale local cross-sector/cross-

program governance structures in each participating community. Each RSN is developing bylaws

and establishing a governing board with decision-making authority to support the network's

blueprint as the RSN works to achieve its goals of increasing access and quality. Before

becoming RSNs, these networks were charged with administrative tasks related to ECE in their

communities. Now, with strong local governance and established bylaws, the RSNs have more

authority to drive improvement at the local level. The first cohorts of RSNs will serve as models.

Decision-Making Path

Figure E: Decision-Making Path

| Constitution & state legislation grant BESE authority to approve policy. | Based on data, feedback, and field engagement, the LDOE drafts policy recommendations. | Drafts of policy recommendations are presented to ECCE Advisory Council workgroup for discussion. | Drafts of policy recommendations are presented to ECCE Advisory Council for a voting endorsement. | If proposed policy is endorsed by a majority of voting members, it is sent to BESE for final recommendation. |

Before policy is brought to BESE, it must travel through the decision-making path outlined

above in Figure E. BESE is granted standing authority through the state's constitution, and

receives additional authority from the state legislation, to approve policy. Based on interactions

with the field, data and analysis, and trends and priorities, LDOE drafts policy recommendations.

These policy recommendations are discussed with various stakeholders (e.g. advocates, lead

agency leaders, school systems, child care directors, partner state agencies, CCR&Rs, teachers,

and families) and refined, as needed. Updated policy is brought to the ECCE Advisory Council

workgroup for discussion and additional feedback. Conversations with workgroup members shape the framing of recommendations brought to the full Council for a voting endorsement. If endorsed by a majority of voting members of the ECCE Advisory Council, the proposed policy is sent to BESE for final approval, typically within 1 month of Advisory Council endorsement.

Table H: Decision-Makers in Louisiana ECCE		
Decision Makers	State legislature	Passes legislation that grants BESE constitutional and statutory authority to make policy decisions that govern the public education system of the state
	BESE	Adopts regulations, exercises budgetary oversight, and enacts policies governing the operations of ECE programs under its jurisdiction
Advisors	ECCE Advisory Council	Advises BESE; consists of members from multiple state agencies and stakeholder groups (e.g., LDH, DCFS, Head Start, IDEA part C) (See Activity Three)
	ECCE Advisory Council Workgroup	Small number of Advisory Council members shape the framing of recommendations brought to the Council
	Stakeholders	Feedback and engagement used to shape policy
Policy Recommenders	LDOE	Based on data, feedback, and field engagement, drafts policy recommendations and oversees implementation

PDG B-5 Stakeholders

In order to assess, plan, and implement all activities under the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant, LDOE will continue to work with a variety of stakeholders. The ECCE Advisory Council, with all members noted in Table I, will continue to be involved in every policy decision; they currently review data, strategy, and policy and provide feedback multiple times a year and will continue to inform strategic planning. Additional stakeholders engaged include the RSN leadership across the state (Table J), the FCC workgroup (Table K), and Shared Services Advisors (Table L). Within LDOE itself, staff from all parts of the department advise and inform the state's ECE strategic planning, including Early Childhood Strategy, Early Childhood Operations, Academic Content, Talent, Accountability and Assessment, Strategy and Research, and more. While these

tables represents the stakeholders most engaged, more will be included as PDG B-5 activities

continue and LDOE enlists more voices around the state for input and feedback.

Table I: Early Childhood Care and Education Advisory Council Members	
P. Polito, Type III Early Learning Center *	J. Smith, Education's Next Horizon *
A. Young, Type III Early Learning Center *	S. Craig, Board of Regents
A. Byrd, Type II Early Learning Center *	L. Lambert, Director of CACFP (LDOE)
A. Iron Rope, Type I Early Learning Center	L. LeCour, Designee of DCFS
M. Joubert, Head Start Program (LEA)	T. Ledet, IDEA Part C Representative (LDH) *
J. Evans, Head Start Program (non-LEA) *	L. Lewis, Director of MIECHV (LDH)
C. Elliot, Nonpublic School	C. Bombet, Office of Sanitarian Services (LDH)
D. Frost, Nonpublic School *	C. Eskew, Louisiana State Police
K. Taylor-White, LA Workforce Commission *	L. Claiborne, Office of State Fire Marshal *
T. Odinga, Early Intervention Director (LEA)	R. Vicari, American Academy of Pediatrics
P. Triche Director of Early Childhood (LEA) *	R. Barrow, Senate Health and Welfare Chair
M. Blanco, Service Organization focusing on children with disabilities *	B. Mizell, Senate Education Chair
	F. Hoffman, House Health and Welfare Chair
L. Sonnier-Netto, Policy Institute for Children *	P. Smith, House Education Chair
A. Recasner, Agenda for Children *	T. Dennis, parent of publicly-funded child

Denotes members of the ECCE Advisory Council Workgroup

Table J: Ready Start Network Leadership	
L. Canova, Iberville Parish Schools	M. Joubert, Calcasieu Parish Schools
S. Stricklin, Jefferson Parish Schools	M. DuQue, Delta Community Action Agency
C. Duay and E. Thibodeaux, Lafayette Parish Schools	L. Griffin and S. Webb, East Baton Rouge Parish Schools
J. Roberts and A. Grainer, New Orleans Early Education Network	C. Cole and A. Metoyer, Natchitoches Parish Schools
C. Rushing, Rapides Parish Schools	A. Clancy, Children's Coalition of Northeast Louisiana
A. Franklin, St. Mary Community Action Agency	L. Hodges, Washington Parish Schools

Table K: Family Child Care Workgroup	
K. Powell, Volunteers of America Baton Rouge	L. Lambert, State CACFP Administrator
A. Clancy, Children's Coalition	T. Moore, Child Welfare Consultant (DCFS)
E. Gerard, Child Welfare Consultant (DCFS)	L. Sonnier-Netto, LA Policy Institute for Children
S. Guarisco, SSG Consulting Services LLC	A. Young, Type III Early Learning Center, CCAL Representative
L. Clark, Children's Coalition	
S. Stricklin, Jefferson Parish Schools	R. Manuel, LDOE CCAP Provider Certification
L. Davis, LDOE Licensing Program Manager	J. Emory, EC Comprehensive Systems (LDH)

Table L: Shared Services Advisors	
L. Stoney, Opportunities Exchange	A. Young, President of CCAL
C. Mosley, LA Office of Technology Support	D. Nora, Child Care Coalition
J. Walker, Office of State Procurement	M. Rouege, Child Care Coalition
C. Eidson, Office of State Procurement	K. Powell, Volunteers of America Baton Rouge
N. Alexander and K. Duncan, NSU	T. Cormier and F. Coleman, Children's First
A. Clancy, Children's Coalition	J. Roberts, Agenda for Children

XI. BONUS: INFANT/TODDLER EMPHASIS

As demonstrated throughout this proposal, Louisiana is prioritizing the expansion of access to quality infant and toddler care to address one of the state's greatest early childhood gaps in access to quality ECE. This priority was reflected in the LA B to 3 report, described in Activity Five above, and has informed LDOE's work with multiple partners to receive planning and technical assistance grants over the past year from the Pritzker Children's Initiative (PCI) and the National Governor's Association focused on partnerships with LDH and local RSNs to expand high-quality care and services for families with children, prenatal to age three. LDOE is working closely with the Louisiana Policy Institute for Children, the state's leading early childhood research and advocacy organization, to prepare a three-year $1 million PCI implementation grant to support policy and research to expand access to high-quality early care and education for infants and toddlers. As part of this, LDOE and its partners will leverage PCI funding to work to further increase infant and toddler CCAP reimbursement rates; expand Part C screenings for infants and toddlers, particularly in rural areas; increase access to research-based maternal-infant mental health programs; and expand the state's successful infant and early childhood mental health consultation.

As described above, during the 2019-2020 school year, for the first time, all infant classrooms will be observed using the Infant CLASS® tool as a part of a learning year. Feedback and scores from the learning year will be shared with all teachers of infants to support quality

improvement and help prepare them for the inclusion of Infant CLASS® scores in performance profiles in the 2020-2021 school year.

As described in Activity Five, LDOE intends to use more than half of the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant funds to pilot strategies that fully fund seat allocations across the state in RSNs seeking to expand access to quality for infants and toddlers in child care centers and FCC programs in child care deserts. A requirement for all PDG B-5 subgrant funding is that a center offer infant care as one of LDOE's strategies to incentivize infant care.

In addition to being a part of LDOE's subgrant strategy, as described in Activity Five, FCC is also a promising opportunity to increase access to high-quality ECE programs for economically disadvantaged infants and toddlers, particularly in rural communities. Incorporating FCC providers into the statewide ECE network, as addressed in Activity Two, will lead to an increase in access for infants and toddlers statewide.

XII. BONUS: COORDINATED ENROLLMENT

As described extensively in Activity Three, LDOE began requiring that community networks implement a network-wide coordinated enrollment process in 2015. Four years of statewide implementation has informed valuable lessons to the state to refine its support each year to ensure coordinated enrollment models within each community best meet the needs of families. Since 2015, Louisiana has conducted a community coordinated enrollment self-assessment and an annual family survey to learn more about family and community experiences of coordinated enrollment, and has collaborated with communities based on their successes and challenges to continually improve local enrollment approaches. Louisiana will continue to refine and improve its approach, and the new B-3 seats funded through this grant will be offered through locally-coordinated enrollment processes.

With this data in mind and through engagement with communities, Louisiana continues to refine and develop supports for its coordinated enrollment model. As described in Activity Six, Louisiana is developing EdLink, an integrated data system that will assign unique identifiers to children enrolled in publicly-funded ECE sites at the time of program entry. Once launched, this data system will further streamline the collection of application and enrollment data. Prior to the launch of EdLink, LDOE is revising the coordinated enrollment planning template to focus communities on two primary coordinated enrollment priorities: (1) Coordinated information campaigns must prioritize equity and must reach all families; and (2) Efficient enrollment processes that maximize the capacity of the network while also prioritizing family choice.

Finally, through projects funded by the PDG B-5 grant, specifically the RSN pilots and the Early Childhood Guides, Louisiana will continue to advance coordinated enrollment processes. By strengthening community coordination and becoming ECE hubs, RSNs will become a single point of entry for enrollment. By piloting Early Childhood Guides, described in Activity Three, Louisiana plans to better reach CCDF-eligible families and streamline their application and enrollment experience, especially for the B-3 seats offered through this grant.

XIII. BONUS: TRANSITIONS AND ALIGNMENT

Since 2015, LDOE has operated as a birth through twelfth grade agency, increasing opportunities to promote alignment between ECE programs with the K-12 grade system into which children matriculate. This enables all publicly-funded programs to work together to align the experiences of children on their pathway to kindergarten and third grade success. Louisiana has developed numerous resources to support smooth transitions, including transition supports for families, aligned standards, tiered curriculum resources, and a unified QRIS.

Louisiana will continue to build on this work through its RSN pilots that are funded through the PDG B-5 grant to ensure communities are supporting smooth transitions and building alignments between programs serving children across the birth-to-five pathway. As RSNs increase their partnerships and align their programs, they also build awareness among families about their available options. Each RSN blueprint addresses improvement to access and quality for children birth-to-five, which will result in more seamless ECE to elementary school transitions for children. A key part of this work at the community level is being able to leverage existing data about individual and collective child experiences, including trends, feeder patterns, and zip-code level needs of families and children. Through continued work on the state's data system as referenced in Activity Six, LDOE will increase the availability of such data insights that RSNs can incorporate into their work to support children and families.

XIV. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

LDOE is well organized to execute the strategic plan outlined in this grant proposal. Following the passage of Act 3, LDOE has increased its leadership role in the state to coordinate seats and services for economically disadvantaged children birth to five, both within its own structure as well as with other state organizations that play a key role in deploying resources and services for children and families. As the lead agency for CCDF, LDOE is responsible for funding access to seats and ensuring the health and safety of children in programs serving children birth to five.

This grant will be managed by the Office of Early Childhood within LDOE. The work of two employees in the Office of Early Childhood focuses full-time on PDG B-5 activities. The first is the full-time grant manager who coordinates across LDOE offices, including Early Childhood, Accountability and Data Systems, Talent, Grants Management, Finance, Research and Evaluation Team, and its contractors and partners, and also provides additional capacity on

RSN implementation. The second team member drives strategic planning for FCC and shared services activities. She is involved in strategy, data collection and reporting, and stakeholder engagement for this grant. Both of these positions will continue in this capacity for PDG B-5 Renewal Grant activities. LDOE seeks to add another position to the Early Childhood team to support Renewal Grant activities; this position would oversee the allocation and implementation of PDG B-3 seats across the state and the implementation of the Early Childhood Guide pilots.

LDOE serves as the key coordinator of most programs serving birth to five year olds as the lead agency for CCDF, the host of the Office of Head Start Collaboration, the granting authority for all state-funded pre-K programs, the administrator of USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the coordinator of IDEA Section 619 part B services. LDOE also oversees many of the policies and regulations guiding access to programs for birth to five year olds. The activities described in this grant are fully aligned with the state's ECE network, and build on the state's work to implement both the CCDF State Plan and the ESSA State Plan.

As the state's previous PDG grantee, the Lead Agency for CCDF, and the recipient of multiple other federal grants, LDOE has the organizational capacity to administer the funding and manage the development and sustainability of the required grant activities. LDOE's finance and grant management teams will support funding, allocations, contracts, and reporting required for the grant, as it does with all federal grants. Through its statewide ECE network structure, Louisiana's infrastructure already exists to ensure quality improvements are reaching the providers and communities prepared to implement the grant activities. Louisiana's Office of Early Childhood has worked closely with the lead agencies of these 65 networks, including the 13 RSNs, since 2013. A key component of Louisiana's statewide ECE network is to promote

sustainability of efforts through increased local governance and expertise. LDOE seeks to empower communities to become RSNs and support their own teachers and leaders to achieve quality, creating a sustainable movement towards achieving high-quality ECE for all children.

Through multiple state level coordination efforts, including the state's ECCE Advisory Council, the governor's Children's Cabinet, and the state's YCWC, LDOE partners closely with DCFS and LDH to align services for children birth-to-five with the programs that serve them in full-day care. Examples of successful collaboration include raising the CCDF reimbursement rate for children with identified disabilities to support centers to offer high-quality care and education for children with special needs. Additionally, the regional IDEA part C coordinators participate in their community network meetings with publicly-funded ECE providers.

Efforts to improve coordination between the agencies serving young children are underway in Louisiana. The state continues to explore data around the processes and accuracy of early identification at the community level in order to support local communities as they transition children into kindergarten and beyond. As part of the work referenced in Activity Four to create KTMs, Louisiana will partner with LDH and DCFS, who supports foster children and families, to develop research-based trauma-informed care training modules that local communities and CC&R trainings can offer to programs serving young children. Through the work of the state's YCWC, state level organizations are mapping the resources available to young children and families from the various agencies as a first step to better coordinate the delivery of services and resources. As this work continues, Louisiana plans to leverage its community networks to increase family and provider awareness of resources.

XV. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Louisiana is committed to sustaining the work funded by PDG B-5 Renewal beyond the timeframe of the grant. LDOE has structured this grant to increase efficiencies in its mixed delivery system through ECE Guides and shared services, to build local infrastructure and investment to sustain initial investments through RSNs and FCC, and through all activities, to improve coordination of delivery services to promote maximization of public funding.

First, RSNs (as described in Activity Two) are required to develop blueprints for how they plan to address their access gaps in 3-5 years, and develop a plan to raise and leverage funding to meet their goals. For RSNs awarded seats through the PDG B-5 grant, sustaining these seats will be included in their fundraising strategy. Additionally, as LEAs are completing their comprehensive request for competitive and formula funds, known as Super App, LDOE is requiring district leadership to report what strategies they are using to expand access to their community's birth through three-year-old population. Finally, through this grant, LDOE is proposing to fund work intended to create efficiencies and increase coordination, leading to sustainability of services. This includes piloting ECE Guides, described in Activity Three, continuing its FCC pilot to increase affordable quality opportunities for families, and increasing shared services infrastructure throughout the state. By creating efficiencies, LDOE will be able to maximize its use of existing federal and state funding to serve more children.

Additionally, Louisiana is building partnerships and coalescing around the state's goals for ECE, promoting sustainability of all ECE efforts. As referenced in Activity Two, the ECCE Commission released LA B-3, which issued a bold call to action to expand funding for ECE in Louisiana. This report has been cited in the media, endorsed by BESE, and referenced by legislators and the governor as a priority to fund. During the 2019 Louisiana Legislative Session, the Legislature demonstrated its ongoing commitment to ECE in two notable ways. First, as a

result of the Commission report and stakeholder advocacy, the Louisiana legislature increased the state investment in ECE by $20M, the first new state investment of its kind in a decade. Second, the Louisiana Legislature improved the Louisiana Early Childhood Education Fund, which will be funded by taxes levied by Harrah's Casino in New Orleans. BESE will be tasked with establishing regulations to distribute this funding for infant and toddler seats to communities providing a match at a rate of no less than one-to-one. These funds will leverage local and state investments to support sustainability of grant-funded seats.

The PDG B-5 Renewal Grant builds on the work of both previous grants and the state's ECE initiatives. This renewal grant will fund the continuation and expansion of multiple initiatives of the initial grant, including RSNs and FCC, as aligned with Louisiana's strategic approach referenced in Louisiana's approach. Lessons learned with initial cohorts of RSNs and FCC will inform the continued piloting and scaling of these strategies. This work builds on the partnerships developed between lead agencies and child care centers with four-year-old seats in the legacy PDG grant, by expanding this opportunity to birth-through-three seats. By funding RSNs with the initial grant, Louisiana is well positioned to maximize its first investment through this renewal grant through its B-3 seat strategy and ECE Guides pilot.

Table M: Sustainability by Project Goals	
Project Goals	**Sustainability Plan**
Establish formalized local infrastructure via Ready Start Networks	Supporting local communities to build infrastructure, coalitions, and fundraising strategies ensures that the systems shaped by the grant can drive sustainable improvements to the mixed delivery birth-to-five system beyond the time horizon of the grant.
Seat Funding: Establish statewide strategies for Ready Start Networks to leverage additional state, local, philanthropic, and business funding	By piloting multiple funding strategies, LDOE will be able to provide communities an opportunity to test different allocation options, which they can adopt and

to sustain and increase access for birth-to-three children in need	sustain in alignment with their needs and community plan beyond the time horizon of the grant.
Maximize parent and family knowledge, choice, and engagement through community-based coordinated intake and enrollment	By piloting Early Childhood Guides, LDOE will create efficiencies that are intended to maximize its use of existing federal and state funding. If successful, LDOE will sustain Early Childhood Guides with CCDF funds in the future.
Incorporate registered family child care into the statewide ECE network	Louisiana plans to continue to scale its FCC pilot and develop a long-term strategy for incorporating FCC providers into the statewide ECE system.
Improve State Systems that Inform statewide ECE network	The data system and validation study will provide information to drive long-term strategy and improvement. The investment to build shared services infrastructure will reduce costs and increase efficiencies across the mixed delivery birth to five system.

XVI. DISSEMINATION PLAN

LDOE has developed a Dissemination Plan to inform public stakeholders regarding the goals and progress of the PDG B-5 application. LDOE has robust, long standing, statutorily-created engagement structures. The state will use these active structures to engage several audiences and stakeholders who already support and drive the direction of Louisiana's ECE approach. Target audiences for sharing information about the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant are the ECCE Advisory Council and Commission, the Governor's Office, LDH, DCFS, community networks (including leaders of publicly-funded sites), RSNs leadership, and families.

The following recurring structures detailed in Table N will be used to support collaboration and updates on activities related to PDG-B-5.

Table N: Dissemination Activities	
Dissemination Activities	**Description**
ECCE Advisory Council	The ECCE Advisory Council, established by law in 2012, meets 4-6 times a year. The Council will receive regular updates and advise on strategy and implementation of this grant.

ECCE Commission	The ECCE Commission will be informed through regular meetings on any goals, outputs, or other products related to Louisiana's plan for supporting increased access to high-quality seats.
Quarterly Supervisor Collaboratives	LDOE provides training and support to all ECE lead agencies through the Supervisor Collaboratives. LDOE will facilitate engagement and feedback with the leaders of the Early Childhood Community Networks on progress, reports, and data from the grant.
Annual Teacher Leader Summit	LDOE hosts the annual Teacher Leader Summit, a multi-day conference for approximately 6,000 educators and leaders Birth-12th grade. Over 600 ECE teachers attend from all program types. At the 2020 Teacher Leader Summit, LDOE will share implementation learnings and solicit feedback on PDG B-5 Renewal Grant.
Early Childhood Connection Newsletter	Bi-weekly, LDOE sends out a newsletter to over 11,000 teachers, program leaders, and stakeholders in the ECE field. This newsletter will disseminate PDG updates.
Presentations at statewide conferences and meetings	Routinely LDOE is invited to provide updates to ECE associations and professional organizations around the state on the goals and priorities for projects such as PDG B-5. These opportunities provide in-person access to mixed audiences of teachers, program leaders, and stakeholders across various regions of the state. These opportunities will be used to share goals and collect feedback.

The effectiveness of dissemination for event-based opportunities will be measured by attendance, participation, and level of feedback provided. LDOE will use this information to determine the effectiveness of the dissemination plan, and revisit as needed.