

# PDG Connection

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## A Message from the Deputy Associate Superintendent

Welcome to the Arizona Department of Education's Early Childhood Education Unit's first-ever Preschool Development Grant Newsletter! The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you informed of the tremendous work happening in communities all over the state of Arizona to implement the high-quality expectations of the Preschool Development Grant (PDG). Currently, there are 27 High-Needs Communities in which 55 programs are participating. This quarterly newsletter will be one way of telling Arizona's stories of struggles and successes through the lens of our regionally-assigned Education Program Specialists who are fully engaged in the work of PDG implementation. It is my hope you will become more familiar with the Education Program Specialist in your area, regardless of your participation in PDG, and as a result, get to know our unit more personally. If you are interested in reviewing Arizona's grant application, or would like more-specific information about the PDG, please visit our website at <http://www.azed.gov/early-childhood/preschool-development-grant/>. As the leader of the ECE Unit, I invite you to use me as an additional resource. My email address is [Nicol.Russell@azed.gov](mailto:Nicol.Russell@azed.gov) and my telephone number is 602.364.1530. Please reach out if you have questions, comments, or need additional assistance.



Sincerely,  
Nicol Russell,  
Deputy Associate Superintendent of Early Childhood &  
Director of the Arizona Head Start Collaboration Office



## WHAT ARE PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS?

Preschool Development Grants support states to (1) build or enhance their infrastructure to provide high-quality preschool programs, and (2) expand high-quality preschool programs in high-need communities. These States will serve as models for expanding preschool to all 4-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families.

### Preschool Development Grantees plan to:

- Create or expand high-quality preschool programs in high-need communities;
- Implement state-level infrastructure and quality improvements;
- Collaborate with selected programs and ensure strong partnerships between school districts and other early learning providers;
- Align preschool programs within a birth-through-third-grade continuum of services; and
- Create sustainable programs by coordinating existing early learning funds.



There are two types of Preschool Development Grants:



Development Grants are designed for states that currently serve less than 10 percent of four-year-olds and have not received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant.

States with Development Grants have ambitious and achievable plans to implement and sustain high-quality preschool programs that can reach and serve additional eligible children in one or more high-need communities.

Up to 35 percent of the Development Grant award may be used for state-level infrastructure and quality improvements.



Expansion Grants are for states that currently serve 10 percent or more of four-year-olds or have received a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant.

States with Expansion Grants have ambitious and achievable plans to implement and sustain high-quality preschool programs that can reach and serve additional eligible children in two or more high-need communities.

Up to 5 percent of the Expansion Grant award may be used for state-level infrastructure and quality improvements.

## 2014 GRANT AWARDS

### DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

AL	\$ 17,500,000
AZ	\$ 20,000,000
HI	\$ 2,074,059
MT	\$ 10,000,000
NV	\$ 6,405,860

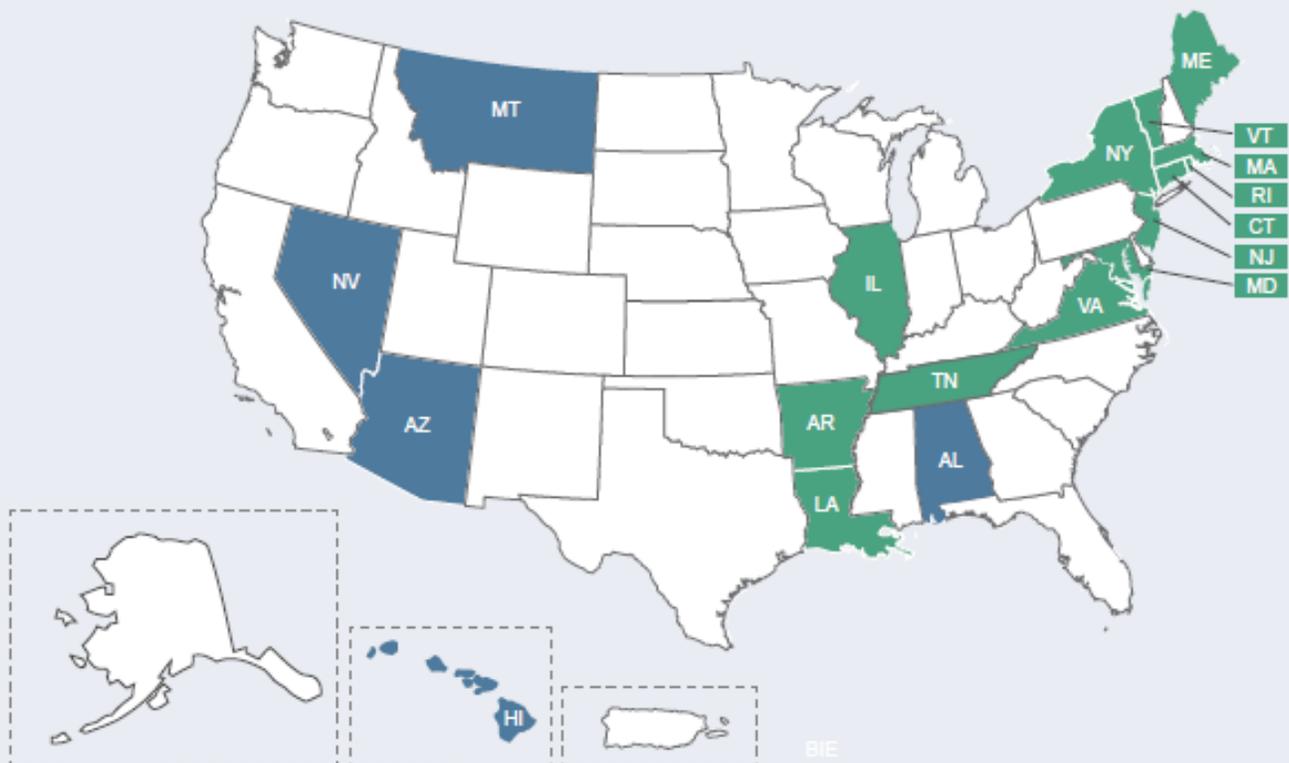
### EXPANSION GRANTS

AR	\$ 14,993,000	NJ	\$ 17,498,115
CT	\$ 12,499,000	NY	\$ 24,991,372
IL	\$ 20,000,000	RI	\$ 2,290,840
LA	\$ 2,437,982	TN	\$ 17,500,000
ME	\$ 3,497,319	VT	\$ 7,231,681
MD	\$ 15,000,000	VA	\$ 17,500,000
MA	\$ 15,000,000		

**TOTAL: \$226,419,228**

Over 18,000 additional children will be served in high-quality preschool programs in Year 1 of the program.

- States that received FY 2014 Preschool Development Grants – Development Grants
- States that received FY 2014 Preschool Development Grants – Expansion Grants



Preschool Development Grant Program is a discretionary grant program that is jointly administered by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

# PDG Photo Contest

In early November, ADE's Early Childhood Education Unit held a photo contest for Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Sub grantees.

Subgrantees were asked to submit photos of their classrooms, students engaged in learning or any photo that illustrates how the PDG has positively affected their programs. The response was overwhelmingly positive with programs submitting more than 60 pictures. The ECE Unit was excited to receive a variety of pictures from private, home-based, and faith-based programs.

Four winning programs were chosen to receive baskets full of educational materials for their classrooms. Congratulations to our winners and a big THANK YOU to all programs who participated in the contest. The four winning pictures are featured on this page. Look out for the next PDG contest for subgrantees in the Spring!



"Too Cool for School"



"Mae-Fun with Sand"



"Looking at Sand Dollars through Colored Lenses"



Buying a pumpkin

Waiting our turn

Introducing play money

Photo Collage "Waiting Our Turn/Buying a Pumpkin/Introducing Play Money"

**Congratulations to the winning programs and their accompanying pictures:**

Creighton Elementary District Creighton District ELC

"Too Cool for School"

Kindertots

"Looking at Sand Dollars Through Colored Lenses"

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Preschool

"Mae-Fun with Sand"

Childtime 1409

"Buying a Pumpkin/Waiting Our Turn/Introducing Play Money"

## Upcoming Events & Webinar Resources

### PDG Monitoring Protocol Webinar

January 21, 2016

11:00am-12:00pm

To access the recording, please click

[PDG Monitoring Protocol - recording\\_1](#)

### Supporting the Young Learner with Special Education Needs Summit

April 5-6, 2016

Glendale Civic Center

5750 West Glenn Drive. Glendale, AZ 85301

Click [here](#) to view the Summit flyer

### Developing a Thriving Reader Webinar

Webinar recording available online:

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=553835aaaadebe0c6033e78a>

Click below for accompanying handout:

<http://readonarizona.org/wp-content/themes/read-on/PDF/continuum-project-web.pdf>

### Child Find Webinar

Webinar recording available online:

<http://www.azed.gov/special-education/az-find/>

## PDG Portal

⇒ Access to PDG resources are just a few clicks away! Visit <http://www.azed.gov/early-childhood/> and click on the purple PDG widget located on the top right of the webpage and also pictured below:

**Preschool Development Grant**

⇒ Here you will learn about what encompasses a Preschool Development Grant, participating programs, programs awarded to date, community meeting resources, and access federal PDG links.

⇒ For useful materials specific to participating PDG programs, click Resources for Participating Programs at the bottom of the page and also pictured below:

**Resources for Participating Programs**

⇒ Here you can access Grants Management resources, download publications, and listen to recorded webinars and State Level COP meetings.

## Alma Quintana

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HNC: Avondale, Tolleson, Littleton,  
Paloma



*\*Alma is the grant administrator for the Preschool Development Grant. During a time of transition between Education Program Specialists, Alma provided support to several HNCs. This is her highlight of some of those programs.*

Peoria Unified School District (PUSD) has opened their first co-teaching preschool classroom funded by the Preschool Development Grant (PDG). There will be two certified teachers in this class; one certified in early childhood special education and the other in early childhood education. This pilot co-teaching classroom expands the district's co-teaching project from preschool through grade 12. The preschool classroom is one of many Early Childhood Center for Excellence in Learning (ECCEL) classrooms. According to the school administrator, “The ECCEL Preschool Program provides flexible programming that meets the needs of the whole child – socially, academically, and emotionally – to prepare them to enter kindergarten ready to learn.”

The High Needs Community of Washington has one of the largest partnerships within the PDG. This includes the City of Phoenix Head Start, Kindertots which is faith-based, and Kids Can Doodle, Lincoln Learning Center, Childtime, and Rehoboth Children’s Learning Center as the community providers. Through their collaboration, this High Needs Community is able to share and use the same referral process.

*In future publications, Alma will be featured in a section titled, “Ask Alma”. In this section, Alma will answer common questions related to the Preschool Development Grant that are submitted to the PDG inbox. To submit a question to be answered by “Ask Alma”, email [PDG@azed.gov](mailto:PDG@azed.gov). The author of each question will be kept anonymous.*



## Ariana Lopez

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HNC: Douglas, Wilcox, Santa Cruz  
Nogales

### Ariana's PDG Highlights

In Cochise County, the Douglas Unified School District was awarded 40 PDG full time slots, allowing them to open two new preschool classrooms in their district. In Willcox, Wesleyan Preschool and Childcare Center was awarded 10 PDG full time slots which has allowed them to open one new preschool classroom.

In Santa Cruz County, the Santa Cruz Unified School District in Rio Rico was awarded 78 part time slots, enabling them to expand their services to many more preschool children in their district. Douglas USD and Santa Cruz USD are both currently working on building community participation in their local Early Childhood Quality Improvement Practices (ECQUIP) meetings in order to expand the influence of the work they are doing with PDG.

Douglas USD has currently participated in 4 professional development opportunities and has 6 more opportunities scheduled. Wesleyan Preschool has currently participated in the Language and Literacy Module training and will be scheduling additional professional development opportunities.



## Elizabeth Hamilton

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HNC: Fowler, Glendale, Pendergast



**Fowler** - In Fowler with the PDG Funds, we trained 5 school principals on Teaching Strategies GOLD. This is going to allow teachers to receive local technical assistance (TA) when needed. In addition, Fowler will have the ability to track Head Start results and PDG results using data for longitudinal studies on how their high quality programs make a difference for children through grade 3 and beyond.

**Pendergast** - All teachers were trained on the Early Learning Standards of Fine Arts and Social and Emotional Development for children 3-Kindergarten entry. The modules were offered during PLC times and Saturdays so that others from the surround communities could also attend. With this training, the Pendergast PDG classroom will better prepare children for kindergarten through teaching self regulation skills as well as musical and dramatic arts.

**Glendale** - The Glendale community is a team of private care providers, faith-based providers, and the school district all uniting to enhance childcare quality in the community. The administrators from all sites received the ECQUIP training, Program Guidelines training, and Child Find training. This is incredibly beneficial to the children of Glendale as information about Child Find will spread and the High Quality Program Guidelines will become the standard in child care centers!

*\*In addition to the HNC responsibilities Elizabeth has, she also continues her work as the data strategist for the ECE unit. A key component of this work is the tremendous work she puts into supporting the field's use of Teaching Strategies GOLD.*



## Eric Bucher

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HNC: Washington, Deer Valley, Peoria

*\*Eric Bucher is new to the Early Childhood Unit. The timeframe for which this newsletter is presenting information was before Eric started his employment with ADE. Here is an opportunity to get to know him a little.*

Eric an Early Childhood Program Specialist whose special project is early childhood sciences, and he is an early childhood adjunct faculty with Paradise Valley Community College (PVCC), a NAEYC-accredited A.A.S. program. He also serves as the Vice President of Professional Development on the Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children (AzAEYC) board.

Eric's work includes nearly 8 years of dedication serving children, their families, educators, and the community around Arizona. Before joining ADE's Early Childhood Unit in December 2015, he facilitated high quality early childhood science professional development and family engagement with Arizona Science Center, serving thousands of children and adults each year. Eric's experience also includes providing job-embedded professional development with educators serving infants and toddlers, constructing and presenting meaningful workshops, and teaching and learning with children in a mixed-age program.

Eric attained a M.Ed. in Early Childhood Leadership and a B.A.S. in Early Childhood Education from Northern Arizona University (NAU). He received an A.A.S. in Early Childhood Education from PVCC through the TEACH scholarship. Eric is working towards an Ed.D. in Leadership & Innovation with Arizona State University (ASU).

Eric currently serves Northwest Maricopa and Yavapai counties and Litchfield Park.

## Erika Argueta

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HNC: Gadsden/San Luis, Crane,  
Somerton



*\*Erika Argueta is new to the Early Childhood Unit. The timeframe for which this newsletter is presenting information was before Erika started her employment with ADE. Here is an opportunity to get to know her a little better.*

My name is Erika Argueta. I serve La Paz, Mohave and Yuma Counties as an Early Childhood Education Program Specialist since October 2015. My role as a program specialist is to support LEAs & other members of the early childhood community ensure compliance with federal and state laws as they relate to early childhood through the provision of technical assistance and professional development.

I am working with South Yuma County subgrantees for the Preschool Development Grant to support high-quality implementation of the grant through technical assistance in support of standards, assessment, and collaborative quality improvement efforts.





## Lauren Zbyszinski, PhD

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HNC: Roosevelt

### Roosevelt HNC

Martin Luther King Jr. Early Childhood Center has successfully completed the first half of their school year, and has never been more excited to continue the year. Through the Preschool Development Grant, the MLK Early Childhood Center has been able to expand their preschool program, and continue offering exceptional early childhood opportunities to their community. In addition, the grant work has provided an avenue to partner with surrounding childcare programs, Head Start, and the community to plan, share ideas, create action plans, and implement professional development as a community of practice. Moving forward, the MLK Early Childhood Center will use these opportunities to ensure quality preschool for their community, as well as continuing to connect and support the work around the Kindergarten Project/Experience for Arizona.

### Fay Landrum Child Development Center (Washington HNC)

Through the Preschool Development Grant, Fay Landrum Child Development Center is excited to offer additional opportunities to their communities. They were passed through DHS licensing, enrolled in the Quality First Star Rating system, and opened an additional classroom for children. The center continues to engage in PDG collaborations, professional development, and action plans to bring the support to their community.

## Lori Masseur

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HNC: Alhambra, Wilson, Osborn



### **Program Spotlight: Osborn School District #8**

Built in 1998 at the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> St and Montecito, Montecito Community School was a beautiful state of the art school built to serve the children in the Osborn School District #8. The school with its courtyard and outdoor science lab was the most recent addition to the district. However, due to declining enrollment Osborn's Governing Board chose to close the campus three years ago. Fast forward to the summer of 2015, and with assistance from funds attained through the Preschool Development Grant, the Osborn Community Task Force conducted a community needs assessment and "recommended that the repurposing of Montecito School begin with an Early Childhood Community Center as the 'hub' and continue with opportunities for the whole community" (Montecito: A Community School A New Beginning." *Osborn Reporter* Spring/Summer 2015 ). This new center which will be called "A Place to Grow" will house 3 preschool classrooms receiving funding from the Preschool Development Grant. Two of these classrooms will be overseen by Osborn School District #8 and the other will be overseen by Southwest Human Development.

In addition to the reopening of the Montecito campus for early childhood classrooms, two other Osborn campuses will now be serving preschool children. Both the Solano and the Longview campuses will also be servicing children as a result of funding received through the Preschool Development Grant. The Solano campus classroom is full and the Longview campus currently has approximately 14 children enrolled.

With the opening of these 4 new classrooms Osborn has also created new and enhanced employment opportunities. Currently, two new certified teachers have been hired by Osborn to serve as lead teachers and a third is currently being recruited. In addition, the new staff being hired will be internal transfers of Instructional Assistants, enabling them to go from part-time to full-time employees.





## Millie Archer

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HNC: Sunnyside, Flowing  
Wells, Tucson Unified, Nogales

### **EMILY MESCHTER EARLY LEARNING CENTER FLOWING WELLS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT:**

*“Our community is thankful for the PDG as it has provides a quality preschool program for their young children to learn and grow. Each classroom teacher has been able to watch their students skills grow in all areas of development. When budgets are tight, it is amazing to have a program that is safe and secure, where teachers are professionals, and the environment is comfortable. Without this grant, all of these things may not be possible for the Flowing Wells community.”*

### **OCOTILLO EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER: SUNNY SIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT:**

From teacher Linda Velazquez :

*“Students are happy and thriving in our literacy enriched developmentally appropriate classroom. They really love to come to school! Parents are reading with them at home every night. We took them to the Valencia Library with their Parents to get their first library card and now the Children’s Librarian comes to read to our class 2 times a month. One student has read over 150 books with his parents to date.*

*Students are gaining self-confidence and an appreciation for the performing arts. We have been singing in both English and Spanish and doing ‘Ballet Folklorico’ dancing this year. Students who were very shy and ESL students are now enjoying performing and gaining self-confidence. We took our students to hear an ensemble from the symphony. We also took our students to the SW Nutcracker and the symphony at the TCC Music Hall. Their behavior in the Theater received many compliments by the ballet organizers as they were attentive and thoroughly enthralled by the performance. Now they ask if we can dance everyday!*

*ESL students have made great progress in English as well as their spoken Spanish this semester. Several of the students did not speak any English when we began in July and now show comprehension and understanding in both languages.*

*Students have shown improvement in social skills and good manners. We eat together family style and they share and have learned table manners. Visitors often comment on how they say please and thank you and are attentive to others.*

*Students are learning the alphabet and learning to write their complete name. All of the students can recognize and write their first name now and can recognize the letter or name of their peers.”*

# Tina Sykes

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HNC: Creighton, Balsz, Stanfield



## Booker T. Washington (Creighton HNC)

*“PDG Room #413 conducted a four week study on GERMS. Children learned about three problems connected to germs and what rules could be applied to correct the problem. An example when a person coughs there are tiny particles that travel in the air. To solve this problem, a child stated, “One can cover their mouth with their hand or use their arm when they cough”. Another child talked about germs on a toothbrush and stated that we need to wash our hands after we brush our teeth because there are germs on the toothbrush. Children had an opportunity to observe a dirty tissue in a plastic bag and a child commented that germs come from our nose, that’s why we need tissues. Teacher Elizabeth reported that the children enjoyed learning about germs & finding their own solutions to correcting the problem.*

*We are also excited about our students’ great attendance! Teachers are always encouraging parents to bring children to school every day and it’s paying off. Both classrooms have had above 90% in attendance.”*

### Room # 413

October 91.56%  
November 90.33%  
December 90.36%

### Room #231

September 94.52%  
October 91.88%  
November 92.00%  
December 92.14%

## Orangedale Early Learning Center (Balsz HNC)

*“Orangedale Early Learning Center is halfway through an amazing school year. With the support of the Preschool Development Grant we have been able to expand our typical preschool program. We are able to run a full spectrum of services for all students, including mainstreaming and inclusion service for our students with special needs. We are also partnering with Quality First this school year. The partnership will allow us to analyze data, access quality coaching, and provide high quality professional development for staff. Through the Preschool Development Grant we meet with other providers and Head Start to plan and share ideas and professional development. The partnerships through the Preschool Development Grant and Quality First have improved our classrooms and our relationships with the families. Moving forward we will be analyzing our ongoing classroom assessments, adding professional development and working with other preschool providers in our area to ensure quality preschool for all students.”*

## Stanfield Elementary School (Stanfield HNC)

*“Our classroom in Stanfield is licensed and we passed our annual inspection on 11/16/15! We have 34/40 students enrolled. We continue to partner and collaborate with Pinal Gila Community Child Services, our local Head Start program.”*



## Suzanne Perry

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Early Childhood Special Education  
Director

*\*Suzanne Perry is new to the Early Childhood Unit. The timeframe for which this newsletter is presenting information was before Suzanne started her employment with ADE. Here is an opportunity to get to know her a little better.*

Suzanne Perry has been with the ADE since 2011, having worked as both a monitoring specialist and training specialist in the area of autism and low incidence disabilities. Prior to ADE she was a special education teacher for the Madison School District for 15 years, teaching students with autism and emotional and behavioral disabilities. She achieved National Board Certification in 2001 in the area of Early Childhood Exceptional Needs, and received several other awards including district teacher of the year and the Shaklee Special Educator award. Suzanne has worked in private settings (Devereux, ACCEL, Menhune Montessori) both as a preschool teacher and special educator.

The most recent accomplishments are supporting the early and visionary work of Arizona Department of Education's Early Childhood Unit to develop sustainable practices in the area of autism by supporting teachers to implement key evidence based practices. Since 2013 more than 700 educators around the state have participated in training from the preschool to the high school levels. Several of the districts have elected to become training sites, to coach and train new practitioners within and outside of the district to enhance the educational experience of all of their students. Suzanne is proud to have developed the ADE's web page on Autism Resources and Supports, further enhancing learning opportunities for families and educators. She has presented at conferences on disability-specific topics, inclusive practices, and Statewide Systems of Support using Implementation Science in Arizona, Mexico, and Ireland. She attended ASU, University of Phoenix and NAU, and has two fantastic daughters (one of which is an educator herself).



Juliana Panqueva

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[Juliana.Panqueva@azed.gov](mailto:Juliana.Panqueva@azed.gov)

Hello!

My name is Juliana Panqueva and I am the Fiscal and compliance Program Specialist for the Early Childhood Education Unit. I oversee all the grants for the early childhood unit and ensure fiscal integrity within the unit as well as quality and compliance for our local Early Childhood Programs administered by the Arizona Department of Education.

I work closely with the Grants Management Unit to ensure all our grants are uploaded into the GME system and available in a timely manner for access. For the Preschool Development Grant I am in charge of the fiscal monitoring, the review of the expenditure reports, completion reports and reimbursement requests.

Please let me know how I can be of service.

Hello!

My name is Terry Doolan and I am the Early Childhood Education Director for the Early Childhood Education Unit. As part of the Early Childhood Education Administrative team, I participate in monitoring, analyzing of data, and decision making.

As part of the Preschool Development Grant Administrative team, I assist in overseeing the Preschool Development Grant, collaborate with Early Childhood Education partners, as well as direct, supervise, and coordinate Early Childhood Program Specialists.



Terry Doolan

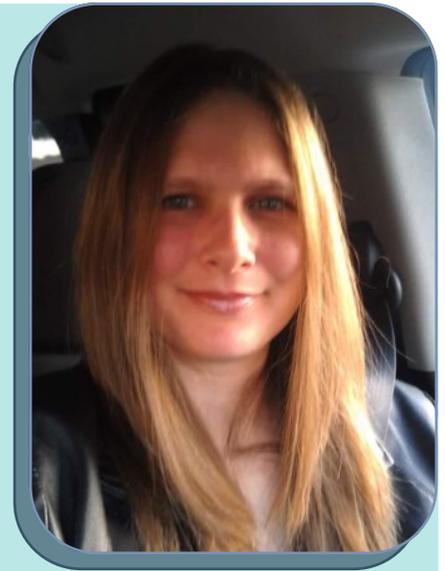
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Hello!

My name is Evelyn Irvine and I am the Early Childhood Education for the Early Childhood Education Unit. I answer the main line for the early childhood unit and assist in the coordination of professional development for ECE professionals in the field. I offer a variety of support to the specialists and directors within the unit as well as assist in ensuring quality compliance for our local Early Childhood Programs.

For the Preschool Development Grant, I manage all the internal databases and information related to the HNCs as well as ensure new sub grantees submit the GSA, the entity administrator form and the user access form to the appropriate location. I also help new sub grantees obtain SAM registration, DUNS numbers and CTDS numbers.



Evelyn Irvine

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Kristy Rosen

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Hello!

My name is Kristy Rosen and I am the Early Childhood Education Project Specialist for the Early Childhood Education Unit. I assist with the coordination of conferences and professional development, publish agency flyers and newsletters, manage the ADE ECE website, and assist the Fiscal Program Specialist with ensuring fiscal integrity within the unit.

For the Preschool Development Grant I work within a team of four specialists and directors to administer the PDG to programs. As part of the PDG Administrative team, I assist with ensuring compliance of all programs with the scope of work outlined in the PDG as well as assisting Program Specialists in providing technical assistance to sub grantees.



## WHAT A DIFFERENCE ONE PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT CAN MAKE: BRAIDED FUNDING LEVERAGES DISTRICT-WIDE QUALITY INITIATIVE

This story shares the work of one superintendent focused on solving a problem associated with educational inequality. Across the community, children's pre-K educational experiences varied significantly based on available resources and the quality standards of the various programs (e.g., public school, Head Start, community-based programs). Longitudinal district data indicated that students who experienced a high-quality preschool program did, in fact, outperform their peers on standardized tests through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The superintendent featured in this brief used Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funds to create a new administrative position (Director of Early Childhood) and significantly increased the number of 4-year-old children attending pre-K. PDG funds were also used to support professional development opportunities. In the words of this superintendent, "With our PDG funds and the work our Director of Early Childhood is doing, we are not just serving nearly 200 more 4-year-old children; we are ensuring that they are all receiving a high-quality pre-K education. We want identical high-quality services for all of our pre-K students."

### AS A SUPERINTENDENT, WHAT PROBLEM DID YOU OBSERVE?

I saw a problem and an opportunity. The problem was that we have real inequality in the area of pre-K. Although some children don't have the opportunity to attend preschool, even among those who do attend, the quality of their educational experiences varied tremendously. The more we looked at these concerns, the more we realized that we could do better. We needed to ensure that all preschool children received identical services. This became our opportunity to make a real difference.

### WHY CREATE A NEW POSITION, DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD?

As a district, we needed a strong commitment to pre-K education. We could see from our longitudinal data, tracking pre-K children into 8<sup>th</sup> grade, that some pre-K children outpaced their peers. We wanted to close that gap so that all students did well. With a Director of Early Childhood, we can actively work towards consistent quality in the areas of teacher education, classroom quality, family engagement, and transition plans for kindergarten. We can use data in each of these areas to ensure we are providing identical high-quality services to all pre-K children, regardless of family income.

### HOW IS THE POSITION FUNDED?

We combined funds from the Preschool Development Grant, Head Start, and our own district funds. This allows us to expand high-quality pre-K services to significantly more children and families. It touches all preschool teachers and all the children.

### CAN YOU SHARE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THE DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD FACILITATES IMPROVEMENT IN CLASSROOM QUALITY?

Our Director of Early Childhood uses data collected from measures such as Teaching Strategy Gold Assessment System and Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale to inform decisions regarding teacher professional development and what types of resources are provided to each classroom. Our Director also uses these data to guide his work with individual teachers in the areas of classroom quality, teacher-child interactions, and instruction.

### DOES THE DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD WORK WITH PRINCIPALS AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS?

Yes. We have in-service events related to PDG and early childhood education with strong attendance from our principals and teachers. They truly want to better understand early childhood education and a few principals are interested in pursuing their doctorate degrees in Early Childhood Education. This speaks to their commitment to young children. We also have a very comprehensive kindergarten transition program. This helps the pre-K teachers understand what children need to know for Kindergarten and it also helps the Kindergarten teacher better understand pre-K and what the children are experiencing.

### IN WHAT WAYS IS THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMUNITY INVOLVED?

First, our Director has partnered with faculty at our community college to pilot a new teacher education initiative. This is important because teachers need effective curriculum training and we want strong instructional consistency across the district. Second, we are using district funds to help some of our pre-K teachers obtain their 2-year and 4-year degrees in Early Childhood Education. In this way, we are growing our own high-quality teaching staff.

**WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?** This grant created the opportunity for the superintendent to effect meaningful change across the school district. This district does not simply serve more 4-year-old children. The district works to ensure that all children receive a high-quality preschool education and that quality continues into the elementary school.

*The PDG provides federal funding to strengthen early childhood education. A key provision is to increase access for 4-year-old children from high-need communities. The PDG also seeks to: enhance teacher professional development; improve classroom quality through infrastructure enhancements including QRIS; and establish inclusive classrooms to serve 4-year-old children with special needs.*



## Early Childhood Contact Information

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ECE Program Specialist	High Needs Community (HNC)	Monitoring	School Improvement	Counties
Alma Quintana 602-364-1910 <a href="mailto:Alma.Quintana@azed.gov">Alma.Quintana@azed.gov</a>	Avondale Tolleson Littleton Paloma	Paloma	Peach Springs	Mohave County (Littleton and Peach Springs) Coconino County (West of 64) Maricopa County(South West) Arlington, Buckeye, Gila Bend, Laveen, Liberty, Mobile, Murphy, Palo Verde, Phoenix, Riverside, Union, Saddle Mountain, Sentinel
Erika Argueta 602-542-3160 <a href="mailto:Erika.Argueta@azed.gov">Erika.Argueta@azed.gov</a>	Gadsden/ San Luis Crane Somerton	Parker	N/A	La Paz County Pima County(West – Ajo) Yuma County Mohave County (except Littleton and Peach Springs)
Elizabeth Hamilton 602-364-1948 <a href="mailto:Elizabeth.Hamilton@azed.gov">Elizabeth.Hamilton@azed.gov</a>	Fowler Glendale Pendergast	Heber-Overgaard Winslow Duncan	N/A	Greenlee County Navajo County (South of I-40)
Lauren Zbyszinski 602-542-1102 <a href="mailto:Lauren.Zbyszinski@azed.gov">Lauren.Zbyszinski@azed.gov</a>	Roosevelt	Dysart	Eloy Akimel O’Otham	Pinal County (only 2 districts/ charters) Eloy Akimel O’otham
Lori Masseur 602-542-3136 <a href="mailto:Lori.Masseur@azed.gov">Lori.Masseur@azed.gov</a>	Alhambra Wilson Osborn	Tuba City	Red Mesa	Apache County Coconino County (East of 64) Navajo County (North of I-40)
Ariana Lopez 602-542-4615 <a href="mailto:Ariana.lopez@azed.gov">Ariana.lopez@azed.gov</a>	Douglas Wilcox Santa Cruz Nogales	Douglas Apache Elementary	N/A	Cochise County Graham County Santa Cruz County

ECE Program Specialist	High Needs Community (HNC)	Monitoring	School Improvement	Counties
Millie Archer 602-364-1966 <a href="mailto:Millie.Archer@azed.gov">Millie.Archer@azed.gov</a>	Sunnyside Flowing Wells Tucson Unified Nogales	Vail Amphitheater San Fernando	Sunnyside	Pima County (East) Santa Cruz County Pinal County –Mammoth San Manuel, Picacho, Oracle, Ray, Red Rock, Superior, Toltec
Tina Sykes 602-542-3183 <a href="mailto:Tina.Sykes@azed.gov">Tina.Sykes@azed.gov</a>	Creighton Balsz Stanfield	Apache Junction Gilbert	San Carlos Coolidge	Gila County, Maricopa County (East) Chandler, Creighton, Fountain Hills, Gilbert, Higley, Kyrene, Mesa, Paradise Valley, Queen Creek, Scottsdale, Tempe Pinal County – Apache Junction, Casa Grande, Coolidge, Florence, J. O. Combs, Maricopa, Sacaton, Stanfield
Eric Bucher 602-542-3143 <a href="mailto:Eric.Bucher@azed.gov">Eric.Bucher@azed.gov</a>	Washington Deer Valley Peoria	Prescott Litchfield	N/A	Maricopa County (North) Aguila , Cartwright, Cave Creek, Isaac, Litchfield, Madison, Morristown , Nadaburg, Wick- enburg Yavapai County