<div align="center">

Project Summary

</div>

Title: Illinois Preschool Development Birth Through Five Planning Grant
Applicant Name: Illinois State Board of Education Agency (ISBE)
Address: 100 North First Street, Springfield, Illinois 62777
Contact Jason Helfer **Phone:** 217-782-4123   **Email Address: jhelfer@isbe.net**
Website Address: https://www.isbe.net/

Illinois State Board of Education Agency (ISBE) is applying for $4,000,000 to implement the Preschool Development Birth through Five Planning Grant (PDG B-5). The project builds on initiatives and infrastructure developments that have resulted from the previous PDG B-5 grant cycles and incorporates innovations and projects that will achieve our outcome to strengthen Illinois' integrated early childhood system to prepare low-income and disadvantaged children to enter kindergarten.

The planned activities will be driven by the Illinois Birth-to-Five Needs Assessment which will be updated and enhanced through engagement of the project team and mixed delivery system early child care and education (ECCE) stakeholders, including providers of early child care and education, Head Start, community-based programs, families, state, local and regional advisory councils and intermediaries, and early childhood professionals, in addition to early intervention programs serving children with disabilities and delays and representatives of children and families that are vulnerable, disadvantaged and at-risk of poor health and child development outcomes. In addition to the needs assessment update, the needs assessment activities will include projects that focus on exploring the challenges, gaps, and needs for specific cohorts of the workforce, such as home visitors. It will also include data projects that will promote an integrated birth-to-five system and strengthen the data assets available for ongoing needs assessment and strategic planning over the long-term.

The strategic planning approach employed through the project will allow Illinois to respond to critical needs identified through the needs assessment update, including challenges and trends emerging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and new workforce challenges. The update to the strategic plan will lead to strategies that expand access to ECCE programs, increased parent and family engagement, and quality improvements in the services and ECE settings utilized by underserved targeted children and families.

Parent and family engagement is a core aspect of the project and integrated into all five required Activities. Illinois plans to utilize funding to strengthen the infrastructure for integrating parent and family voice into policy decisions and planning by ensuring opportunities are provided equitably and in culturally responsive says. PDG B-5 Planning Grant funds will be utilized to staff the Early Learning Council Advisory Committee and to build the capacity of local and regional engagement structures. To support the workforce the project will continue to refine the implementation of the Prior Learning Assessment System to support increases in the qualifications of ECCE professionals and will develop and implement models for sharing best practices to prevent the suspension and expulsion of children in early childhood settings. To improve the quality of ECCE programs, Illinois will pilot strategies for inclusive community-based special education and conduct research to identify the best models for increasing access to early invention programs. Dual language learners, another targeted population, will also benefit from developing a common process to identify English language learners to be implemented in community-based early care and education settings.

Contents

Expected Outcomes

Illinois will utilize the Preschool Development Birth Through Five (PDG B-5) funding opportunity to strengthen the state's integrated early childhood system and to respond to longstanding and emerging needs occurring as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Illinois is a national leader in early childhood education and systems building for children and families. The state has implemented three cycles of PDG B-5 grants which have accelerated systems development and improved equitable access to high quality early care and education programs for children. The strategies and approaches have increased parent and family engagement in decision making and built the capacity of the state to maximize and leverage funding to increase the supply of high-quality services. The PDG B-5 Planning Grant will advance these efforts.

Illinois has concurrently prioritized workforce development and has invested significantly and leveraged Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF) to increase equity in

access to services for children and to address professional inequities in access to workforce supports. The conditions of the workforce cannot be separated from goals to increase access, improve equity, and support high quality ECCE programs. For example, a key initiative funded by our current PDG B-5 grant to support quality early learning programs and settings was to launch an ExceleRate pilot program, where grants were issued to 35 community-based child care providers in rural part of our state. Funds were directed to hire additional staff to reduce the child to staff ratio, to allow existing staff for planning time, to improve recruitment opportunities, and for wage supports to reduce turnover and increase compensation. The CCDF lead agency – the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) – is currently assessing the degree to which the ExceleRate Pilot program can scale and inform innovative financing strategies given the deepened workforce crisis resulting from the COVID19 pandemic.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Gateways ECE professional development registry has also been used as a "backbone" and mechanism by which the state provided restoration and stabilization grants to the child care workforce. Ahead of any other state in the nation, the Child Care Restoration Grant (CCRG) initiated large grants to providers in June 2021 in a comprehensive effort to help the child care industry survive in the earliest stages of the pandemic. As the state began to fully reopen in the 2022, the state transitioned from a strategy of "restoration" to long-term stabilization and we initiated the Strengthen and Grow Child Care (SGCC) grants as a targeted strategy to address the increasing workforce crisis across the ECCE field. Specifically, SGCC grants required at least 50% of funds to be invested in increased wages, benefits, professional development and staff enhancements.

In addition to relief strategies, the state has simultaneously continued to significantly increase child care reimbursement rates, with a particular focus on rural child care providers.

The state's Preschool for All (PFA) program has also addressed compensation for teachers in community-based programs by giving a higher Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) to those programs (compared to school-based PFA programs). Illinois' multiple strategies to impact compensation have been effective: Bureau of Labor Statistics data show that child care worker wages rose 13% from 2019 to 2021. The PDG B-5 Planning Grant will compliment this strategy by adding quality enhancements that support child care staff that have been recruited and retained using these funds and by expanding access to supports for child care programs serving children with disabilities or delays and children demonstrating challenging behaviors.

Parent and family engagement is also embedded into the ECCE system and has recently expanded through Illinois establishment of 39 Birth to Five Action Councils and accompanying Family Action Councils that represent all parts of the state. These structures are designed to provide a pathway to further engage families and communities in planning, alignment, integration, and systems building efforts. The activities within the PDG B-5 Planning Grant will build upon and extend these, and other system assets and initiatives to help Illinois achieve our vision for children aged B-5 that "*Every young child develops to their maximum potential and thrives with the support of their families and communities*." Activities 1 and 2 will strengthen meaningful engagement by clarifying gaps and identifying strategies that can deepen engagement, while Activity 3 strategies will operationalize and build capacity to sustain these improvements over the long-term.

Approach

Illinois PDG B-5 project approach follows a pathway of change that recognizes the interconnected nature of the ECCE system and its dependence on a web of services and programs in the context of complex local, regional, and state environments. The framework for

organizing the ECCE system so it can achieve broad impacts for children, families, and the ECCE workforce includes planning strategies and activities that address each of the following elements: ***Context:*** Implementing initiatives that successfully build a political context (see grant activities 1.1, 1.2., 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 3.2) leading to system ***Components*** and resources that establish effective programs and services (see grant activities 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3). ***Connections*** further integrate the system and connect people and programs in meaningful ways, including parents, families, providers, and other stakeholders (see Table 9 page 58) and grant activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 3.2). ***Infrastructure*** projects create supports that facilitate continuous improvement (activities 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1), enabling is to ***Scale*** the most effective programs and achieve broad impacts for children, families, the workforce and stakeholders across the mixed delivery system (see grant activities 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3).

Activity One. Update Comprehensive Statewide B-5 Needs Assessment

The PDG B-5 Planning Grant will provide Illinois the resources to convene partners across the mixed delivery system to support the assessment and analysis of needs that have emerged for specific aspects of the early childhood care and education (ECCE) workforce and for targeted populations. The assessment will also provide data describing how child, family, and workforce needs have changed and been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The needs assessment update process will utilize Illinois' data assets to create a substantially updated living document that builds upon the statewide needs assessments produced in 2020 and 2022. It will also incorporate the findings of recently produced reports, not yet reflected in the current needs assessment. Table 1 show the requirements and updates we will complete.

Table 1. Needs Assessment Requirements and Updates	
PDG B-5 Needs Assessment Elements	**How Needs Will be Assessed/Updated**

Table 1. Needs Assessment Requirements and Updates	
The availability and quality of existing programs in the state, including programs serving the most vulnerable or underserved populations and children in rural areas	Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map (IECAM) will complete its annual update of supply and demand that will be incorporated into the B-5 needs assessment update. Changes in gaps in services related to 1) increased state Early Childhood Block Grant funding; 2) pandemic-related program closures; and 3) the implementation of the ExceleRate pilot will be incorporated as new data.
Available and equitable access to ECCE for infants, toddlers, and children in underserved communities, high-poverty communities, and rural areas	IECAM, Geographic Equity Asset Mapping (GEAM), and the Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) data will be examined, and any changes will be included in the B-5 needs assessment update. Initial gaps related to children with disabilities and delays, English language learners, and children at-risk of suspension and expulsion will be re-assessed to determine needs and trends.
Barriers to the funding and provision of high-quality ECCE services using a mixed-delivery system; alignment and coordination of health and early learning systems; and data sharing capacities and barriers	Barriers previously identified in the B-5 needs assessment update such as: misaligned eligibility requirements, lack of adequate information about ECCE opportunities and programs, geographic, race, income and ability equity factors that limit services, barriers to enrollment, and system navigation issues will be revisited and modified to reflect the post-COVID-19 environment, the pandemic impacts, emerging needs, and the impacts of new investments from the state in the ECCE system. Information gathered through the 39 new Birth to Five Illinois Action Councils about barriers to participation will be included.
Available, existing, and emerging needs associated with the sustainability of ECCE programs and COVID-19 impacts	Not adequately explored in 2020 B-5 needs assessment Data will be collected, assessed, and incorporated into the needs assessment update which will include a review of child care supports provided using CARES, CRRSA and ARP federal relief, and other resources
Number of children being served in existing programs, waiting list for services for children B-5, current program capacity	IECAM, ILDS data will be examined and any changes and emerging trends will be updated and included in the B-5 needs assessment update
Opportunities to engage families to maximize parent choice and engagement in the ECCE system	Map intermediary and early childhood structures and supports for parent engagement across the ECCE continuum for children 0-5 and assess infrastructure for local parent and community engagement in state policy and decision making.
Workforce needs related to the impacts of the COVID-19	Utilize and cross tabulate data from the Early Childhood Educator Workforce Dataset, High School 2 College 2

Table 1. Needs Assessment Requirements and Updates	
pandemic and a workforce snapshot that includes: level of degree/credential attainment, average number of years of experience, average salary for teachers and paraprofessionals by settings, and the age of children served (and as compared to other professions such as elementary school teachers), and demographic makeup of the workforce	Career Dataset and Educator Workforce Dataset within ILDS to create a snapshot of the ECCE workforce. The data set will provide information on the workforce capacity, health, financial status and wellbeing
Inclusive, community-based early intervention (EI)	This indicator was not assessed adequately in the prior needs assessment and will be included in the needs assessment update to identify the existing EI and identification services utilized by families and to review models used by states for community-based special education

Data Infrastructure that Will be Utilized to Update the Needs Assessment: Illinois has utilized PDG B-5 grant funds and leveraged state, federal, and private philanthropy to build a robust data infrastructure that provides real-time and annually updated data used to improve outcomes for children and families in Illinois. Created in 2006, and supported by the University of Illinois, the IECAM website brings together critical supply and demand data for ECCE services and allows users to access a wide range of reports and custom data tables, such as the number of Preschool for All and Head Start "slots" in a county, municipality, school district boundary or legislative district. The Illinois Early Childhood Dashboard, created through PDG B-5 grant funding, is housed on the IECAM website and tracks identified systems outcomes through indicators and metrics designed to be representative of the ECCE system. Metrics include data focused on economic security, health, high-quality B-5 ECCE, coordinated community systems, and the Kindergarten Individual Development Survey.

The Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) collects program participation data across eight state agencies and uses direct and predictive matching techniques to generate unique identifiers that can be used in inter-agency analytics and to develop an unduplicated count of ECCE participation. The Early Childhood Participation Dataset of the ILDS, built through previous PDG B-5 grants, connects data for children ages birth to kindergarten entry participating in the following programs: Child Care, IDEA Part B, Section 619, IDEA Part C (Early Intervention), Home Visiting (MIECHV, Parents Too Soon, and Healthy Families Illinois), State pre-k (Early Childhood Block Grant-Preschool for All for children B-5), 80% of Early/Head Start programs statewide, and Public Primary Education K-12. The larger ILDS also incorporates data from the state's higher education system and employment security system.

The pioneering Geographic Equity and Adequacy Map (GEAM) allows for the assessment of equity of early childhood resource allocation in Illinois. The GEAM provides regional analysis of ECCE funding across 750+ unit and elementary school district geographies, compares funding equity across demographic attributes of families and children, and compares current funding to what would be an "adequate level" of funding. GEAM helps identify the communities most in need of additional ECCE funding.

The Gateways Registry, administered by the Illinois Network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA), collects data on ECCE practitioners' qualifications, professional development participation, and current employment. There are currently over 106,000 active members in the Registry. Two separate databases at ISBE—the Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS) and Employment Information System (EIS)—contain credential and employment data for staff working in public schools. These three workforce data systems are not linked, but planning for the linkage of an Early Childhood Educator Dataset has been completed. Finally,

Illinois has worked to make ECCE data more useful to local communities through the development of a local cloud-based system that can be used by state, city, and Head Start grantees to create dashboards that help stakeholders understand community ECCE needs.

Process for Updating the B-5 Needs Assessment: ISBE will work in partnership with state agencies administering services for children B-5 to update the needs assessment. The process will leverage the content expertise of organizations already working in targeted areas of interest, building upon the current needs assessment system and PDG B-5 activities. The needs assessment will be coordinated by the Project Director who will manage partnerships, communication, and the integration of needs assessment findings to inform the strategic plan. The needs assessment tasks will occur concurrently across agencies and will be comprised of a data update and ongoing projects. The substantial needs assessment update will be completed by March 30, 2023 while two additional needs assessment that target home visiting and workforce challenges and data linkage projects will be conducted throughout the entirety of calendar year 2023. These projects will interactively inform the other program activity areas outlined in this grant, especially the strategic plan.

Needs Assessment Timelines and Milestones

Table 2. Process for Completing the New Comprehensive B-5 Needs Assessment Update	
Needs Assessment (NA) Process Element	**Milestones**
Timeframe: January 2023	
Establish contracts with needs assessment (NA) partners	NA activities begin
NA contractors initiate workforce and home visiting and workforce NA projects and data projects begin	Engagement of ECCE partners using multiple strategies (e.g., surveys, focus groups), data collected, workgroups meet
Timeframe: February 2023	
Project Director conducts analysis of data using state resources; creates a summary of	NA update builds on prior data and updated information shows trends, changes in gaps/needs, and COVID-19 impacts

Table 2. Process for Completing the New Comprehensive B-5 Needs Assessment Update	
Needs Assessment (NA) Process Element	**Milestones**
recent reports in relation to NA elements and shares data with Early Learning Council (ELC)	
Project Director summarizes data, meets with partners and ELC workgroups	Data is interpreted and analyzed and incorporates the perspectives of mixed delivery system partners
Timeframe: March 2023	
Data is reviewed by workgroups, needs and gaps are identified, and NA is updated by Project Director	Recommendations are updated where needed
Timeframe: April 2023-December 2023	
Partners continue NA projects and provide summaries and finalized reports to the PDG B-5 Project Director	Information from all assessments is incorporated into the NA update
PDG B-5 2023 NA Update is disseminated broadly	NA update is used for strategic planning and decision-making

Collecting and Utilizing Data on Workforce Needs: The supplemental needs assessment

processes will begin in January 2023. As information is produced, the team will integrate the

findings into the strategic plan which will be developed concurrently. The needs assessments will

be supported by enhancements to the state data system that allow for cross-tabulated data.

Activity 1.1 Home Visitor Needs Assessment; Project Lead: Illinois Network of Child Care

Resource and Referral Agencies (INCCRRA): INCCRRA is a statewide organization created to

partner with the state's 16 Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies to provide

services that support access to high quality, affordable ECCE and school-age options for children

and families. INCCRRA is the primary clearinghouse for ECCE workforce professional

development strategies and data through the Gateways to Opportunity professional development

registry (Gateways registry). The home visiting needs assessment will build upon the previous

PDG B-5 projects led by INCCRRA to establish a Home Visiting Credentials Crosswalk Report

and include home visitors in the Gateways registry.

Given the incredible stress our home visitors have experienced during the pandemic, we recognize the need to focus in on this critical aspect of our ECCE infrastructure and to develop the understanding, at a minimum, of home visitor compensation practices including: salary incentives and increases, how the COVID-19 pandemic impacted financial stability, health, and capacity of home visiting professionals, degree/credential attainment rates, linguistic diversity, home visitor retention and experience, gaps in pathways for credentialing, the possibility of including home visitors in our ECCE state scholarship program, and supports for home visitors within institutions of higher education. Illinois is in the process of implementing a universal newborn screening system (UNSS). It is important to address the workforce needs as the system is expanding. We also want a picture of the use of home visiting, including equitable access.

Activity 1.2 Linking ECCE Workforce Data; Project Lead: *Northern Illinois University (ILDS) and University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign (IECAM)*: Developing comprehensive, accurate, up-to-date reports on the composition of the ECCE workforce and compensation across the field is a top priority for the state. This includes better understanding of the employment outcomes of those who show interest in ECCE in high school; those who study ECE in two- and four-year colleges; and those who receive a Professional Educator License in ECE or who are registered in the Gateways registry as having demonstrated competencies in ECE. For each of these populations the goal is to assess if they actually entered the profession, whether they stayed in the profession, and how they fared in employment outcomes relative to similarly educated individuals not in ECE. This data should also allow for a better understanding of those individuals who are in the profession but have not come through the typical pipeline.

In order to develop an annually-updatable dataset for these types of workforce assessments and studies, the state and its partners will: 1) link data between ISBE's Educator

Information System (EIS) and Educator License Information System (ELIS); 2) create an automated update between the Gateways registry data and IDHS; 3) link data between the Registry data at IDHS and the ISBE workforce data; and 4) link all of these data to the High School 2 College 2 Career Dataset (HS2C2) and IDES employment and wage data. The ILDS and IECAM teams will then work in partnership with state agencies to create a set of easy-to-update reports, dashboard indicators, and interactive reporting tools using the new EC Educator dataset.

Activity 1.3 Workforce Portrait Assessment; Project Lead: *University of Illinois, Chicago*: PDG B-5 grants have enabled Illinois to increase our investments in data infrastructure that brings together ECCE workforce data. A major effort underway is the establishment of an Early Childhood Educator Workforce Dataset (ECE workforce dataset). The ECE workforce dataset is being built in conjunction with a HS2C2C and an Educator Workforce Dataset. The linkages between the data systems will allow for analysis of early childhood educators against the workforce as a whole and against other educators. For example, Illinois can examine wage comparisons between the three different sets, using the ILDS wage and employment outcomes from the Department of Employment Security.

To complete activity 1.3, the University of Illinois, Chicago will use the newly linked workforce datasets and cross-system databases to analyze existing data on the needs of the ECCE workforce and to explore additional dimensions of needs and gaps. This project will mine newly available data in comprehensive and innovative ways to 1) provide an accurate portrait of the Illinois early childhood care and education workforce (teachers, leaders, and childcare providers), 2) make recommendations regarding what the state must do to recruit, support, and advance teachers, leaders, and caregivers for all of our young children and their families, and 3)

exemplify the ways in which collaborative partnerships can improve the quality and use of administrative data about the early childhood workforce.

Activity 1.4 Expanded Use of ECPDS and CECIDS by Local Communities; Project Lead:

NIU-ILDS and UIUC-IECAM: One of the goals of the Early Childhood Participation Dataset is to support decision making at the local level. IECAM and the ILDS have partnered to develop a set of tools that can support communities as they plan early childhood services. In addition, PDG B-5 funding was used to support an interactive set of dashboards in Chicago that use state, city, and individual-provider-level data (with strict privacy controls on all data).

The Chicago Early Childhood Integrated Data System (CECIDS) uses state-of-the-art statistical modeling drawing upon both actual program participation data and Census and other public sources of data to give a more refined and accurate estimate of the number of children needing and receiving services in a geographic area. CECIDS was funded with the goal of creating a tool that could be replicated for use in communities across the state. Illinois recently launched Birth to Five Illinois, a system of 39 regional "Birth to Five Action Councils" focused on assessing and meeting the needs of young children and families in all communities across the state. The CECIDS technology is well-suited to supporting the Action Councils and their local community collaborations as they identify needs and deploy resources to build local systems.

Scaling up this local data system ("Local ECIDS") requires a data governance model that continues to support ongoing discussions around data stewardship and creates safeguards for the appropriate use of the data. Funding from this PDG Planning Grant will support the development of a Data Governance Model to support regional and local needs assessment data integration.

On the technical side, Activity 4.1 will include: 1) development of the architecture for sharing data between ILDS, CECIDS, and IECAM to ensure that data from the state is shared

safely and securely; 2) addition of funding data to the ILDS and IECAM to support local-level GEAM; and 3) alignment between CECIDS and IECAM to establish a single interface for local communities to access and retrieve ECCE data.

The new Local ECIDS will be piloted in three communities during 2023. Data Governance will be established in these communities, and training of local data governors will be completed. The required Data Access and Use Authorization agreements will be drafted and executed, and local data will be linked into the Local ECIDS system, with a goal of "going live" by the end of 2023. In collaboration with the PDG B-5 evaluation partner, the implementation of the Local ECIDS will be documented for lessons learned that will inform further iterations of the tools and approaches to collaboration that comprise the new data system.

Collaborative Process to Engage State Systems Partners: ISBE will engage system partners in Activity 1 strategies by involving the state Early Learning Council (ELC) and the Family Advisory Committee of the Early Learning Council (FAC-ELC). The Illinois' State Advisory Council, the ELC is a public-private partnership, co-led by the Deputy Governor for Education and a private sector co-chair, that was created under Public Act 93-380 to coordinate existing programs and services for children from B-5. The ELC meets three times annually and is the leading advisory body for Illinois' early childhood system. Its membership is detailed in Table 3. The ELC's Executive Committee guides the work of its other committees--Community Equity & Access, Workforce & Quality, Integration and Alignment, Research and Evaluation, and Health & Home Visiting, and Family Advisory Committee—which meet bi-monthly.

The structure for engaging the diverse perspectives of families in planning and conducting the needs assessment process is already integrated into Illinois' iterative and ongoing needs assessment activities through the ELC-FAC which is comprised of parents of young

children, including families who have been traditionally marginalized. The agency department representatives also meet as an Inter-Agency Team at least monthly and will be engaged in the review and discussion of the needs assessment data through presentations from the Project Director and needs assessment partners. The table that follows details the state system partners that sit on the ELC and the programs they represent.

Table 3. State ELC Agency Members and Programs	
State Partner/ELC Member	**Composition/Programs**
Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS)	Day Care Licensing, Early Childhood Project, Extended Family Support Program Family Advocacy Centers, Intact Services, Teen Parenting Service Network, Illinois Community College Board, Illinois Board of Higher Education, and the Illinois Student Assistance Commission administering the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE), ECACE scholarship program
Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)	Better Birth Outcomes, Caregiver Connections (Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation), Child Care Assistance, Early Intervention, IDEA Part C (Early Intervention), Family Case Management, Family Community Resource Centers, Healthy Families Illinois & Parents Too Soon (HV), High Risk Infant Follow-Up, Maternal, MIECHV, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, Head Start State Collaboration Office, Parents Care & Share, Perinatal Depression, Pregnant Teens Doula, Prevent Child Abuse Responsible Parenting, SNAP, TANF, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)	Prevention Initiative (0-3 services), Part B Early Childhood Special Education, Preschool for All, Child Care and Adult Food Program
Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS)	All Kids, Family Care, Moms and Babies, Health Choice Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program
Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)	Administrative Perinatal Centers Program, CDPH Mini-Block Grant, Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs, Family Planning, Genetics/ Newborn Metabolic Screening, Illinois Immunization Program, Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative, Newborn Hearing Screening

Table 3. State ELC Agency Members and Programs	
Other Mixed Delivery System Stakeholders	Families, Early Childhood Educators, Child Care Providers, Public Schools, Community-based Organizations, Foundations, Organizations, Research Institutions, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Tribal Programs, Latino Policy Forum, Head Start, SEIU, Faith Based Programs, Businesses (Please see the Stakeholder Engagement Chart on page 58)

Meaningful engagement will occur as the ELC members are involved in a review and discussion of data and needs assessment findings. The needs assessment partners will also be required to include survey data from mixed delivery system providers, to facilitate workforce surveys, and to conduct family surveys as part of their needs assessment process. They will also facilitate additional interviews and focus groups with hard-to-reach or underserved populations such as faith-based programs, tribal leaders, and agencies and professionals serving infants, toddlers, and children in underserved communities, high-poverty communities, rural areas, English language learners, and children with disabilities and delays.

Activity Two. Update the Comprehensive Statewide B-5 Strategic Plan

In October 2022 Illinois completed a statewide B-5 Strategic Plan that serves as the short and long-term vision for the strengthening of the ECCE system going into and lasting beyond the grant period. The strategic plan is updated to reflect corresponding needs assessment updates as part of the ELC's annual planning cycle. Activity Two is collaborative in scope and other funding sources such as the ECCS grant, MIECHV and state funding for early childhood systems are utilized to support the planning process and the implementation of strategic plan activities. Input and consultation from key stakeholders to ensure the plans' focus on equity and priority populations occurred throughout the process. Key stakeholders included the Latino Policy Forum

for input on dual language learners on dual language learners and input from the State's Chief

Equity Officer to align with state agency Diversity, Equity Inclusion, and Racial Justice goals.

Key priorities specified in the SP are tied to objectives and strategies that strengthen the

ECCE system that expand access and increase the participation of children in mixed delivery

ECCE programs. These priorities include strategies that address: the integration of data systems

so that resources can be equitably distributed and gaps in access can be addressed, transportation

and family access, communication about the importance of high-quality ECE, and efforts to

reduce the financial burden of ECCE costs for families. Because the SP is convened across B-5

agencies and utilizes multiple funding for the implementation of strategies the objectives will

lead to leveraged resources that expand children's participation in higher-quality ECCE

programs and services throughout the mixed delivery system. As data from the needs

assessment is generated, the ELC and ELC-FAC will review and update SP components. PDG

B-5 grant activities and the SP are aligned as follows:

Table 4. Alignment of Strategic Plan (SP) with PDG B-5 Requirements
Requirement: SP strategies address opportunities for collaboration
Within the **Access and Quality SP Goal Areas**, *Objective 6 -* Unified, strategic system of training, technical assistance, consultation, and coaching--provides strategies and infrastructure for aligning professional development supports, standards and pathways and *Objective 2 -* Implement cross-system coordination of ECCE programs—defines 3 strategies to support collaboration through data integration and capacity building in local communities. **These strategies are a focus in PDG B-5 Planning Grant Activities 1, 3, 4 and 5.**
Requirement: SP strategies comprehensively address early childhood workforce needs
Within the **Quality SP Goal Area**, *Objective 2 -*Workforce Pathways, three strategies to expand and improve pathways for entry and progression in the ECCE profession, to expand collaborations between higher education institutions and ECCE programs, and to continue building on the Prior Learning Assessment instruments are defined. **This strategy is a focus in PDG B-5 Planning Grant Activity 4.**
Requirement: SP plans to expand equitable access to ECCE programs and services for eligible children and to improve equity across ECCE B-5 systems
Within **Access SP Goal Area**, *Objective 2* - Implement cross-system coordination of ECCE programs, defines a strategy to expand coordinated ECCE application and enrollment

Table 4. Alignment of Strategic Plan (SP) with PDG B-5 Requirements
processes and a strategy to build out community systems to prioritize the voice of families in addressing ECE needs. These strategies will be supported by PDG Planning Grant Activity 3. SP *Objective 3* - Expand equitable service pathways, defines two strategies focused on access for children and families, 1 strategy focused on cultural/linguistic alignment of the ECCE workforce to improve access, and 4 strategies for infrastructure developments that support increased access to equitable programs and services, including professional development supports for the workforce that promote equity. In the **Quality SP Goal Area**, *Objective 4* – New funding system, has 4 strategies to address equity through funding models and *Objective 5* – Updated Program Quality Standards includes 2 strategies to adjust standards and requirements to reflect equity and cultural and linguistic responsiveness. **These strategies will be extended by PDG B-5 Planning Grant Activity 5**.
Requirement: SP identifies activities to improve transitions across ECE programs, including from infant-toddler to preschool to elementary school programs
Within **Quality SP Goal Area**, *Objective 1* - defines 3 strategies to support family voice, community-level planning and systems building, and to improve data literacy and integration that will support transitions Within the **Resources SP Goal Area**, *Objective 1* - defines 3 strategies to identify and mitigate resource and systems gaps that impact early transitions. **These strategies will be extended by PDG B-5 Planning Grant Activity 5**.

Process for Updating the Strategic Plan: The strategic plan was recently updated in October 2022 and will be released to the public in November 2022. Activity 2 will be facilitated by the Project Director in conjunction with the Governor's Office and Inter-Agency Team. The processes, milestones, and timeline for completion of the update will center on reviewing and revising current objectives to reflect data and recommendations from the needs assessment data update. The annual needs assessment update will incorporate the HV Needs Assessment and the Workforce Portrait Assessments as well as new data trends emerging over the year as data becomes available.

Upon funding of the project in January 2023, the Project Director will facilitate an initial review of the strategic plan with the ELC and ELC-FAC to identify any of the objectives that must be adjusted to reflect needs assessment focus areas or new/updated data. The milestone of developing an inventory of proposed updates will be completed by the Project Director in February 2023. During February, the Project Director will attend meetings of the ELC and ELC-

FAC to develop new metrics and measurable indicators for any new or updated strategies, which also encompass any information gleaned from the B-5 Action Council focus groups, surveys, or engagement activities. The milestone for this activity will be ELC and ELC-FAC review and approval of new strategic plan content. In March, the Project Director will make any needed updates and produce a revised strategic plan for review and approval by the ELC. The milestone of incorporating updates into the plan will be achieved by March 30, 2023.

The B-5 Strategic Plan (SP) already aligns to the PDG B-5 requirements, and we are currently engaged in the implementation of several projects which will be refined through the SP update that will further address the comprehensive needs of the workforce including SP objectives on: use of data to assess workforce needs and characteristics, use of innovative contracting approaches to increase compensation, strategies to strengthen workforce pathways and coordination, credentialing updates, assessments and strategies to meet the needs of specific workforce cohorts such as home visitors, and workforce supports such as coaching and scholarships. These objectives, as noted in Table 4, are connected to project activities and strategies that are being implemented. As needs related to wellness and professional development are revealed they will be developed into SP objectives and mapped to SP goals.

The strategic plan also includes targeted workforce strategies that through the PDG B-5 Planning Grant will be translated into data-driven, time-bound, measurable objectives that will provide a roadmap for addressing critical needs and challenges of the workforce identified through the needs assessment. The SP recommendations will further support the development of the ECCE system and the objectives will be continuously assessed using the ECE workforce dataset, resulting in the ability to continuously produce the information needed to inform ongoing SP activities. Additional workforce factors related to workforce pathways,

compensation, equity, workforce supports, will be addressed by engaging the Quality and Workforce Committee of the ELC in SP activities and by operationalizing and expanding upon current SP workforce objectives, including strategies to collect, analyze, and share equity data from state agencies, trends and identified barriers to field entry, retention, and advancement and barriers or exclusionary practices for diverse or non-traditional candidates.

The additional priorities identified through the needs assessment update will be integrated into the discussions of the appropriate SP workgroups and prioritized and mapped to the SP goals. Each priority will be assigned objectives and key strategies, cross system collaborations and any additional resources needed to achieve the priority will be identified. The information garnered from these methods will be summarized by the Project Director and incorporated into ongoing SP development activities and planning functions.

Engagement of ECCE System Partners and Families: To assess progress in achieving the SP goals the Project Director will present an update of the SP activities and objectives at each ELC and ELC-FAC meeting which is attended by State B-5 ECCE system key stakeholders. This information will be shared with the B-5 Action Councils through newsletters, website postings, and by representatives on the ELC and ELC-FAC that sit on the B-5 Action Councils, conveying information back to the regional and local bodies. The stakeholders engaged in the SP are detailed in the Stakeholder Engagement Chart (page 58). Going forward, the SP will be updated annually after the needs assessment update is completed. The SP stakeholder engagement process will be culturally and linguistically responsive and outreach will be conducted in various languages and key documents will be translated as needed. Engagement and outreach strategies will occur across communities and agencies that serve diverse populations by engaging partners and families where they are as well as through their representation on state committees.

Activity Three. Maximize Parent and Family Engagement in the B-5 System

The State's needs assessment activities have identified a few critical areas that need to be strengthened to ensure families have access to needed information and their voice is elevated within the ECCE policy process. First, there is a continued need to provide staffing and stipends to facilitate families' participation in the ELC's Family Advisory Committee. Second, Illinois has several regional-level intermediaries for its ECCE system, including the CCR&Rs, Regional Offices of Education, All Our Kids Networks (in nine communities), Early Intervention Local Interagency Councils and Child & Family Connections offices, and the new regional Birth to Five Illinois (B-5 IL) system. These structures have some overlapping purposes and there is no alignment in the geographic breakout of the state for these systems. The result is significant confusion about which entity is charged with which tasks, especially pertaining to helping families effectively navigate the ECCE system. There is a need to map this system of intermediary structures and their functions to create greater cohesion. And third, there is a need to develop a coherent equity framework for the state's early childhood system that clarifies how the system will effectively engage parents and providers in the policy-making process.

Activity 3 strategies will build the capacity of the local-to-state infrastructure and will lead to coordinated partnerships between the state and local communities to support family choices, to improve coordination to institutionalize family voice in decision-making.

Activity 3.1 Staff the ELC Family Advisory Committee (ELC-FAC). The ELC-FAC was established before the launch of B-5 IL and its 39 Parent Councils across the state. Activity 3.1 will sustain the work of the ELC-FAC and of the Integration and Alignment Coordinator (IA Coordinator) who has been working to build connections between the B-5 IL regional system and the state ELC-FAC. The PDG B-5 Planning Grant funds will also provide stipends that

compensate ELC-FAC members for their participation in leadership activities (regional Family Council members' participation stipends are funded through a separate grant).

The IA Coordinator is housed within Illinois Action for Children (IAFC). Their chief responsibilities are to facilitate the structural engagement of parent voice in policy making by providing staffing for and serving as a liaison to the ELC-FAC and by working with the state-level B-5 IL team to formalize the links between the ELC-FAC and the B-5 Family Advisory Councils. IAFC also leads the training and technical assistance for Birth-to- Five IL, facilitating alignment between the needs assessment and planning activities of the regional councils and the work of the ELC. By expanding the meaningful engagement of communities, families, and leaders in decision-making and strengthening the alignment of the governance system, children and families' equitable access to a broad range of high quality culturally responsive services that meet their needs will be improved.

Activity 3.2 Assess and Align Capacity of Intermediary Structures. Activity 3.2 will engage local advisory groups and regional intermediary structures to map the array of intermediary early childhood structures and supports for parent navigation across the ECCE service continuum for children ages B-5, including transitions between programs and into elementary school. This work will be led by the ELC Integration and Alignment Committee (IAC) co-chairs and engaged representatives drawn from the IAC; the B-5 Action Councils and their family councils; the CCR&Rs; the Local Interagency Councils for Early Intervention; AOK Networks; Regional Offices of Education; Star NET professional development regions; local community collaborations; and other relevant regional structures.

A Committee Priority Facilitator will be engaged as a consultant to complete the mapping and develop recommendations for better articulating and coordinating the functions of the

intermediary structures. The 9-month process will include mapping the various intermediary early childhood structures' strengths, services, and data systems to examine and connect the many existing intermediary organizations and sets of information about early childhood capacity, needs and services throughout Illinois. The facilitator will combine completed data sources into a comprehensive landscape analysis that identifies strengths and gaps of the current systems for supporting parent and family choice, knowledge about the system, and access to a mixed delivery system of high-quality ECCE options.

Once the mapping is complete the consultant will facilitate a strategic assessment and stakeholder engagement with state and regional partners, including the B-5 Action Councils and their Family Action Councils. They will use the information to develop recommendations for any needed restructuring of the suite of intermediaries to ensure greater alignment, efficiency, and efficacy. This activity will be guided through an equity and diversity lens, ensuring both the planning and the anticipated changes will be culturally responsive to those affected.

Activity 3.3 Developing framework for how the State will integrate family voice in policy-making. ISBE will contract NORC at the University of Chicago to develop and implement a stakeholder engagement process (including focus groups and interviews) to authentically engage and elevate the voice of parents, providers, and communities in developing recommendations that prioritize equity as foundational to ECCE systems-building within Illinois. The result of these activities will be a comprehensive analysis of the work happening at local and regional levels and development of an equity-focused framework for how the systems can work together to better ensure that parent and community voices inform policy and finance decision making based on data, lived experiences, and priorities of communities and regions.

The NORC team, co-led by nationally-recognized experts Wesley Williams (educational equity) and Michael Lopez (early childhood), will lead a discovery process to map the various ways that current intermediary structures (e.g., CCR&Rs, B-5 IL Action Councils, AOK Networks, Regional Offices of Education (ROEs), local community collaborations, etc.) engage parents and communities, and will complete a comprehensive landscape analysis that identifies both the strengths and gaps of the current intermediary systems, as well as the necessary infrastructure and processes to ensure that parent and community voices inform policy and budgeting decision making at the state level. With this mapping as a base, NORC will facilitate a strategic assessment and multi-lingual stakeholder engagement planning process with state and regional partners to build a framework for using local voices and experiences to inform equity-focused policy and decision-making at the state level. Together, the mapping and stakeholder engagement activities will yield a clear set of structural and process recommendations for the state to authentically engage and elevate parent and community voices, with articulated mechanisms and pathways for informing the state's policy and fiscal priorities. This work will result in a coordinated systems approach to active parent and community engagement and prioritize development of a strong "equity framework" for ECCE in Illinois, building on existing work and tailored to meet the goals and priorities as established by the B-5 Strategic Plan and the ELC.

Activity Four. Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices

ISBE will address the workforce needs already identified in the needs assessment, including compensation, strengthened career pathways, and new / emerging needs by leveraging current workforce supports and strategies that have proven effective. The new projects will offer solutions that will strengthen and expand existing supports. Illinois workforce supports and

training are supported and disseminated through Gateways to Opportunity, a statewide PD support system designed to provide guidance, encouragement and recognition to individuals and programs serving children ages 0-5 and beyond. Resources and services provided by Gateways include ECCE Credentials, PD advisors, Great START (a wage supplement strategy to attract and retain our workforce), a cross-program PD Registry, the Illinois Trainers Network, and the ECCE Scholarship Program. The Gateways registry was leveraged as a foundation for our COVID-19 Relief grants hub during the pandemic.

Illinois requires all ECCE providers in licensed programs to participate in the Gateways PD registry where a full system of credentials for ECCE professionals is offered and then recorded. The Gateways system also houses the Gateways Scholarship program, which was greatly augmented through the initiation of the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) Scholarship program, the state's strategy to establish coherent articulation pathways across community college and state universities (public and private). To ensure and encourage equitable access, a complementary "navigator" strategy has also been implemented to help current and prospective child care providers access and succeed in a credentials and degree pathway. ECACE allows greater access to online courses as essential to our goal for broader, more equitable access. Please see narrative page 3 for additional description of how Gateways has been used as a workforce support and approach to increasing compensation for ECCE staff.

In addition to relief strategies, the state has simultaneously continued to significantly increase child care reimbursement rates, with a particular focus on rural child care providers. This approach has increased the availability of qualified providers at the same time as supporting retention of the ECCE workforce. Illinois has initiated a strategy to address minimum wage increases ahead of federal requirements, which have also informed Illinois' ECCE rate and

compensation strategy. BLS data show that child care worker wages have risen 13% from 2019 to 2021 statewide. The state's PFA program has also addressed compensation for those community-based programs who provide preschool programming by giving a higher COLA to those programs (compared to school-based PFA programs) as a strategy to address the workforce crisis in those programs as well.

All of the strategies described above are incorporated in Illinois' strategic plan for ECCE, and comprise the context in which the state is proposing two key initiatives to be implemented with PDG grant funds. The Activity 4 approach will continue to leverage Gateways and build on the ECCE workforce infrastructure to ensure providers are professionally prepared and to strengthen career pathways, including ensuring more equitable access to professional development opportunities and credentials. The project will also expand supports for providers and educators to enable the sharing of best practices to support inclusive programming for children (also detailed in activity 5.1 and 5.2). The project will hire a Workforce Activity Lead for these efforts (see Organizational Capacity page 36).

Activity 4.1 Implementation of Prior Learning Assessment System (PLA). Illinois Gateways to Opportunity Credentials and their levels were originally created to classify and codify the knowledge and skills required of ECCE professionals working in various roles. The Gateways ECE 2 Credential reflects the content of first-year coursework at community colleges and universities. In the over two decades since the inception of Gateways to Opportunities, the credentials have been refined to reflect changes in the ECE profession writ large. The B-5 needs assessment and other workforce reports have highlighted the finding that both community colleges and universities need a unified assessment that maximizes the competency-based credit awarded to ECE professionals as they are seeking to earn a Gateways ECE 2 credential on a

pathway leading towards a bachelor's degree. Such an assessment is especially important for recognizing the knowledge and skills that experienced ECCE professionals already have and for reducing unnecessary coursework to streamline degree attainment.

In 2021 the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development (GOECD) utilized PDG B-5 funding to support INCCRRA as they worked with the Gateways-entitled community colleges and universities throughout Illinois to develop a virtual-reality-based PLA that provides college credit for ECE Level 2 Credential competencies. Agency administrators from IBHE, ICCB, ISBE, and IDHS informed the project's design and goal setting; endorsed its efforts; and served as on-call experts and collaborators throughout the assessment development process. ECCE employers from around the state participated in further vetting the instrument's validity and relevance to the incumbent workforce for whom the PLA instrument is designed.

The Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN) was contracted by INCCRRA to guide faculty in developing the content for a virtual-reality based PLA instrument and then train them in evaluating it consistently. C-BEN contracted with Mursion, a virtual-reality technology company, to create and administer the actual instrument. C-BEN also worked with the project faculty and leaders in training the Mursion staff to deliver the assessment in standardized ways and to provide supports for accessibility by diverse users.

The proposed activity will further develop the system to evaluate the competencies of the ECCE workforce. Through activity 4.1, we will continue to implement the Mursion-based PLA system for the first six months of 2023, serving as a "bridge" to the planned implementation in July 2023 of sustained implementation funding the PLA long-term through other sources. During this time, the PDG Planning Grant funds will be utilized to scale and to continue to test the PLA scenarios and assessments with ECCE professionals. As part of the strategy, the PLA will be

27

administered at eight higher education institutions, including two- and four-year public and private colleges and universities. At least three pilot sites will have the capacity to administer the PLA in Spanish which will support aligned systems of service provision and a career ladder for ECCE professionals that is culturally and linguistically supportive. The data from continued testing will be reviewed by C-BEN and INCCRRA to establish inter-rater reliability and to determine any recalibration needs or scenario revisions needed; then INCCRRA will convene work groups of faculty experts to make revisions to PLA content. To support the implementation, C-BEN will provide additional faculty training in using the PLA scenarios and assessments. The continued development of the PLA system will address systemic workforce equity challenges related to workforce qualifications, will minimize unnecessary coursework and maximize the recognition of existing knowledge and skills, and will increase the number of pathways for ECCE professionals to increase their qualifications. As detailed on page 26, the PLA will be a mechanism within the state strategy to increase ECE workforce compensation by improving staff qualifications which is aligned with wage increases.

Activity 4.2 Sharing Best Practices for Preventing Suspension and Expulsion. B-5 needs assessment findings show children with challenging behaviors are at-risk of suspension, expulsion and exclusion. Also, there continues to be disproportionately high rates of removals for children of color, children with disabilities and delays, and children within the child welfare system from child care settings, which diminishes children's equitable access to services and social/emotional development. Overall, the rates of suspension and expulsion have decreased slightly due to the slate of interventions implemented by the state, however there remains a high rate of transition among children with behavior problems both from program to program, within

28

programs, and there is a lack of support for their transition into elementary school and other settings.

The adoption of the Pyramid Model as an intervention and behavioral support tool has enabled Illinois to address high rates of expulsion and suspension across the mixed delivery system, but due to the increase in children's challenging behaviors as the result of experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and skill gaps among professionals responding to children's behaviors, the need for support remains unmet. The transition process can also be improved.

The Pyramid Model (PM) is a conceptual framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development. Prior PDG B-5 investments in the implementation of the PM model have been designed to help ECCE professionals support children's adoption of prosocial behaviors and respond to the needs of children with challenging behaviors or mental health concerns, including providing support for families. In evaluations of the PM model implementation, it has been found to increase the likelihood that children with behavioral challenges can remain in group ECCE settings.

PM system supports delivered through PDG B-5 work include: providing interdisciplinary PD to support coaches and trainers, establishing and facilitating communities of practice, expanding job-embedded PD opportunities and ongoing practice-based coaching and mentoring, and developing and implementing *EPyramid* Modules to support trauma-informed care and to assist ECCE professionals in developing the skills they need to address children's adverse experiences. The PM was also extended from early childhood into kindergarten settings to improve the transition experiences for children with behavioral challenges as they move between preschool and elementary school. The Gateways registry is also used to identify approved trainers and coaches and to track PM trainings.

Activity 4.2 will build upon the PM approach through the expansion of a pilot of PM implementation sites to additional family child care homes. Lessons learned from this pilot will help the state to develop the "Unified, strategic system of training, technical assistance, consultation, and coaching" called for by its strategic plan. The current pilot includes 6 community-based child care PM implementation sites and 7 family child care home PM implementation sites and 35 PM implementation sites that are state preschool settings. Activity 4.2 will expand the sites across a much wider range of providers and will increase the equitable representation of child care settings in the pilot group.

The Pyramid Consortium will partner with ISBE to identify and select additional sites to participate in the pilot project. New sites will receive professional development including: trauma informed care, wellness, PM practices (*ePyramid* Modules Access) and will engage in an assessment process using a battery of program quality and caregiver skills and knowledge assessments that will drive changes and improvements. Through the process, the PM implementation sites will engage in training and monthly professional learning communities. They will also be engaged in monthly coaching to support the PM implementation. By increasing access to high-quality early education settings at the same time as supporting the ECCE workforce, children will be provided inclusive equitable ECCE services that contribute to their school readiness and rates of expulsion and suspension will be decreased.

Activity Five. Support Program Quality Improvement

Activity Five strategies will only be initiated after the completion of the needs assessment data update and strategic plan update in Activities 1 and 2, during the remaining 8 months of the project period. The program quality improvement activities will expand investments in PDG B-5 projects to increase access and quality ECCE for children with or at-risk

of disabilities and dual language learners. They build on existing strategies rather than duplicate by aligning with existing efforts (see page 39).

Activity 5.1 Pilot Strategies for Inclusive Community-Based Early Childhood Special Education. Children with disabilities are a priority population that face some of the greatest disparities in ECCE access and outcomes of all young children. The B-5 needs assessment noted parent and community feedback indicating a general lack of access to services and difficulty navigating special education services; specifically assessment and enrollment. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these issues and disproportionately impacted children with disabilities and delays. Services were delayed due to social-distancing protocols and children living in families hesitant to re-engage in services due to health concerns fell through system gaps. Widespread program and/or classroom closures also impacted service access.

Activity 5.1 builds on the B-5 Strategic Plan and the recommendations to improve early childhood special education (ECSE) services by understanding the true cost to deliver the services preschool aged children and their families need and deserve. To date, ISBE has engaged experts, convened state policy groups, and embarked on a multi-state scan to inform the state's own development of multiple, improved program and funding models in order to serve children in inclusive environments, especially in community-based child care and Head Start programs.

Illinois is a large state with over 750+ kindergarten-serving school districts across 102 counties. There is "no one size fits all" solution that will succeed in every community. During 2022, ISBE has engaged external consultants (i.e., Public Consulting Group) and created a diverse stakeholder advisory group to develop multiple models to improve ECSE program delivery in community-based programs. The proposed continuation of this work through this PDG B-5 Planning grant will build on this planning, and will help district-level leadership and

ECSE staff to better understand their responsibility to serve children in inclusive environments during their preschool years, and provide them blueprints for doing that successfully. Early Choices, the state's technical assistance hub for ECSE, will lead this work, including selecting and supporting pilots sites to "pressure test" the models; soliciting and documenting real-time feedback from district-level and community-based ECSE staff: and refine the models as needed.

The first phase of implementation will create public awareness and education materials about models for serving children with disabilities and delays within community settings. Stakeholder engagement, including parents, providers, teachers and school district staff, will both serve as a vehicle to increase/deepen understanding of "inclusive environments" outside of school buildings and as a real-time source of feedback and input as models are being tested and refined. Early Choices will also review needs assessment data related to where children (age 3-5 years) with disabilities are being served and the reach of special education services in community settings that will inform the models.

Up to six community team conversations in multiple languages will be facilitated to vet and test models. Three communities with differing geographic and demographic characteristics will be chosen to pilot at least one of the models developed by Public Consulting Group. More attention/research will need to be done to understand the fiscal challenges arising as the models are tested, and the Advisory Group, assembled this year with Public Consulting Group, will stay engaged throughout this process to: serve as thought partners and reviewers; support Early Choices as they evaluate the outcomes of Activity 5.1; and provide feedback to the state. A report summarizing the lessons learned will act as a foundation for the future expansion of services for children with disabilities. The information will be integrated into the strategic plan and will inform the realignment of funding and the state's adoption of innovative models.

Activity 5.2 Multi-State Research on Early Intervention (EI) Models. The proposed activities will support the work of IDHS, the state agency responsible for providing EI services to children ages 0-3. This project aligns with the state's Strategic Plan, addresses "priority populations" as defined by the ELC, and follows the recommendations that emerged from the Governor's Funding Commission in 2021 to: increase equity and access to EI services; improve retention/recruitment of the workforce through modifications to the EI service delivery model; data collection and analysis; cross-state research; and deeper engagement of providers and families. Further, the Governor's Early Childhood Funding Commission report highlighted that the need to consider improved funding mechanisms is more urgent than ever, given the disruption the EI system has experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To achieve Activity 5.2, IDHS will engage a contractor who will begin by surveying other states who have attempted changing program and/or financing models to better and more equitably serve children through their state's Early Intervention Program. Through surveys and conversation, the contractor will glean lessons from these states that will assist Illinois as it moves forward with making potential improvements to the Early Intervention funding system. The contractor will study patterns of program participation by children and practitioners that may point to needed reforms in the funding system. The work will identify and dig deep into implementation questions and challenges related to bilingual EI service delivery, workforce structure, compensation and financing models. This project will provide IDHS the information and next steps it needs to ensure that Illinois' Early Intervention system provides adequate compensation and support of providers and equitable access to all families who are entitled to critical Early Intervention services.

The project will also support robust engagement of thousands of providers and families and include the development of sustainable mechanisms for engagement of providers and families over the long-term. Stakeholder engagement will be facilitated by the Illinois Interagency on Early Intervention in partnership with Raising Illinois, a coalition with over 800 contributing organizations and individuals across the state. The coalition is almost 50% persons of color and includes many local organizations focused on equitable access for children and families historically under-represented in early childhood services.

Activity 5.3 Developing a Common Process to Identify English Language Learners. Illinois has led the nation in services for preschool age English Learners, requiring school districts to screen children for English language development and to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) supports and bilingual instruction in Preschool for All (PFA). However, gaps in services and lower ECCE access for children in linguistically isolated households remain. Community-based PFA providers are not required to conduct English language screenings, and as a result may be failing to identify many children who would benefit from specialized instruction.

Through Activity 5.3, the capacity of mixed delivery system providers to identify and serve English learners will be extended and enhanced by implementing a common identification process across the mixed delivery system leading to the full integration of English learners into the B-5 ECCE system and equity improvements. To execute Activity 5.3, The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning (IRC) will develop resources and provide training that builds the capacity of community-based ECCE providers and the workforce to conduct an enrollment interview with families that includes the ISBE Home Language Survey to determine if a child has exposure to one or more languages in the home and if the child needs a direct language screener or assessment. A training and support system will be developed that prepares

these ECCE providers to facilitate the Pre-IPT, the English proficiency screener used in public schools, within the first 30 days of enrollment to children identified as having exposure to multiple languages at home to determine the need for bilingual programming.

Where needed, a team of consultants will be deployed to directly conduct screening services on-site to ensure that all children are appropriately screened. An estimated 7,500 children ages 3 and 4 in community-based Preschool for All programs will be screened through this initiative, and ISBE will evaluate the effectiveness of these supports to determine how best to sustain consistent screening in all PFA programs in the future.

The identification activities will be paired with the development of protocols for professionals to use in partnership with families of children identified as needing bilingual instruction or other ESL services to determine the type of program placement that can best meet the child's needs and family preferences. Finally, IRC will also support workforce development activities through the development of an estimate of the cost to hire and train bilingual ECCE professionals that have obtained an ISBE as English as a second language endorsement.

As a result of Activity 5.3, Illinois can achieve stronger B-5 integration of English learner identification, screening and programming across the mixed-delivery system to promote quality programming for under-served populations. Additionally, a holistic and sustainable approach to build and properly compensate the early childhood workforce in Illinois will be developed, particularly for staff that are bilingual.

Early Childhood Workforce TA and Peer Learning Initiative Participation – Illinois is eager to participate in the Early Childhood Workforce TA and Peer Learning Initiative.

Organizational Capacity

ISBE (agency) is qualified to lead the administration and implementation of the PDG B-5 Planning Grant. The agency is responsible for administering public education and early childhood programs throughout Illinois including IDEA Part B Section 619; PFA, home visiting, and center-based birth-to-three programs funded through the Early Childhood Block Grant; Title I of ESEA; and the Child and Adult Care Food Program. ISBE awards subgrants to non-federal entities such as Local Education Agencies, institutions of higher education, and nonprofits and is well-positioned to implement the partnerships needed to achieve the project goals. The agency has extensive experience managing federal mixed-delivery system grants as a lead agency, a partner, and as a fiscal sponsor that includes administration and oversight roles in the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC), Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5), PDG B-5 Expansion, and PDG B-5 Renewal grants. For all of these projects, ISBE has maintained compliance and achieved project goals and objectives in collaboration with other state agencies and the Governor's Office (please see Oversight of Federal Awards in this narrative for fiscal management capacity).

The organizational chart in the attachments details the grant oversight structure and the breadth and scope of the ISBE infrastructure which spans all project functions. The PDG B-5 Planning Grant will be housed within the ISBE Department of Early Childhood and Multilingual Departments. The agency will dedicate a portion of time for leadership staff to the grant inkind, including time from the ISBE Director of Early Childhood who will perform grant oversight. The project staffing will be comprised of a Project Director, Budget Support Specialist and three Activity Implementation staff focused on Data, Workforce and English Language projects. The ideal qualifications for these staff will be at least a bachelor's degree and three years of experience in a similar role.

The position descriptions will be developed during the planning period and will be posted upon the award of funds. The hiring process is expected to take no longer 60 days and will consist of the job posting and recruitment (January 2023), the selection of candidates (February 2023) and the onboarding and training of PDG B-5 Planning Grant staff (March 2023). In the interim, the staff who will directly coordinate and implement the grant activities in alignment with the budget and workplan, including facilitating Activities 1 and 2 will be comprised of content experts within ISBE's Department of Early Childhood. These staff will also advise on PDG B-5 projects that fall within the scope of their purview (please see Table 5). The program performance evaluation plan will be developed and implemented by the Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative (IWERC), who is also qualified to lead project evaluation and continuous improvement efforts (please see Program Performance Evaluation Plan).

ISBE will collaborate with a number of partners that will support Activities 3-5. Each contractor/consultant has been actively engaged in current and previous Illinois PDG B-5 projects or in the development of the ECCE mixed delivery system where they have gained the requisite experience necessary to successfully implement PDG B-5 tasks. Upon funding, the procurement process will involve developing a scope of work and assessing the contractors/consultants expertise and experience against the project role. The partnering organizations that have been identified include: INCCRRA, University of Illinois, Chicago, Northern Illinois University (Activity 1 and portions of Activity 4) who each house data systems and have past experience implementing PDG B-5 projects. NORC who will lead Activity 3.3 will utilize two consultants that have decades of experience in engagement, facilitation, early childhood and community development. NORC is also a research institution that has collaborated on prior PDG B-5 projects. The Pyramid Consortium, who will facilitate Activity

4.2 has been integral in developing Illinois B-5 PM support system, including through prior PDG

B-5 projects. Activity 5 projects will be supported by Early CHOICES and The Center. Both of

these entities are currently engaged in other work with ISBE and have PDG B-5 experience.

Key staff expertise and experience: The project team (including interim staff) are highly

qualified to implement the project:

Table 5. Staff Qualifications Table
Carisa Hurley Davis, ISBE Director of Early Childhood, Role - PDG B-5 Project Director; lead Activities 1 and 2 with contractors/consultants until project staff are hired; oversee all project implementation and management functions.
Qualifications: Master of Arts degree in Education with a specialization in ECE; 35 years working in center-based and home visiting programs; oversees approximately $550M in funding for early childhood education; 4 years in current role.
Alicia Lynch-Deatherage, Role - Budget Support
Qualifications: Master of Business Administration degree, 19 years of experience with ISBE including PDG B-5 grant and task oversight.
Norma Moore, Workforce Specialist (Interim), Role - Assist with the oversight of the B-5 PDG Activity 4 projects.
Qualifications: Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Management and a Master of Arts degree in Education with a specialization in Early Childhood and 20 years of experience working in early childhood and on workforce challenges
Joanne Clyde, English Learner Identification Project Coordinator (Interim), Role - Oversee efforts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion for English learners and Activity 5 projects.
Qualifications: Over 15 years of bilingual education experience including as a bilingual and ESL teacher and administering pre-k-8th grade bilingual programs at the district level. Over 2 years' experience at ISBE and has obtained a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Bilingual Education and experience overseeing EI programs.
Jenny Metcalf, Data Systems Strategist (Interim), Role - Will provide programmatic oversight of the grant, specifically support for comprehensive systems development and Activity 3 projects.
Qualifications: Bachelor of Science degree in Child Development; Master of Arts degree in Education;14 years' experience working in early education and ECCE workforce professional development roles and integrating systems for families and children.
Michelle Wood, Early Childhood Evaluation Principal Consultant (Interim)*,* Role - Implementation support for Activities 3-5
Qualifications: Bachelor of Science degree in ECE and Elementary Education; Master of Science degree in Education; 22 years' experience in early education, 6 years as ISBE ECE Principal Consultant evaluating grant-funded projects

Alignment of PDG B-5 and State Initiatives: The PDG B-5 Planning Grant projects are aligned to other initiatives as detailed in Table 4 which shows the alignment between the projects and the strategic plan activities already in implementation. Additionally, Activity 1 aligns with the work of the ECCS grant, specifically the work of the UNSS Advisory Council and a collaborative project to establish joint early childhood goals for the P-3 population engaging Illinois' Medicaid Agency – Health Care and Family Services—and the Illinois Department of Public Health. The workforce assessment that will occur during Activity 1 will also build on and support the work to establish the integrated data set and the High School 2 College 2 Career Data Set and the Educator Workforce Dataset within ILDS. Data projects within Activity 1 extend initiatives currently underway to link data systems and expand their use by local and regional groups such as Northern Illinois University and the Chicago Early Childhood Integrated Data System (CECIDS described on page 13).

Activity 2 is collaborative in scope and other funding sources and established plans such as the ECCS grant and MIECHV and state funding for early childhood systems (e.g., State preschool, maternal child health, Early Intervention and the Professional Development Advisory Council) are leveraged and cross walked to create unified goals and a shared vision for children across ECCE stakeholders.

Activity 3 is funded using multiple sources including the PDG B-5 grant, GEER and CRRSA/ARPA funding. The initiatives are complimentary to the *I Got Love* Campaign. The Illinois Cares for Kids website (built with previous PDG B-5 funds) includes searchable information and a "locater" for available programs including: information on how to access services; help for parents to understand developmental milestones, information on what services are available to assess children for delays and/or disabilities; information on licensing regulations

and quality indicators; and information on the overall benefits to children enrolled in a high quality ECCE program. The campaign is funded through previous PDG, GEER and CRRSA funding, and includes social media, broadcast advertising and grants to community organizations to build awareness and smooth access to early learning programs and services.

Complementary to our Illinois Cares for Kids campaign is the state's adoption of Ready4K parent texting service. Ready4K allows parents to sign up to receive texts in any of nine languages to facilitate their efforts to support their children's development and school-readiness. Ready4K was made possible through GEER Funding and lives on to be a permanent part of how we engage and support parents as a child's first and best teacher.

The integration and alignment mapping and stakeholder engagement activity will also build on and align the Birth to Five Action Councils and their Family Councils. It will align with local and regional strategic initiatives to build the capacity of CCR&Rs, Local Interagency Councils for Early Intervention; AOK Networks; ROEs, Star NET professional development regions; and other regional structures who are also charged with integrating parent, family, and community engagement into decision making.

Activity 4 and its components are aligned with collaborative cross-sector professional development and workforce capacity efforts including child care stabilization grants and statewide infrastructure projects such as the Strengthen and Grow Child Care (SGCC) grants (see page 3-4). The PLA project is also aligned with the Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity's (ECACE) initiative to address issues of equity in access to early childhood degrees and credentials and to provide support to immediately upskill the current incumbent workforce, this can also interface with the PLA (Activity 4.1) as qualifications are linked to advanced

compensation. The ECACE is developing a consortium of 62 institutions to collectively work towards a well-prepared and supported early childhood workforce.

Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability: *Stakeholder Engagement Chart:* The chart on page 58 identifies the stakeholders involved in the PDG B-5 Planning Grant project and differentiates them by the role (e.g., assessment, planning, and implementation) they represent or will represent. Illinois' ECCE system is governed by state agencies who receive and disburse federal and state funds, implement statute, and develop administrative rule for ECCE programs to support children, families, and communities. Each of these agencies report to the Governor's Office and meet twice monthly as an Inter-Agency Team. Table 3 identifies each agency and the programs they administer. Illinois maintains a decentralized governance model, where ECCE system components are managed by different state agencies, including ISBE. Since the initial PDG B-5 grant, Illinois established a Governor's ECCE Funding Commission to examine current funding and governance models and consider alternate structures that could support improved outcomes for children and families. The recommendations from the commission include researching models of governance that centralize the ECCE funding system and distribute funding in new ways.

While the governance model has not changed since the last PDG B-5 grant, the needs assessment and strategic planning will be utilized to continue to explore new models that result in improved coordination, increased accountability for ECCE services, and amplified parent and family voice in decision making. The commission report recommended that ECCE should be

centralized into a single state agency; the Governor's Office has been working to determine the best governance structure for the future. The organizational chart in the appendix and the decision-making path map detail Illinois' current ECCE structure and the entities that serve in an advisory capacity.

State Decision Making Pathway
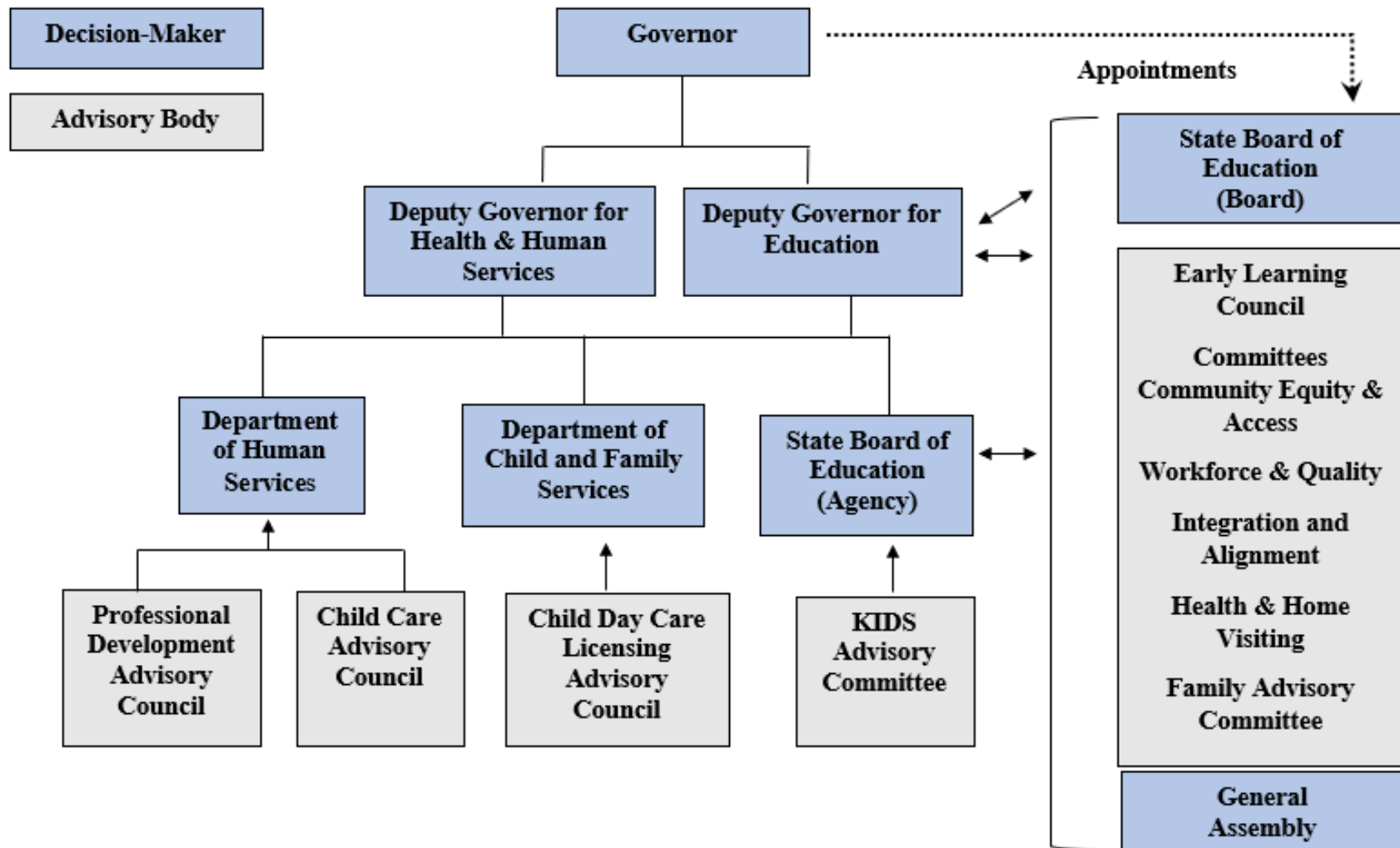
Early Learning Advisory Council (ELC): As described on page 14, the ELC is Illinois' State Advisory Council that advises state agencies, the Governor's Office and the Legislature on early education and care for children from birth-to-five years. The chief responsibility of the ELC is to lead the development of a high-quality, comprehensive ECCE system that involves the full range of early childhood programs across the mixed delivery system. To facilitate programmatic decisions, the ELC's Executive Committee guides the work of its other committees (see page 14)

Parents and providers are engaged in the B-5 system through representation on the ELC and on the ELC-FAC which is codified as part of the ELC's structure. The parents and providers are also engaged through the Birth to Five Action Councils and their Family Councils. Several activities within this project will further develop the infrastructure for their engagement including Activities 3.1 and 3.2. In addition, the enhancements to data systems will support their improved knowledge of the ECCE system which informs decision making and policy.

The ELC produces reports on areas of focus and child, family, and workforce needs and collaborates with stakeholders, including B-5 Councils, to complete tasks that contribute to programmatic and policy decisions such as: conducting needs assessments of the ECCE system, identifying barriers to collaboration and coordination, increasing access to ECCE services, including outreach to underserved and vulnerable populations, developing recommendations related to unified data systems, assessing the capacity and effectiveness of professional development and higher education programs in supporting the ECCE workforce, and developing recommendations for improvements to the state early learning standards.

Future Efforts to Incorporate Family and Provider Voice into Policy Decisions: Several PDG B-5 Planning Grant projects elevate family and provider voice in policy and programmatic decision-making. As described in Activity 3.1 and 3.2 capacity-building activities will give voice

and power to parents and providers by creating policy implementation feedback loops between local communities and the ELC. The project dedicates resources to the establishment of local plans for strengthening the ECCE system, improving access, and leveraging resources that will transition into actions that broaden the roles of families and policy and decision-making.

Oversight of Federal Funds and Activities

In addition to the programmatic oversight through the Department of Early Childhood, the Finance Center at ISBE includes five departments that perform a range of services to identify, procure, and provide fiscal oversight and monitoring for funding which will support the PDG B-5 Planning Grant. The departments include: Funding and Disbursements, Fiscal Support Services, Budget and Financial Management, State Funding and Forecasting, and School Business Services. Specifically, the Early Childhood Department works closely with the Departments of Budget and Financial Management, Funding and Disbursements, and Fiscal Supports Services in their work with previous PDG grants.

The FY23 budget for ISBE is approximately $20.28 billion dollars. Of that amount, total funding from all grants is approximately $19 billion dollars in grant funding annually, including $10.3 billion in appropriation authority for federal grants. The Early Childhood Department houses 15 staff who manage grants and reporting activities. The PDG early childhood budget and data coordinator within the Department will be responsible for the PDG B-5 fiscal activities. The grant funds will be managed in accordance with federal payment process and working together with the project staff, the fiscal department will monitor and analyze the project status monthly.

The partnership between the Early Childhood Department and Departments of Budget and Financial Management, Funding and Disbursements, and Fiscal Supports Services is central to ensuring fidelity with federal grants processes and is responsible for drawing funds/revenue in

from the federal granting authority based on amount granted and expenditures by the agency related to that specific grant. Moreover, the collaboration between departments ensures appropriate use of funds and accuracy of allocation through the quality review process. To this end, all federal financial reports for the PDG B-5 grant will be completed and submitted through the Funding and Disbursement, including reports of revenues drawn in and expenditures out of the programs. Staff in each department and PDG B-5 program implementation staff will work closely with the PDG B-5 fiscal staff to ensure data is correct and accurately reflects project activities. The oversight of federal awards is governed by fiscal policies and procedures approved by the ISBE that comply with 45 CFR part 75, Subpart D.

ISBE uses Management Information Database Accounting System (MIDAS) as its official accounting system. Amounts in MIDAS, which are reconciled to the Illinois Office of the Comptroller's Statewide Accounting Management System on a monthly basis, are used for the agency's financial reporting. ISBE also uses the Financial Reimbursement Information System (FRIS) to process state and federal grant or claim-based disbursements to ISBE grantees. All vouchers processed in FRIS are simultaneously processed within MIDAS. Vouchers are approved by Funding and Disbursements management and sent to the Fiscal Support Services Department for processing and then to the State Comptroller for payment. Annually, ISBE also undergoes an independent audit annually and the results are shared with the board and posted publicly. The agency has received an unmodified opinion for the past 20 years. ISBE also implements procedures to evaluate subcontractors including an eligibility vetting process that includes an assessment of the contractor's financial stability, previous audit findings, and compliance during the term of previous grants as well as current term after the first year of funding. The Department of Fiscal Services is a conduit between the Early Childhood

Department, ISBE Legal Department and the State Procurement Office to ensure that all federal procurement regulations are followed and that processes are transparent and ethical. Entities that receive funding through ISBE to provide services to the field submit annual reports if no compliance issues are present at the time of application and more often (usually quarterly) if the entity is identified as a high-risk grantee. Specifically, required reporting is compared to invoices to ensure accuracy and the allowability of expenses. Should evidence suggest questions regarding appropriate use of funding, the Federal and State Monitoring Department along with relevant programmatic department at ISBE, work with the grantee and/or contractor to address any issues related to non-compliance.

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

The Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative (IWERC) is a research unit at University of Illinois devoted to studying educational issues in the state of Illinois from cradle to career. IWERC has previous experience working with ISBE and other key collaborators on the PDG B-5 Planning Grant and a research-practice partnership with ISBE which has familiarized the organization with the requirements associated with monitoring and evaluating federally funded ECCE grants.

Evaluation Staff: The Primary Investigator for the project will be Meg Bates, PhD, Director of IWERC. Bates will commit 10% of her time to PDG B-5 grant evaluation activities. She will coordinate the evaluation with the PDG B-5 grant leads at ISBE, oversee the implementation of the evaluation project, and review and provide quality assurance to all data and evaluation products. Bates will be supported by 5 additional research staff including one staff that is allocated at .75 FTE and two graduate students.

Evaluation Process: The PDG B-5 Planning Grant program performance evaluation plan

(PPEP) will build on prior evaluations of the PDG B-5 project and monitor ISBE's progress

towards the implementation of grant activities, as well as build data systems to measure

completion of those activities and the achievement of the goals and objectives of the project. The

evaluation plans of the prior PDG B-5 grants and their implementation and findings will be

reviewed upon funding of the project to inform the PPEP. The work of the previous PDG grants

is captured in the PDG B-5 logic model which has been a guiding document for the PDG B-5

activities that will continue to guide this project. The process for monitoring and assessing

project progress involves tasks as follows:

Table 6. Process for Monitoring and Assessing the Project
Analyze needed improvements to current PDG programming (an input) to support the success of the planning grant. [Implementation]; *Timeline:* Q1-Q2
Develop evaluation criteria (outcome measures) for new programming planned within this grant (activities). [Implementation] *Timeline:* Q2-Q3
Examine the engagement process, results, and planned use (outcomes) of the planning grant's diverse needs assessments (activities). [Implementation] *Timeline:* Q3-Q4
Assess stakeholders' understanding and commitment (outcomes) related to the projects developed with the planning grant (activities). [Implementation] *Timeline:* Q3-Q4
Build out the existing Illinois Early Childhood Dashboard to track progress on grant goals (outcomes). [Data Systems] *Timeline:* Q1-Q4

Data Collection and Management: Data collection will occur using ISBE's systems for data

collection and reporting including the use of primary and secondary data stored in electronic

spreadsheets and data systems such as (but not limited to): the ILDS, IECAM, and the ECE

workforce dataset. Qualitative data sources such as interviews and focus groups will also be

utilized to assess project strategies and partnerships. The project implementation staff and

Activity leads will collect project data and compile it for reporting to the Project Director. The

data will be reviewed by the Project Director and forwarded to ISBE's Department of Data

Strategies and Analytics whose research staff will clean data to ensure that all primary and

secondary data sources are free of identifying information. All data will be collected by trained evaluators and staff using standardized tools that have been tested for reliability.

IWERC will access directly the ILDS and IECAM using the secure protocols already in place at the state; no data will be extracted. All other data are surveys and interviews with stakeholders about public documents and materials; these data will be stored on University of Illinois's secure Box folders and accessible only by project staff. The IWERC staff are trained in the management and security of data. All current research and evaluation staff are required to be certified in research ethics and compliance.

Obstacles to completing the evaluation, continuous improvement, and data management tasks that may emerge include inconsistency in the use of reporting forms and changes in staffing. The challenges will be addressed through the review of reporting forms during Quality Continuous Improvement (CQI) and by providing training to all staff that report, manage, or evaluate data om the reporting processes, and protocols for the collection and reporting of accurate data.

Throughout the project year, the Evaluator will support execution of the PPEP as well as complete quarterly updates and enhancements to the PPEP. They will select and create impact scorecards for metrics such as return on investment, create those metrics, and measure the likelihood of positive outcomes for key activities. This information will be shared with the project team and stakeholders quarterly. A timeline for the components of each evaluation task is provided in Table 6.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI): IWERC will lead CQI based on the "plan, do, study, act" process that will be implemented through quarterly CQI convenings of the project team and evaluators. Illinois' previously-developed PPEP will serve as a foundational resource to be

updated. In the "***plan***" phase, the Evaluator will develop implementation and program evaluation scopes and methodologies for activities and projects. These documents will be submitted to the federal grant training and technical assistance staff. In the "***do***" phase, the Project Evaluator will begin execution of the project evaluations scoped previously and will implement a performance measurement system. Additional stakeholder interviews and surveys will also be conducted.

In the "***study***" phase, the Project Evaluator will lead analysis of performance measurement data housed in the project management software as well as initial findings from project implementation evaluations. The PPEP Team will then identify necessary adaptations and adjustments to project implementation to mitigate challenges and support successful implementation and improvements in short-term outputs and outcomes. In the "***act***" phase, activity and implementation leads will work directly with partners to implement identified adjustments to scope or practice and update project work plans in accordance with learnings from the "*study*" phase. Cycles will occur on a quarterly basis and will be informed annually by an updated needs assessment and/or strategic plan.

Protection of Sensitive and Confidential Information

It is not anticipated that the project will collect any personally identifiable information. Information about individuals, families, or organizations will be de-identified and shared in aggregate by the dataset manager. ISBE is compliant with federal requirements regarding the protection of human subjects, protection of sensitive information, and the confidentiality of information that is identifiable to a person. The agency has policies and procedures for confidentiality protocols, the retention and disposal of data, and disciplinary actions for violations of procedures. As part of the confidentiality standards, information may not be shared with any person or organization outside of ISBE without the prior written approval from the

individual, parent, or guardian. Adherence to confidentiality protocols will be monitored by the staff in the Early Childhood Department at ISBE with support as necessary from the departments of Data Strategies and Analytics and Legal. A data sharing agreement will be developed between IWERC and contractors and ISBE for appropriate project tasks and activities.

Sustainability Plan

Sustaining the PDG Planning grant activities following the period of federal funding will take several forms, including a review of alignment of programs and funding streams as follows:

Table 7. Sustainability Plan
1. Needs Assessment
A cycle of needs assessments and analytics to fill data gaps will support unified, data-driven decision-making across the ECCE system through the use of state funding sources, the federal ECCS grant and other leveraged funds allocated to the ELC; this will be managed by ISBE.
2. Strategic Plan
The strategic plan will be developed and implemented on a five-year cycle utilizing funds from the state allocated for the ELC.
3. Family Engagement
The ELC-FAC will effectively incorporate family knowledge and voice into policy and practice. State investments will provide ongoing staffing support for the FAC, including supporting links between the state and local Birth to Five Action Councils and Birth to Five Family Action Councils which are funded through state early childhood streams.
4. Workforce Development
Greater integration across state data systems will leverage funding streams to support scaled training and technical assistance endeavors and the use of PM, trauma-informed approaches, and workforce registry enhancements. The state will develop a plan for sustainability involving workforce funding from the ECCE system funds as efficiencies are achieved, the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act, and state higher education student assistance.
5. Quality Improvement
The strategies in Activity 5 are one-time projects that can be sustained as capacity is built. The full implementation of these activities can be supported using Part C and Part B, 619 funding and in some instances Medicaid reimbursement.
6. Data Management
Following completion of intra-agency data system enhancements, state investments will support ongoing maintenance as they have in the previous generation.

Dissemination Plan

The dissemination goals for the project are to share materials, resources, and lessons learned with families, ECCE professionals, policymakers, advocates, and program implementation entities throughout Illinois and with the wider early childhood community, ACF, and TTA Network so that project outcomes that inform the systems building efforts of other states. The objectives to are observe and identify the current reach of the project; to develop and administer a multi-channel dissemination plan to inform stakeholders about the PDG B-5 Planning Grant activities and outcomes; and to deploy continuous ongoing strategies to execute the dissemination activities, analyze their effectiveness and make adjustments to achieve the widest reach possible. The plan will be developed upon funding in collaboration with key partners and will articulate clear objectives for dissemination, outline strategies to identify and engage key audiences (e.g., individuals, organizations, institutions, and dissemination partners), and it will include a timeline for distribution.

The target audience for the dissemination of PDG B-5 Planning Grant activities is ELC members, representatives from public and private organizations on committees and Ad Hoc Committees, families, ECCE programs across the mixed delivery system (including stakeholders identified in Table 9 page 58), state agencies, tribal and faith-based organizations, policy makers and advocates. Strategies to identify and engage with target audiences will include: the development of research briefs, manuscripts, presentations, infographics, and PowerPoint content. Dissemination will occur by engaging the audience through the presentation of information at state and national conferences (e.g., BUILD), and by participating in other systems-building cooperative groups, posting information on the ISBE website, and by utilizing newsletters and listservs to share information on the progress and outcomes of the project.

The ELC will facilitate the distribution of the needs assessment, strategic plan, and other materials developed through PDG B-5 Planning Grant activities. The ELC will help ISBE target appropriate audiences to maximize circulation. For example, monthly newsletters and email communications reach over 3,500 subscribers around the state with information about early childhood policy, programs, workforce supports and services. ISBE, the ELC, and its Executive Committee, and the Early Childhood Inter-Agency Team will continue to fill the dissemination role for the PDG B-5 Planning Grant. This strategy has proven effective during prior funding cycles. The project budget includes funding for project staff who will also be formally assigned dissemination tasks as part of their core responsibilities (e.g., Project Director, Evaluator).

The plan to evaluate the extent to which the target audience have received project information will utilize website analytics, email reports, and feedback loops built into the ELC communication pathways. The data will be compiled by the Project Evaluator and reviewed through the CQI process. The PPEP will include metrics that describe how target audiences receive information and how the information is used. The data will be collected quarterly. The timeline for the dissemination of key products includes: newsletters/listservs (monthly/quarterly/annually beginning 3/2023); research briefs/manuscripts (developed annually and upon project end by 12/2023); infographics (before key meetings (quarterly beginning 3/2023 and presentations/annually by 12/2023); PowerPoint content (monthly presentations to stakeholders groups and committees beginning 2/2023); needs assessment and strategic plan (by 12/2023); conference presentations (annually by 12/2023).

Third-Party Agreements

Within 30 days of funding, ISBE will facilitate the procurement process and secure all contractors. Please see letters of commitment in the grant attachments for current partners.

Table 8. Project Timeline and Milestones						
Task Potential challenges could be delays in hiring and procurement. If needed, ISBE will initiate activities using current staff and will expedite procurement	**Responsibility**	**Milestones/ Evidence of Achievement**	**Timeframe**			
			Q1	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**
Project Implementation and Start-Up						
Convene stakeholders and announce award; disseminate overview; review and revise workplan and evaluation with ACF T and TA team; meet to discuss workplan and project activities and to lead project until new PDG staff are in place; establish contracts/agreements/MOUs with project implementation partners; meet with contracting, purchasing, and budget offices to discuss and plan project activities; initiate hiring of four positions	ISBE	PDG B-5 staff hired and oriented	X			
Contract with evaluator and refine evaluation plan, set data metrics and develop and implement monitoring forms and processes	Evaluator, ISBE, Project Team and Partners		X			
Engage in continuous quality improvement tasks (CQI)	Evaluator, ISBE, Project Team and Partners			X	X	X
Activity 1: Update Comprehensive Statewide B-5 Needs Assessment **Partners Include: University of Illinois, Chicago (UIC), ELC, ELC Committees, INCCRRA, IDHS**						
Annual update of supply & demand and overall review of needs assessment; engagement of mixed delivery system partners; data collected and workgroups meet; needs assessment update build on prior data	IECAM Project Director EC Data System Strategist	Updated Dashboard Completed NA update	X			
Home Visitor Workforce Needs Assessment (conduct data collection, analysis, stakeholder engagement)	INCCRRA IDHS	Completed assessment of HV workforce	X	X	X	X
ECCE Workforce Needs Assessment (conduct data collection, analysis, stakeholder engagement)	UIC	Completed report	X	X	X	X

Activity	Responsible	Measure				
Data System Integration—EIS, ELIS and Gateways Registry (development of architecture for data sharing; add funding data to ILDS and IECAM; align data systems to establish single interface)	NIU	Complete dataset	X	X	X	X
Expanded use of ECPDS and CECIDS by Local Communities (development of architecture for data sharing; add funding data to ILDS and IECAM; align CECIDS to IECAM)	NIU IECAM	3 additional communities implement local ECIDS	X	X	X	X
Establish data governance in communities and share approaches	NIU	Data governance agreements done			X	X
Activity 2: Develop or Update Comprehensive Statewide B-5 Strategic Plan **Partners Include: ECCE Partners; Start Early (EI), ELC, ELC-FAC, Integration Alignment Coordinator (IAC); State Agencies, Early Choices, The Center**						
Review strategic plan objectives and goals in the context of needs assessment new initiatives and perform update; share information with stakeholders; develop new metrics for any updated strategies; Create goals, and objectives; and cross system collaborations	NIU IECAM	Regional Participation Reports, Local ECIDS systems; ELC approval of Strategic Plan	X			
Disseminate strategic plan update	Project Director, ELC, B-5 Councils	Updated Strategic Plan	X			
Evaluate progress using continuous improvement and evaluation process	Evaluator			X	X	X
Activity 3: Maximize Parent and Family Engagement in B-5 System **Partners Include: NORC, State Agencies, Messaging Campaigns; ECCE System Partners, Families/Communities; B-5 Councils**						
Illinois Cares for Kids Awareness Campaign, including website & outreach *This work continues to saturate media outlets to inform parents on the value and availability of quality ECCE programs in their community.*	IDHS	Sustained website, outreach activities	X	X	X	X

Local Collaboration Grants to Support Coordinated Outreach Competitive grants are awarded to local ECCE collaborations to support outreach and enrollment activities as the state continues to recover from under-enrollment in ECCE programs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic	Birth to Five IL	Coordinated outreach plans in 20 communities	X	X	X	X
Activity 3.1. Staff the ELC-FAC - hire and orient staff, support ELC-FAC links to local communities and stakeholder engagement in project activities	IL Action for Children	Staff hired during Q1; 6 Committee meetings (Q2-4)	X	X	X	X
Activity 3.2. Build Capacity of Local/Regional Structures (contract with Committee Priority Facilitator (CPF)	Consultant	Contractor secured during Q1	X			
Activity 3.2. CPF will complete infrastructure mapping tasks; develop recommendations for engagement and outreach to families, communities and service providers	Consultant	Landscape Analysis Completed		X	X	X
Activity 4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Partners Include: ECACE, Illinois Board of Higher Education, State Agencies**						
Implementation of Early Childhood Access Consortium for Equity (ECACE) ECACE scholarship program was established to complement Illinois' Gateways to Opportunities scholarship program; further attracting and streamline new and current ECCE providers to enroll in higher education degree-bound classes	IBHE ICCB IDHS	Continued Scholarships, Implemented new articulation pathways	X	X	X	X
Activity 4.1. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) continued implementation (identify 8 additional sites to pilot PLA; scale and pilot PLA with diverse populations); data reviewed and work groups convened to make revisions	ISBE INCCRRA	8 sites pilot PLA New Vendor begins implementation	X	X	X	X
Activity 4.1. Provide faculty training on PLA; scale the PLA across 2 and 4-year colleges and universities	ISBE INCCRRA	Pilots sites have capacity to administer PLA			X	X

Activity	Partner	Deliverable				
Activity 4.2. Share Best Practices for Preventing Suspension and Expulsion - Pyramid Model (PM) Implementation (select and expand PM implementation sites to community-based child care programs; provide professional development on PM; establish communities of practice for PM sites; provide PM coaching)	Pyramid Consortium	Data system housing PM data; cross-systems work with providers	X	X	X	X
Activity 5: Support Program Quality Improvement (Activity 5 will be implemented from April-December after completion of Activities 1 and 2 (remaining 9 months of project period) **Partners Include:** Early CHOICES, ISBE, IRC, INCCRRA, IDHS						
Activity 5.1. Pilot Strategies for Inclusive Community-Based Early Childhood Special Education (create public awareness materials; select appropriate models for testing; engagement partners)	Early CHOICES ISBE	Modes for pilot sites identified		X	X	
Activity 5.1. Convene six community team conversions and vet and test models; disseminate grants to three communities to pilot models and provide consultation and training	Early CHOICES ISBE	Sites identified and pilot initiated		X	X	X
Activity 5.1. Convene advisory body, evaluate outcomes and share data with state and integrate into strategic plan	Early CHOICES ISBE	Report of recommendations				X
Activity 5.2. Research and develop innovative models for EI financing and staffing strategies to ensure equity and adequacy of services to children 0-3 (review state models; identify best practices and models; engage ECCE stakeholders and obtain feedback, develop recommendations)	Contractor (TBD)	Report of recommendations and analysis of EI workforce needs		X	X	X
Activity 5.3. English Learner (EL) Identification Process (develop resource and protocols to identify Els; provide training on EL identification process; expand and review data and referral processes using needs assessment strategies	Illinois Resource Center (IRC)	Child care and other ECCE providers prepared to identify ELs		X	X	X

Activity	Partner	Outcome	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
Activity 5.3. Review models and data to identify cost of bilingual ECCE professionals that have ESL endorsement	ISBE	Workforce report produced		X	X	X
Continuation of ExceleRate Pilot approach to CQI The ExceleRate pilot will expand to begin "scaling" the pilot, which has resulted in increased quality, retained and better qualified staff, and greater stability for children in care	INCCRRA IDHS	Sustain 35 sites Add 35 sites	X	X	X	X
Monitoring, Evaluation, and Data for Use in Continuous Improvement **Partners Include: IWERK, ELC and ELC Committees, ISBE, Contractors/Partners**						
Analyze needed improvements to current PDG program; compare logic model and SP indicators and metrics to develop PDG B-5 Planning Grant Program Performance Evaluation Plan (PPEP)	IWERK ISBE	Plan approved by ACF	X	X		
Develop evaluation criteria and reporting forms and use data for continuous improvement.	IWERK	Forms used for project reporting, monitoring and CQI		X	X	
Assess stakeholders understanding and commitment; Surveys completed for families, providers, and workforce	IWERK	Survey data used in CQI and planning			X	X
Build Early Childhood Dashboard	IWERK	Dashboard tracks progress/outcomes	X	X	X	X
Engage in "plan, do, study, act" CQI processes	IWERK Project Team	CQI feeds project adjustments	X	X	X	X

Stakeholder Engagement Chart

Table 9. Stakeholder Engagement Chart									
Stakeholder and Key Contact	**Activity Involvement**					**Past, Future or Both**	**Assessment, Planning, or Implementation**		
	A1	**A2**	**A3**	**A4**	**A5**		**A**	**P**	**I**
American Institutes for Research: Eboni Howard	X					Past	X		
Birth to Five Illinois & 39 Action & Family Councils: Cicely Fleming	X	X	X			Both	X	X	X
Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies: Dan Harris	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X
Community Systems Statewide Supports: Grace Araya	X	X				Both	X	X	
Early Childhood Educators: Marcy Mendenhall, Bela Mote, Rey Gonzalez, Rochelle Golliday, Ruth Kimble	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X
Early CHOICES/ Least Restrictive Environment Stakeholders: Ann Kremer		X			X	Both	X	X	X
Early Intervention & EI Training Program: Susan Connor		X			X	Both			
ELC Executive Committee: Phyllis Glink, Irving Harris Foundation; Martin Torres, Governor's Office	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	
ELC Community Equity & Access Committee: Carisa Hurley, ISBE and Trish Rooney, Fox Valley United Way	X	X	X			Both	X	X	
ELC Research, Evaluation & Data Subcommittee: Dawn Thomas, IECAM and Mariana Souto-Manning, Erikson Inst.	X	X				Both	X	X	
ELC Quality & Workforce Committee: Christi Chadwick, Illinois Board of Higher Ed and Bela Mote, Carole Robertson Center	X	X		X		Both	X	X	
ELC Health & Home Visiting Committee: Joanna Su, Illinois Dept of Human Services and Diana Rauner, Start Early	X	X				Both	X	X	
ELC Integration & Alignment Committee: Bethany Patten, IL Dept of Human Services and Shauna Ejeh, Illinois Action for Children	X	X			X	Both	X	X	
ELC Family Advisory Cmte: Dena Chapman, Stacee Leatherman	X	X	X			Both	X	X	X

Table 9. Stakeholder Engagement Chart									
Stakeholder and Key Contact	**Activity Involvement**					**Past, Future or Both**	**Assessment, Planning, or Implementation**		
	A1	**A2**	**A3**	**A4**	**A5**		**A**	**P**	**I**
Erikson Institute: Linda Gilkerson, Mariana Souto-Manning	X	X				Both	X	X	
Governor's ECCE Funding Commission	X	X				Past	X	X	
Illinois Board of Higher Education: Stephanie Bernoteit	X	X		X		Both	X	X	X
Illinois Community College Board: Marcus Brown	X	X		X		Both	X	X	X
Illinois Dept of Children & Family Services: Chevelle Bailey	X	X	X			Both	X	X	
Illinois Dept of Human Services: Kirstin Chernawsky, Benny Delgado (EI), Kisha Davis (Quality), Lesley Schwartz (MIECHV)	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X
Illinois Early Childhood Asset Map: Dawn Thomas	X	X				Both	X	X	X
Illinois Early Learning Project: Micki Ostrosky									
Illinois Head Start Association: Lauri Morrison-Frichtl	X	X			X	Both	X	X	X
Illinois State Board of Education: Carisa Hurley	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X
Illinois Children's Mental Health Partnership: Katelyn Kanwisher									
INCCRRA: Joellyn Whitehead, Dan Harris	X	X	X			Both	X	X	
Northern Illinois University: Ben Boer	X	X			X	Both	X	X	X
Pyramid Model Consortium: Rob Corso		X		X		Both	X	X	X
Regional Offices of Education: TBD									
Start Early: Karen Berman	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X
NORC: Wesley Williams II, Michael Lopez	X	X	X	X		Both	X	X	X
The Center: Josie Yanguas	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X
Universal Newborn Supports System (ECCS) @ IDHS: Lori Orri	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X
Latino Policy Forum: Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X
Service Employees International Union: Brynn Siebert	X	X	X	X	X	Both	X	X	X

Project Budget and Budget Justification

Included in the budget below are allowable costs in accordance with 45 CFR Part 75 Subpart E. For Contractual, Illinois has and will follow all relevant federal and state requirements in selecting subrecipients and contractors for this grant; the Simplified Acquisition Threshold of $250,000 45 CFR 75.326-340 and 45 CFR 75.351-353 are being applied. The budget also includes a request for a Program Performance Evaluation which totals 6% ($240,000) of the project budget.

Activities: A = All Activities; **NA**=Needs Assessment (Activity 1); **SP**= Strategic Plan (Activity 2); **MFE** = Meaningful Parent and Family Engagement (Activity 3); **WBP** = Workforce Support & Best Practices (Activity 4); **PQI** = Program Quality Improvement (Activity 5); **PPE** = Program Performance Evaluation.

1. Personnel ($465,000)

Personnel Support Table				
Activity	**Position/Title/Description**	**Mos. /FTE**	**Salary**	**Federal Request**
A	Project Director	12 mo, 100%	110,000	110,000
A	Budget Specialist	12 mo, 100%	100,000	100,000
NA	Implementation Support-Data	12 mo, 100%	90,000	90,000
WBP	Implementation Support-Workforce	12 mo, 100%	90,000	90,000
SP, PQI	Implementation Support-EL Support	12 mo, 100%	75,000	75,000
Total Personnel				**$465,000**

Justification: ISBE needs additional staff to manage the implementation of this grant and to support the integration of the projects funded here with the overall early childhood system. These staff will develop and monitor subcontracts and/or Inter-Governmental Agreements (agreements between the state & its political subdivisions or other governmental units, e.g., state universities) with the organizations named in this grant and will ensure that all required reporting and record-keeping is completed in a timely manner. Three positions will be Personal Services Contracts, defined as hiring of an individual as an employee and not as an independent contractor, whether pursuant to an employee code or policy or by contract directly with that individual.

2. Fringe Benefits ($93,650)
Justification: Two positions will be regular employees (Proj Dir and Imp Supp-EL Support), and as such will receive full benefits, including: Retirement 10.89% of salary costs ($20,147); Health/Life/Dental Insurance @ $24,700 each ($49,400); and Medicare @ 1.45% (2,683). The remaining three staff will be hired on Personal Services Contracts, for which the only benefits are FICA @ 7.65% ($21,420).

3. Travel ($12,240)

Justification: Funds are requested to support required travel for annual grantee meeting and for staff to participate in learning communities as offered by ACF.

Purpose	Dest.	Staff	Days	Air	Hotel	Meals	Transp.	Total
Ann. grantee meeting	Wash. DC	4	3	450	250/nt	60/day	50	6,120
Learning community	TBD	4	3	450	250/nt	60/day	50	6,120
Federal Request								**$12,240**

4. Equipment – No equipment is requested through this proposal.

5. Supplies ($17,500)
Justification: The project request includes funds to purchase supplies necessary to achieve project goals including computers and consumable office supplies.

Activity	Item Description	Cost	QTY	Request
A	Computers for project staff	3,200	5	16,000
A	Office supplies, per staff position	300	5	1,500
Total Supplies—Federal Request				**$17,500**

6. Contractual ($3,220,711)

Activity	Contract Description	Calculation	Federal Request
NA	**IECAM-Univ of IL:** Developing Regional-level reports of ECCE participation	Developing regional reports: $100,000; Disclosure proofing of identifiable info: $25,000; Incorporating funding levels in regional reports: $50,000	$175,000
NA	**Northern IL Univ (NIU)-** Education Systems Center & IL Interactive Report Card (IIRC) Proj: Support for developing regional/local data reports & systems for ECCE	Implement state-of-the-art Early Childhood Integrated Data System for more accurate local/regional supply & demand: $100,000; Provide project management and data governance development support: $75,000	$175,000
NA	**NIU**-Education Systems Center IIRC: Support for developing EC Educator Workforce Dataset	Connect ISBE workforce data (EIS & ELIS) to CloudPac data environment: $50,000; Create integrated dataset: $50,000; Create project charter and necessary legal agreements: $125,000	$200,000

NA	**INCCRRA**: Integrate Gateways data into ILDS environment	Connect Gateways data to CloudPac: $25,000; Match data to integrate Gateways with ISBE educator data: $75,000	$100,000
NA	**INCCRRA:** Assessment of Home Visiting workforce needs	Salaries: $16,300; Fringe: $6,330; Supplies: $1,500; Travel for focus group participants/staff: $27,500; Software: $1,000; Indirect: $3,370	$56,000
NA	**Univ of IL-Chicago:** ECCE Workforce Portrait	Salary & fringe (Main, Maggin, two research assts., incl. tuition remission): $142,514; Consultant: $25,000; Supplies: $10,000; Travel: $5,000; Meeting costs: $1,685; Indirect: $15,801	$200,000
MFE	**Wendy McCullough:** Intermediary Structures Review & Planning	750 hours @ $200/hour	$150,000
MFE	**NORC at Univ of Chicago:** Integrating Family Voice Planning	Consulting hours (525 @ $200/hour): $105,000; Travel (local): $11,138; supplies: $1,721	$120,000
MFE	**Illinois Action for Children:** Staff support for Early Learning Council-Family Advisory Committee	Salaries: $105,000; Fringe: $34,650; Supplies: $11,576; Member stipends (300/mo*12 mo*16 members): $57,600; Mentor stipends" $7,500; Staff stipend: $1,200; Contracted training: $50,000; Interpretation services: $4,200; Indirect: $19,985	$291,711
WBP	**INCCRRA:** Prior Learning Assessment	Salaries: $37,120; Fringe: $10,800; Consultants (C-BEN, IHEs, state experts): $195,000; Indirect: $7,080	$250,000
WBP	**Pyramid Model Consortium:** PM Implementation Support Project	Salary & fringe: $152,000; supplies: $1,000; Travel (local & conf): $5,100; Software: $1,000; Indirect: $15,900	$175,000
SP/PQI	**The Center: Resources for Teaching & Learning):** English Learner Identification Project—Implementation Phase	Salary & fringe, Proj Dir .25FTE: $29,000; Pre-IPT test admin (8 consultants * 525 hrs/ea*$75/hr): $315,000; Travel-mileage (300 trips*100 mi*$.625/mi): $18,750; Pre-IPT online tests (7,500 @$4/ea.): $30,000; Pre-IPT kits (10 @ 188): $1,880; Supplies (8 iPads w cellular @	$488,000

		$750): $6,750; Stipends for teachers (600 @ $100): $60,000; Indirect: $26,620	
SP/PQI	**Early CHOICES:** EC Special Ed in Community-based Settings Project-Planning & Implementation Phases	Salaries: $126,300; Fringe: $25,239; Supplies: $7,000; Implementation stipends for 3 communities: $75,000 ($25,000 ea.); Travel-local & conf. ($10,390); Conf. Reg.: $1,610; Printing: $10,000; Phone/internet: $2,250; Graphic design & translation: $24,369; Postage: $4,000; Indirect: $13,842	$300,000
SP/PQI	**Start Early:** EC Special Ed in Community-based Settings Project-Planning & Implementation Phase	Salaries: $61,500; Fringe: $17,220; Supplies: $577; Travel-local & conf.: $2,225; Conf. Reg.: $1,610; Occupancy: $3,826; Indirect: $13,042	$100,000
PQI	**TBD** (IDHS will hire a contractor): Early Intervention Model Development	Contracted services: Salaries & benefits, $175,000; Stipends for parents/providers, $8,000; Graphic design & translation services: $17,000	$200,000
PPE	**IWERC:** Program Performance Evaluation	Salary & Fringe (Bates, Beilstein, Cashdollar, research specialist, two research assistants): $177,718; Tuition remission for assts: $19,545; Supplies: $10,000; Publication Costs: $4,000; Travel: $5,000; Indirect: $23,737	$240,000
Total Contractual			**$ 3,220,711**

7. Other ($0)

Indirect Costs: $190,899
Indirect costs are requested at 20.9%, the federally certified rate for the ISBE. Indirect is charged on personnel, fringe, travel, supplies, and on the first $25,000 of each of 13 contracts/Inter-Governmental Agreements.

Nonfederal Contribution
Commitment of Non-Federal Awards: The required match of at least 30% will be met by the end of the grant year using two ISBE Contractual programs that ISBE validated to meet all the criteria listed in 45 CFR 75.306 by cross checking the contract deliverables with the Activity Approach. These contracts are funded with state General Revenue Funds.
Nonfederal Contractual ($1,200,000)

Contractors supported by state funding will participate in activities as follows:

Contractor	Services/ Description	Relation to Grant	Total
IECAM-UIUC	Ongoing operations of IECAM	**NA**: Organizes data for annual needs assessment update	$700,000
INCCRRA	Gateways Scholarship	**WBP**: Supporting EC educators to achieve degrees	$500,000
			$ 1,200,000

Total Direct Costs: **$3,809,101**
Indirect Costs according to approved IDR: **$190,899**
Total Federal Request: **$4,000,000**
Nonfederal Contribution, exceeding required 30% of federal request: **$1,200,000**
Total Project: **$5,200,000**

Budget Summary			
Cost Category	**Federal**	**Nonfederal**	**Total**
1. Personnel	465,000		465,000
2. Fringe Benefits	93,650		93,650
3. Travel	12,240		12,240
4. Equipment			
5. Supplies	17,500		17,500
6. Contractual	3,220,711	1,200,000	4,420,711
7. Other			
Direct Costs	3,809,101	1,200,000	5,009,101
Indirect Costs	190,899		190,899
Total	4,000,000	1,200,000	5,200,000

Total Spent on Project Activities 1-5	
Activity	**Total**
1. Needs Assessment - Act. 1	$996,000
2. Strategic Plan – Act. 2	$100,000
3. Maximizing Parent and Family Engagement – Act. 3	$601,035
4. Workforce Support/Best Practices – Act. 4	$515,000
5. Improving Quality – Act. 5	$1,025,550
Program Performance Evaluation (6%)	$240,000