Arizona's Preschool Development

B-5 Renewal Grant

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Arizona Department of Education

Early Childhood

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PROJECT SUMMARY

- Project Title: Arizona's Preschool Development B-5 Grant Renewal
- Applicant Name: Arizona Department of Education - Early Childhood
- Address: 1535 E. Jefferson St. Bin #15, Phoenix, AZ 85007
- Contact: Early Childhood Main Line: 602-364-1530; Brooke Colvin 602-542-3143
- Early Childhood Main: ECEInbox@azed.gov; ECE Director: Brooke.Colvin@azed.gov
- Website: www.azed.gov/ece

Realizing the Arizona Departments of Education's Vision, Equity for All Children to Reach their full potential, requires vulnerable communities to develop, and implement high-quality early care and education services that enable all children, to enter kindergarten prepared and ready to succeed. Arizona's plan outlines how it intends to use the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant funds to develop a highly-skilled and appropriately compensated workforce; increase access to high-quality early care and education; and to create pathways for Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programs to improve the quality of their services.

Arizona's plan outlines how the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), in partnership and with input from other early childhood care and education (ECCE) system partners, will further enhance the services made available by the sophisticated ECE system and increase access for more children to high-quality early learning settings. This plan details how ADE's partnerships with First Things First (FTF), Read On Arizona (ROA), and the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DCC) will be leveraged to significantly improve the State's ECCE infrastructure and keep its commitment to the mixed-delivery service model.

Arizona is applying for $14 million for each year of the grant which will significantly impact children and families throughout the state, particularly those from high needs communities. The impact of this grant will provide high-quality B-5 programming for 1,000 children and provide essential supports for the ECCE workforce.

ADE has the full support of the Office of Governor Doug Ducey, as indicated by his letter of support in the Appendix. Arizona will exceed the in-kind state match requirement and will be met by system and philanthropic partners.

Activity One: Update Comprehensive Statewide B-5 Needs Assessment

The focus for this grant application is for the state of Arizona to provide high-quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) services to all children across the state. This grant outlines how the Arizona Department of Education (ADE), First Things First (FTF), and AZ Department of Economic Security (DES) Division of Child Care (DCC). These three agencies (referred to hereafter as "System Partners") collaborated to create a comprehensive plant to best meet the needs of children and families across the state.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

Arizona's comprehensive statewide needs assessment leverages recently performed needs assessments of AZ Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) System Partners and used an initiative/funding inventory methodology to identify system strengths, challenges, gaps, and actionable next steps. AZ will commit to updating the needs assessment on an annual basis.

ADE convened seven regions throughout the state, representing diverse communities, to serve as Local Planning Committees (LPCs) to analyze data and offer strategies and actions for both the state and local level engagement. ADE invested in the development of community-based decision-making and governance through (1) Implementation Science, (2) Leading by Convening, and (3) the Lectio Process. ADE then commissioned a crosswalk and meta-analysis of information from all the strategic plans and needs and assets information as well as a synthesis of the LPC convenings.

Needs Assessment Updates

Updates from System Partners include the FTF 2021 Building Bright Futures, DES Division of Child Care (DCC)'s 2022 AZ Child Care Market Rate Survey, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), and the 2022 Child Care and Early Learning in AZ: A Landscape Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities. Candelen, a statewide systems partner, conducted a study to investigate parents' choices during the pandemic in Family Research: A Statewide Look at Arizona's Child Care Decision. Also, the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation's How Child Care Impacts AZ Workforce Productivity and the State Economy influenced the conversation around workforce. AZ hosted a convening of early childhood stakeholders, state leadership, business partners and champions. Building on the convening, a group of more than 50 early childhood champions, under the umbrella of the AZ Early Childhood Alliance (AZECA) in tandem with the Data Integration Workgroup (DIW) convened, reviewed information and data, discussed solutions to problems, outlined responsibilities and made recommendations leading a comprehensive update and analysis of Arizona's ECCE landscape.

Analyzed data revealed the COVID pandemic made ECCE even less accessible for many families. The early learning spectrum in AZ is based on a mixed delivery system with 2,501 centers licensed through the AZ Department of Health Services Child Care Licensure. 1,581 are centers, 672 are public schools operating preschool programs and 248 are small group homes. DCC has 1,257 family providers licensed through their system.

Many child care centers and homes closed due to concerns about safety. In the summer of 2020, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) reported 47% lost their pre-pandemic child care arrangements, and 70% were worried about returning to prior

arrangements. Centers that remained open during the pandemic had to shoulder costs related to cleaning and staffing changes. 56% of centers reported losing money while operating in December 2020, and one-quarter of home-based providers and one-third of center-based providers indicated that they would close in the next three months without additional support. Estimates indicate that monthly operating costs increased by an average of 47% nationwide. AZ costs were substantially more, potentially increasing by 84% for center-based providers ($685 to $1,257) and 75% for family home providers ($732 to $1281). Many providers continue to face staffing challenges and low enrollment driven in large part by the low wages in the early education sector.

DCC began implementing a 20-strategy child care recovery plan focused on four areas: stabilizing the child care network; expanding access to care; improving the quality of early learning; and accelerating educational support and early childhood literacy. These investments are aimed at preserving the early learning infrastructure. Despite these investments, utilization has been lower than initially forecasted. In December 2021 the DCC was serving approximately 10,000 fewer children.

Head Start programs in AZ have also seen a significant decline in enrollment since the pandemic. In 2022, the number of children served was 15,800, a 27% drop in enrollment from 21,000 in 2019. Only 18% of 4-year-olds were enrolled in publicly funded free or reduced-cost preschool programs, compared to 44% nationally in 2019. Thankfully, $56 million in additional federal funds from the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) allowed DCC to increase provider reimbursement rates.

Updated data for children with disabilities illustrates that only 2.3% of eligible infants and toddlers (5,225) receive early intervention services. These numbers are low compared to 3.5% served nationally. In 2014, at the time of the first Preschool Development Grant (PDG), ADE reported 22% of children with disabilities were served in regular early childhood classrooms; currently it is 31%. Overall, 8,086 children receive services under IDEA 619 in 2022 compared to 10,521 in 2019. This is addressed in Activity Five.

The entire ECCE system is based on the strengths of the teachers and caregivers, who are the key to quality. AZ offers college scholarships funded by FTF. In 2022, 737 early childhood educators received college scholarships that were issued to enhance qualifications for those working with young children and families. (More information about The Registry found in Activity Four). The AZ Workforce Registry (Registry) allows access to Child Care Education Institute (CCEI) a learning management platform offering professional development along a continuum of experience.

Based on child outcome data, AZ has made significant investment in developing the language and literacy skills of ECCE providers. In 2021, System Partners in concert with Read on AZ (ROA) began a thought partnership relative to advancing and accelerating early literacy. DCC invested a total of $47.2 million to expand literacy coaching, professional development on the science of reading (SOR), increased access to High-Quality Early Learning slots, and expansion of Quality First (QF). DCC investments relative to Data Integration and ECCE Strategic Finance Plan total $1.5 million.

AZ blends and braids funds to provide access for eligible children prior to kindergarten in communities that lack equitable educational opportunities for all children. DCC invested $45

million to serve approximately 1,200 children in 13 of Arizona's 15 counties through the High-Quality Early Learning (HQEL) program. FTF provides funding through QF scholarships to 6,687 children Birth to 5. The mixed delivery system also includes school districts, private and non-profit child care, and Head Start B-5. In addition, some local efforts provide funding for additional slots such as the City of Tempe and in the Sky Harbor Airport City of Phoenix.

Another strength of the AZ system is the work regarding integrated data systems to inform systems level decisions and ECCE investments. This work has resulted in mapping our ECCE gap, examining high need low resource areas, and examining investments to support children and families. Previous PDG grants funded $2.2 million to support infrastructure-building in Information Technology (IT) to align preschool data with ADE's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). This included unique identifiers for all B-5 students, allowing subgrantees to submit assessment data. This work resulted in data visualization for parents, schools, and teachers on our School Report Cards (SRC) site including non-district sites such as child care centers and Head Starts.

Significant investments in AZ have been made in family engagement and support efforts. With FTF funding, 18,000 families attend parenting activities or receive referrals to needed services through Family Resource Centers. 7,282 families participated in activities to increase their awareness of core areas of family functioning and children's development. 4,280 families with young children participated in voluntary home visiting programs proven to reduce parental stress levels, increase connections to community supports, and improve children's cognitive, motor, behavioral and social-emotional development.

Activity Two: Update the Statewide B-5 Strategic Plan

Analysis of data has led ADE to propose an approach designed to improve services for low-income and disadvantaged children in our state. Specific goals and activities were created through a series of convenings between March and September of 2019 as part of the PDG B-5 Year 1. That work resulted in strategies and activities predicted to address and support the goals in Workforce Development, Early Learning Gaps and Access, Inclusive Environments, Kindergarten Transition, and Language and Literacy. The illustration below shows the goals from 2019 linking to the current updates and including work that has continued despite AZ not having received funding in the last iteration of PDG.

AZ Higher Education Accreditation Facilitation Project (AzHEA) began in June 2019 with funding from the PDG. Funding paid for 10 Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) accreditation site visit fees for new programs, or maintaining accreditation and coaching. Another strategy under this goal was the use of a Workforce Liaison to advance teacher preparation and workforce initiatives within 6 IHE including 1 Tribal College. This resulted in 57 ECCE students achieving Associate Degree completion.

AZ does not have universal preschool access and with limited resources funding must be targeted to high needs communities. Since the last grant, ADE partnered with Read On AZ (ROA) and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) to launch a data-mapping tool called MapLIT. This serves as a one stop for resource to identify key data sets that impact school readiness and early literacy, inclusive of gaps analysis by varying geographies. This data and information will be used to identify areas for ADE to target.

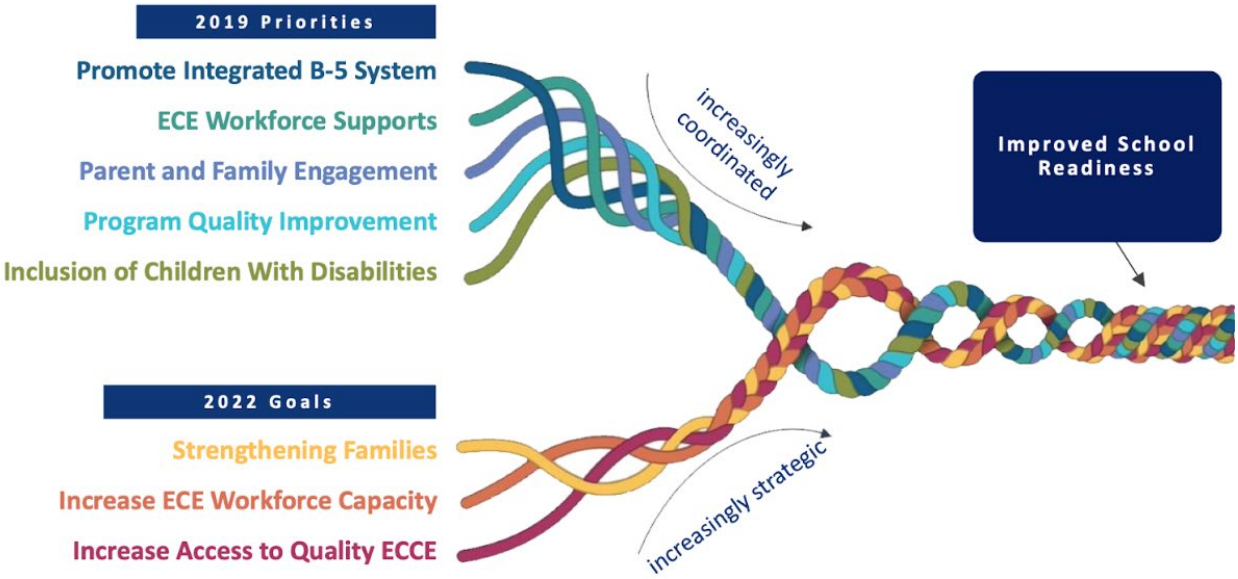
Since 2019, AZ has continued its quest to increase the number of children who access high quality inclusive environments and improve the inclusion of young children with disabilities. In order to support a true mixed delivery system based on parental choice and the correct match for a child's need, AZ proposed using an Itinerant Service Model of Early Childhood Special Education and use of the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) to evaluate and improve the quality of inclusive experiences of young children ages 2-5 with disabilities. The COVID pandemic resulted in the closing of classrooms and these projects were not realized.

The Kindergarten Transition for All initiative is another strategy to address our goals. Activities included convenings of local education agencies, families, teachers, and local support services. During the COVID pandemic many of these activities were put on hold. However, during this time, System Partners worked to support the passing of Senate Bill 1572 which included the statewide adoption of a common Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA). The KEA will use a statewide tool to evaluate all Kindergarten students in the state across domains of learning. This monumental step is seen as critical to supporting a B-5 system at the state level and transition planning at the local level.

In 2019 ADE made a commitment to invest in Teaching Reading Effectively which aimed at increasing teacher knowledge around the SOR and improving teacher best practices. As a result about 6,000 teachers attended that training. Update work through a systematic, capacity-building approach has led the state to dedicate funding for 69 cohorts, representing, 2,700 early childhood educators have been training in the Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling LETRS®.

Also in the initial PDG planning grant, ADE proposed becoming a statewide implementor of the Pyramid model. Since 2019, ADE used CCDF relief dollars to begin the process. In addition, two ADE staff have became certified trainers in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and Protective Factors. As a result, 470 educators have been trained.

The goals moving forward will braid the priorities identified in 2019 with three new enhanced goals centering on (1) Strengthening Families, (2) Increasing the capacity of the workforce, and (3) Increasing access to high quality early learning for children from vulnerable populations.



Promoting an integrated B-5 System

ADE and System Partners are coordinating to build both statewide and local B-5 systems. Data suggests that there are not enough infant and toddler slots, signifying the need for Infant-Toddler Startup Grants to further build local B-5 continuum. ADE will provide startup or

expansion grants to a minimum of five ECCE programs serving infants and toddlers. Funding will also be allocated to expand an estimated 1,000 slots in high needs communities to fill in service gaps at the local level. (A high needs community (HNC) is a geographically defined area, such as a city, town, county, neighborhood, district, rural or tribal, or consortium thereof, with a high level of need as determined by the State Department of Education). All subgrantees identified in this project will be required to work with local education agencies to improve school readiness and implement an early childhood transition process. This will require local education agencies to implement the ADE Early Childhood Quality Improvement Process (ECQUIP), which is also discussed in Activity Five.

Multiple data sets show that the B-5 workforce is in severe need of support and attention. To address this, ADE will hire a full-time FTE dedicated to internally coordinating the ECCE workforce issues and represent ADE in external endeavors. This position will also be the liaison with the IHE, Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, and those working on Recruitment and Retention efforts.

ADE also proposes to pilot a wage enhancement strategy for the selected early childhood programs in targeted communities who will receive subgrants. Based on the AZ estimates for the cost of quality, ADE will require site staff to be compensated based on the AZ Early Childhood Educator Salary Scale. Activity Four is dedicated to further discussion about the workforce.

Strengthening Family Engagement

ADE will build meaningful family engagement along a continuum of options. Based on previous gap analysis, ADE proposes an expansion of the successful Statewide Family

Engagement Centers. In partnership with ROA and several local ECCE system partners, programming in local hubs empowers families with the skills, tools, and resources to make informed, evidence-based decisions regarding their children's educational needs. More about Family Engagement will be found in Activity 3.

Supporting Program Quality and Improvement

The State Advisory Council (SAC), the FTF Board, has identified a 70% voluntary participation of regulated early care and education programs in QF as the scalable rate. QF is Arizona's Quality Improvement and Rating System with participation representing 37% of the total regulated ECCE providers. Subgrantees will be required to participate in a quality improvement pathway. More in Activity Five.

A second way that AZ will support quality improvements is with an investment in the skills and knowledge of the ECCE staff. Discussed further in Activity Four ADE will work to increase the number of highly effective ECCE providers through the coordination and access to a continuum of professional development opportunities.

Inclusion of Children with Disabilities

Based on IDEA data, ADE proposes to increase the percentage of children with disabilities served statewide from 31% to 50% served in inclusive settings through blending and braiding of funds. The proposed infant toddler startup grants will allow for additional inclusionary slots. More on this topic is discussed in Activities 5 & 6. ADE will update the ECE Funding Manual and will provide a minimum of three annual PD sessions highlighting efforts

and offering technical assistance and support for funding ECCE and using all available resources.

Improving access to high-quality inclusion requires teacher skill and knowledge. Over the course of this grant opportunity, the Registry will offer expanded offerings for inclusion and special education. A baseline minimum will be determined in Year 1 for participants with an expected increase in participation of 10% per year. ADE also plans an expansion of the Itinerant Service model and will dedicate funds towards an FTE to support the use of the ICP tool to improve inclusionary settings and support for Early Childhood Special Education Summit.

As part of the B-5 System, DCC funds help to reduce family costs for child care, expand the availability of preschool, improve the quality of early learning settings, promote early literacy and help early educators support the social-emotional development of young children and prevent expulsions by coaching educators on addressing with challenging behaviors. In addition, as a result of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA), the DCC received an increase in CCDF award of approximately $1.3 billion. The increased award is being allocated across different CCDF fund sources, which have specific spending categories to strengthen and stabilize Arizona's early childhood education and child care network, focusing on 4 strategic areas (1) including the expansion of access to care, (2) investment in quality, (3) acceleration of educational support and early childhood literacy and (4) stabilize the child care network of providers.

As a result of the federal investment in CCDF, there has been historic increases in DCC child care provider reimbursement rates and enhanced quality rates, which have made a

considerable impact in creating access to high quality child care by closing the cost gap for families and child care providers in the current network. For example, pre-pandemic in January 2020, the average monthly subsidy payment for a child was $477 and currently, the reimbursement is $642 per child. With a quality increase for a 5-Star Center the rate jumps to $1,055.

The gap in access to quality care is largest in rural and tribal areas of the state. The CCDF and Early Head Start programs are by far the largest—and often the only—public funds available to support infants and toddlers. Initiated in July 2021, Arizona's Child Care Stabilization Grant (CCSG) Program was designed to sustain Arizona's child care network by giving a consistent, reliable funding source directly to child care providers to cover increased cost and challenges due to COVID through June 2023. In accordance with the ARPA Stabilization requirements, monthly reporting to DCC makes it clear that providers are utilizing the majority of their CCSG funds on meeting basic needs focusing on personnel costs, rent, mortgage, and utilities.

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

Through extensive cross-sector partnerships and initiatives, families have access to the knowledge they need of the State's mixed delivery system of ECCE services and are afforded a wide variety of opportunities to participate in their children's care and education. And to ensure optimal participation.

AZ supports the role of families as ECCE consumers who need information to make informed choices regarding the services that in a mixed delivery system. That best suits suit their needs. The AZ Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) is contracted to provide a public-

facing 24-hour, consumer-friendly website for families, the general public, ECCE providers, early childhood professionals, and other stakeholders. Including tribal families and families with limited English proficiency. CCR&R uses targeted strategies to ensure tailored consumer education information for families, the public and ECCE providers to assist them in accessing high-quality ECCE through the use of Community Engagement Specialists who can connect to comprehensive supports. Based on family needs, preferences, and identified eligibility, the CCR&R service will provide referrals to DCC or other State Agencies for early learning options such as child care or as a strategy to identify families who may be eligible for child care assistance, QF scholarships, or Head Start programs as well as services such as the AZ Early Intervention Program.

FTF made significant investments in a wide variety of strategies designed to support the needs of families and local communities, including FTF's 10 tribal regions. The family support approaches used by First Things First fall along a continuum to meet the varying needs and preferences of families. The services offered by FTF increase in intensity, frequency, and duration, addressing universal needs of all families of young children and to very targeted needs of specific populations of families and caregivers.

FTF funds two statewide strategies aimed to support parents and caregivers: the Helpline and the Parent Kit. The helpline is a free service open to all AZ families with young children looking for the latest child development information from experts in the field. The Parent Kit supports parents of newborns with relevant and timely information on caring for a baby in the first year of life and is delivered in hospitals across AZ.

ADE as demonstrated by its vision statement, is committed to equity for all students to achieve their fullest potential. Honoring this includes targeted supports to families who serve as their child's first teacher. ADE has a long history of supporting high impact and high quality family engagement. As a compliment to the family engagement activities mentioned above, ADE proposes to expand Arizona's Statewide Family Engagement Center (SFEC) to address the disruption in early learning caused by COVID. Overseen by ROA, the SFEC is state and national a collaborative effort among state and national partners to develop and implement a systematic, high impact infrastructure of family engagement that improves student academic achievement, empowers parents and increases the capacity of state agencies and organizations to provide high-quality family engagement supports for both parents and practitioners. With 14 current SFEC regional hubs, from varying geographic regions around the state, communities deliver evidence-based family literacy and engagement programming that aligns to the specific needs of their communities to address such topics as support for English language learners, culturally responsive family engagement practices, supports for children with. With an active Parent Leadership Council, local SFEC hubs seek to elevate family voice and build family capacity to make informed decisions on behalf of their children and inform policy recommendations to ADE.

By utilizing and expanding upon our existing partnerships in family engagement and early literacy and providing regional autonomy to determine the strategies that best fit the needs of their communities, the SFEC will advance efficacy and sustainability in program practices and create partnerships grounded in equitable, evidence-based practices.

Since the initial introduction of SFEC in AZ in 2018, the State has leaned into our strong collective impact model, utilizing collaborative partnerships with other stakeholders and sharing expertise in family engagement and literacy to create sustainable change for Arizona's children, families, and communities. The project will leverage our existing partnership with ROA, to provide targeted technical assistance, capacity building and key resources to these hubs as identified in Activity Five. A critical component of this model is promoting active, sustainable engagement between families, their children's schools, and community partners committed to increasing family literacy and well-being. ADE proposes to strengthen family engagement and access to services, information and resources by expanding the family engagement hub model to include three additional sites by the end of year three that provide evidence-based supports, trainings, and resources that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and targeted to the needs of the community and region in which they are located.

This approach proposes to improve literacy outcomes and scale up family engagement utilizing a two-prong approach that focuses on the necessary cross-agency collaboration and coordination needed at both the state and local level to mitigate the significant impact of the pandemic on Arizona's most-disadvantaged students and families.

Driven by community needs assessments and data analysis, the SFEC and regional community-level hubs, will provide targeted, evidence-based strategies, services, and supports to engage families in high need communities serving Arizona's most disadvantaged students to promote equity in accessing educational resources and opportunities leading to accelerated language and literacy outcomes. One data activity that ADE and regional hubs will engage in is a

family engagement imitative inventory to assess the availability of family engagement opportunities and resources across the state.

Statewide activities include cross sector and cross agency trainings on the AZ Family Engagement Framework; family engagement learning cohorts; enhancement of family engagement and literacy-based resources; convening of an ECCE chronic absenteeism task force; and designating a parent-majority special advisory committee to inform the needs assessment. Local-level activities include development of regional hubs to provide training and direct programming services to families; collaboration and coordination of direct services for families through a menu of evidence-based programs; and delivery of training and technical assistance to providers. ADE will implement the use of a family pre and post questionnaire to assess increases in parent capacity and knowledge.

The model will scale up family engagement practices and improve literacy outcomes for Arizona's most disadvantaged children and their families by focusing on two capacity-building goals aligned with the AZ Family Engagement Framework. Goal 1) Sustaining and continued development of state-level family engagement center to support strengthening of family engagement system for AZ through coordination of collaborative training, technical assistance, and leadership opportunities; and Goal 2) Enhancement of a network of regional family engagement and literacy hubs to support local family engagement, evidence-based direct service, and resources to high needs communities and families as well as training to providers in the region on evidence-based family engagement practices.

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

ADE intends to increase the skills and knowledge of ECCE professionals, thus improving access to quality. Data from the needs assessments point to the need for both recruitment and retention efforts and increased development of the knowledge and skills within the ECCE workforce. Administrative oversight of the early learning space is decentralized across multiple state agencies in AZ. Educational attainment and professional development requirements vary widely by funding source, agency regulations and quality efforts.

The current and proposed focus is based on developing both knowledge and understanding of best practice as well as the development and refinement of skills through implementation methodologies. Across the B-5 ECCE mixed delivery system, three key agencies, FTF, DCC, and ADE collaboratively fund professional development to improve implementation of quality early learning practices. With Child Care Licensure only requiring a high school diploma or a GED, there is a perpetual need to support the preservice and in-service provider.

Professional development is typically organized through formal and community-based offerings. AZ offers a suite of professional development opportunities individualized to meet specific needs and offered in accessible ways. For example, CCEI, an online professional development platform with more than 200 course offerings, is available to 15,000 practitioners through funding from FTF. In addition to generalized content, specialized coaching is made available through QF, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC), Child Care Health Consultation, Inclusion coaching and literacy coaching on the SOR in specifically funded

communities around the state. DCC funds a statewide Suspension and Expulsion Prevention program, AZSTEPS which includes a community of learner's pilot.

The state of AZ has long recognized the need for a comprehensive system that would ensure a path toward building the capacity and efficacy of the workforce. Current data shows that PD needs will vary greatly from the experienced implementers of quality working through the pandemic to the influx of new staff. The ASU Center for Well Being is conducting a statewide needs assessment on existing training and professional development to ascertain gaps and offer recommendations.

FTF and System Partners created an integrated professional development system in 2012. This integrated early childhood professional development system includes: (1) Professional Development website including competencies, career pathways, employment opportunities, and the Registry. PD offered via this website includes PD from ADE, DCC and outside vendors such as Cox Campus and Head Start; (2) The Registry is a web-based system to find, register and track professional development opportunities. It also manages College Scholarships for Early Childhood Professionals; (3) The AZ Workforce Knowledge and Competencies is a uniform set of expectations that identify the basic knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for early childhood professionals; (4) The AZ Career Lattice provides the pathway of education, and the Professional Development Instructor and Technical Assistance Provider Standards define the credentials, knowledge and experience necessary to ensure high quality professional development. Ten years after its inception, the Registry services almost 24,000 active teachers, 22,500 assistant teachers, 6,200 ECCE center directors, and 1,000 family child care providers.

ADE plans on supporting the ECCE workforce by increasing the field's capacity and understanding of the true cost of child care in order to ensure early learning staff have access to fair wages and compensation. DCC focused a large portion of its stabilization funds on supporting the child care workforce. Effective July 2022, the CCSG amount was awarded to recipients who certified using the amount for personnel costs including payroll/wage supplements, bonuses, and employee benefits. Workforce amounts ranged from $2,000 to $25,500 across the mixed delivery system. Programs who received child care stabilization grants were required to certify that each employee was paid at least the same amount in weekly wages and maintain the same benefits (such as health insurance and retirement, if applicable) for the duration of the grant. Since this did not ensure that funds were being utilized to support increased compensation or the provision of employee sponsored benefits, the additional layering of the funding allowed for approved providers to directly address financial relief and/or compensation of its workforce. Approximately $724 million out of the $1.2 billion in relief funds was set aside for stabilization grants. Monthly payments directly to providers (between $500 and $10,000) can be used for a variety of workforce costs. Another source is the workforce grants. Beginning in July 2022, providers receiving the stabilization grants could receive an additional monthly amount – between $250 and $15,500 per month for increasing wages, employee benefits, or other recruitment and retention activities.

Two relevant and current studies were commissioned by two key partners (FTF and DCC) that provided state specific information about the wages and compensation of the early learning workforce: the biennial Market Rate Survey and the Cost of Quality Study. Results indicate AZ mirrors national data trends that identify workforce wages and compensation to be woefully inadequate. The wages and benefits for classroom staff account for between 60% and

80% of total expenses. Given that these are the largest expenses and areas where providers have some flexibility, these are also the factors with the largest differences between providers' reported expenses and the cost of quality care.

Workforce Compensation

ADE proposes to pilot a workforce wage enhancement strategy within the identified subgrantees. ADE will ensure subgrantees compensate staff based on the AZ Educator Salary Scale. ADE staff will update the ECE Funding Manual and make use of it to assist programs in funding for quality. This information will be captured in the ADE reporting system. Lessons learned from this demonstration project will be used to build understanding within the field and potentially be used for scaling or as part of future policy agenda.

Recruitment and Retention

In collaboration with System Partners, ADE will address efforts to improve recruitment and retention of the ECCE workforce. ADE will hire and dedicate an FTE to serve as a Workforce Liaison for B-5 retention and recruitment purposes. This is meant to ensure the ECCE needs are a priority within the agency and ADE has representation externally with statewide efforts. Responsibilities of this staff person will require them to be a thought partner in the statewide Professional Development Advisory Group. This group works toward increasing collaboration among the state agency PD offerings. The FTE will also build relationships and work in accordance with Institutes of Higher Education on re-envisioning recruitment campaigns. The FTE will also work directly with the statewide director for Early Childhood

Career and Technical Education on issues related to developing a pipeline of students with the propensity for the field of early childhood.

Current ECCE certification data indicates that 76% of those with a current and valid certificate are no longer serving as early childhood educators. Only 3,518 out of the 14,965 with current certificates or endorsements were reported as a teacher of record in a content position of early childhood education, despite the fact that ADE issued 401 new ECCE endorsements over a three-year time frame and 2,544 new ECCE certificates. This data reflects a need for AZ to address the loss of certificated early childhood educators and to devise recruitment and retention strategies to codify a strong ECCE workforce that is professionalized and highly qualified.

ADE will work with System Partners and community partners to enhance education and recruitment of a diverse workforce. The new FTE will participate with the CTE and Retention and Recruitment staff at ADE to ensure the needs of the B-5 community are included in campaign efforts addressing the teacher shortage. ADE will work to promote the AZ Teacher Academy (ATA) by funding 20 scholarships for early childhood certificates/degrees. In addition, ADE will leverage the new Experienced Educator Rule to conduct targeted outreach to the vast number of educators with ECCE certification currently not working in the field.

ADE proposes to invest an additional $1.2 Million dollars over three years to support degree attainment in the areas of early childhood and early childhood special education. ADE proposes to engage in a marketing campaign to elevate and communicate about The Experienced Educator Rule, for twenty dollars, will allow previously certified teachers to renew certificates that have expired between two and ten years with no additional professional development required.

In addition, as of June 2022, 775 ECCE practitioners received scholarships through FTF's commitment of $5,937,581. FTF bachelor's degrees target center directors and other instructional leads while supporting Child Development Associate (CDA) and associate degree attainment with all other levels of professionals as a key strategy to removing barriers to higher education.

ADE proposes to extend the DCC apprenticeship program, via a $2.8 million investment, after federal CCDF COVID relief dollars have been expended. The DCC Professional Career Pathway Project (PCPP) provides equitable access to college coursework statewide by funding tuition, registration and/or course fees, and textbook stipends to allow child care providers and eligible students to meet their individual educational goals and earn stackable early childhood

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Professional Career Pathway Project

Arizona Early Childhood Educator Salary Scale

Completed Formal Education	Arizona EC Educator Lattice Level	Target Hourly Wage Floor	12-Month Annual Salary Floor
Educator - High School Diploma or Equivalent	**Educator**	$15.00	$31,200
Early Childhood Educator I (ECE I)			
ECE I - Completion of a Professional Preparation Program* or Industry Recognized Credential such as CDA or MACTE	**ECE I** **ECE I IA** **ECE I IB**	$16.00 $16.25 IA $16.50 IB	$33,280 $33,800 $34,320
ECE I Advanced - Certificate of Completion in Early Childhood (with at least 18 credit hours in early childhood)	**ECE I Advanced** **ECE I IA Advanced** **ECE I 1B Advanced**	$17.00 $17.50 IA Advanced $18.00 IB Advanced	$35,360 $36,400 $37,440
Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II)			
ECE II Associate Degree in Early Childhood (with at least 18 credit hours in early childhood)	**ECE II** **ECE IIA** **ECE IIB**	$19.00 $20.00 IIA $21.00 IIB	$39,520 $41,600 $43,680
Early Childhood Educator III (ECE III)			
ECE III- Bachelor's Degree (with at least 18 credit hours in early childhood) **ECE III- Related** (Bachelor's degree not in ECE but with at least 18 credits ECE) **Current AZ Elementary Teacher Salary**	**ECE III** **ECE III Certified** **ECE III Related**	$23.00 III $23.00 III Related $24.15 III Certified $23.10*	$47,840 $47,840 $50,240 Certified $48,050*
ECE IV - Master's Degree (with at least 18 credit hours in early childhood)	**ECE IV** **ECE IV- Related**	$26.00	$54,080

- Roles aligned to the Unifying Framework for the Early Childhood Education Profession: http://powertotheprofession.org/unifying-framework/
- MIT Living Wage Calculator for Arizona- https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/04
- The Self-Sufficiency Standard determines the amount of income required for working families to meet basic needs at a minimally adequate level, taking into account family composition, ages of children, and geographic differences in costs. http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/Arizona/

credentials, certificates, and associate degrees. Beginning in January 2023, through the PCPP and Central AZ College, AZ will establish an Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship Pathway. Programs participating in the PCCP will be implementing the launch of the Arizona Early Childhood Educator Salary Scale.

DCC will provide assistance to PCPP and the Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship Pathway through the AZ Apprenticeship Office in registering apprenticeship programs and their apprentices, providing technical assistance and conducting reviews for compliance with Federal Regulations and quality assurance assessments. DCC will also provide financial support through stipends to Journey workers and paid professional development to participating child care providers who have completed the employer acceptance agreement as defined in the Standards of Apprenticeship.

One way that ADE proposes to support recruitment is through mini grants issued to the Early Childhood Education and Education Professions Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs. ADE will use an application process to identify appropriate recruitment such as offering stipends to CTE teachers who conduct outreach and recruitment to the field in hours outside of their contract; provide transportation to early childhood sites in order for students to participate in workforce based learning opportunities; pay for transportation to field trips or internships; assist students in obtaining certifications such as Fingerprint Clearance Cards, TB tests, Food Handlers, CPR/First Aid; and covering expenses that allow CTE students to participate in state or national early childhood affiliate clubs or associations such as AzAEYC or Future Teachers of America affiliates.

Professional Development System and Dissemination of Best Practice

ADE plans on supporting the workforce by increasing availability of professional learning opportunities. Working with System Partners over the next three years, ADE will increase the number of training available in the Registry in the content areas of Social Emotional Development, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Early Learning Standards, Infant Toddler development and the SOR. Identification of the specialized discourse was based on feedback from the field pertaining to the immediate needs of the ECCE field by onboarding new staff and addressing challenging behaviors. ADE will dedicate funds to work collaboratively with System Partners to modernize the Registry. Updates will expand the platform to include technological and program enhancements to the Professional Profile and a user-friendly dashboard in the Registry, in coordination with other state agency program information. It will allow personalized visualizations of licensing requirements, professional development requirements and pathways to growing ECCE careers.

A critical component of the support for programs is the statewide Pyramid Model (PM) implementation and evidence-based ECMHC where available. Continuing social emotional support services through PM and ECMHC as well as implementing corresponding policies allows for a comprehensive approach to serving children that may need additional services. A recent pull of social emotional child outcomes data demonstrated that since the onset of COVID that there has been an increase in the percentage of children not meeting widely held expectations. Based on this data the targeted supports being provided by PM and ECMHC will help to address social emotional development, trauma-informed care, and a reduction in suspensions and expulsions.

ADE and its System Partners seek a professional development system that supports linguistically and culturally supportive pathways. In 2020, the ADE established an Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). This office develops policies, resources and oversees program areas critical to the work of equity, diversity and inclusion including The Office of Indian Education and the Office of Unique Populations. In collaboration with diverse representatives in AZ, the EDI Office has created an Equity Framework that defines equity, diversity, and inclusion and includes six goals of education equity. The key documents update project, referenced in the Activity Four will include and address the equity framework.

Activity Five: Support Program Quality Improvement

Arizona is home to approximately 511,382 children under 5 years of age. However, based on geography, ECCE gap varies widely between, 25% -72% of children, ages 0-4, who potentially need ECCE are unable to access it. The gap is particularly high for rural and tribal communities. This is compounded by the fact that less than 40 % of lawfully regulated early care and education programs are considered quality. Thus, leaving only 17% of Arizona's preschool age children, as reported by Arizona's Education Progress Meter, receiving their early learning in quality settings.

Quality Programming

Within the state of AZ there are three qualifications that determine a program's quality designation: National Accreditation, Head Start Affiliation, and a 3–5-star rating in QF. Based on 2021 data from various partners, 24,823 children are served in accredited centers, 14,334 are served in Head Start programs, and 45,000 children are served in QF programs. As the data

shows, a vast majority of Arizona's young children are currently not accessing quality early learning programs. This data informs our need to focus on building upon proven strategies aimed at increasing the number of young children accessing quality ECCE.

Arizona's Quality Improvement and Rating System, (QF), provides a formal assessment for participating early childhood programs resulting in a quality rating, ongoing technical assistance and professional development to programs through individualized coaching and financial incentives. In some communities Child Care Health Consultation, Mental Health Consultation, and Inclusion Coaching is available. Program assessment results include a QF Star Rating ranging from 1 to 5 stars. QF Star Ratings are currently calculated using two assessments consisting of an Environmental Rating Scale and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS).

Due to the important role that ECCE plays in the lives of our children, there is a critical need for high quality programs that provide children with the foundational skills and knowledge to be successful learners. There are many factors that contribute to a high-quality ECCE. Some of these critical elements include: class or group size; research and evidence-based programs and practices; developmentally appropriate instructional strategies, and the level of staff preparedness and opportunity for PD. ADE proposes to support program quality improvement through a number of key strategies including: increasing the participation of ECCE programs, families, and community partners in the ECQUIP process; supporting access to QF; increasing state capacity advocating for improved investments in early care and education; increasing educator capacity in evidence-based, effective instructional practices grounded in the SOR and increasing access for children with disabilities to high-quality inclusive settings.

Early Childhood Quality Improvement Practices (ECQUIP)

According to the recent LISC ECCE landscape report, stakeholders desire a collaborative approach to addressing the needs of the local ECCE system. Currently ADE utilizes ECQUIP. This process, based on the *Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten* (PGHQ), is designed to be used as a self-evaluation and planning process for ongoing quality improvements at the local level. ECQUIP provides a framework for assessment and implementation of culturally responsive quality practices and program planning through a lens of equitable access to rigorous curriculum, effective instruction in environments attentive to School Culture, Climate and Communication; Leadership; and Fiscal Responsibility. ADE will update the Program Guidelines and ECQUIP documents as a strategy in the grant period.

Framed around the alignment of quality goals that focus on shared best practices, ECQUIP is used to build a streamlined, organized system of support for the local ECCE ecosystem through facilitation of sustained, collaborative relationships amongst Head Start and Early Head Start programs, LEAs, private child care providers, home visitors, Part C providers, families, and other key stakeholders. An important part of the ECQUIP process is the intentional planning amongst early learning programs around how to transition children from early learning into kindergarten, based on the work of Dr. Robert Pianta.

ADE supports providers in implementing kindergarten transition for all students. AZ proposes to expand the use of the ECQUIP as a tool to bring together LEAs with local early childhood providers. For all subgrantees identified in Activity 6 to receive funding this will be a requirement. Subgrantees will annually perform a self-assessment and create an action plan with measurable goals to address areas identified as opportunities to strengthen their ECCE

ecosystem. The self-assessment results and accompanying action plans will be submitted to ADE for data collection, review, and analysis to help inform planning and support for Years 2 and 3.

Child care centers, home-based providers and preschools participating in QF are supported with training and coaching to help improve their programs so that every child has access to a learning environment that supports their needs and development in ways that nurture the emotional, social and academic development of every child. In addition, they receive funding for the purchase of educational materials, equipment and other resources to remove barriers to improving and maintaining quality environments.

Having a keen understanding of the investments being used to support programming and services for young children and their families is paramount. Since 2019 ADE and key partners have been committed to engaging in fiscal mapping and analysis work to answer the questions of "Who invested how much and in what?" In 2022, through a partnership with ROA and the Children's Funding Project, AZ set forth to (1) Assessing Current Investments in Arizona's ECCE system and building local and tribal capacity; (2) Estimating True Cost of Care and Calculating Needs; and (3) Identifying Options for New Revenue and Facilitating Stakeholder Input. This process will allow AZ to inform a two-year development of a consensus led ECCE Strategic Financing Plan. This information will be leveraged to inform investments and innovative strategies to close the ECCE gap and ensure more children are served in high-quality ECCE.

Prior to the pandemic, AZ had made steady, incremental progress on third grade reading proficiency, moving from 40% of all students passing the state's English Language Arts (ELA) assessment in 2015 to 46% passing in 2019. However, data from the 2021 state assessment

shows that, consistent with national trends, our state's youngest students experienced significant unfinished learning due to the pandemic. The percentage of Arizona's third graders passing the state assessment dropped to 35%, and long-standing achievement gaps among low-income and disadvantaged students and other key subgroups grew wider.

Expanding Developmental and Social Emotional Learning Supports

The impact of the pandemic has been even more severe for younger students. According to a report by ROA, the percentage of kindergarteners at benchmark for reading on grade level by third grade plummeted by more than half in one year, from 55% at benchmark in 2020 to just 26% in 2021. This was further illuminated in preschool child outcomes data. Looking at pre- (spring 2019) and post-pandemic data (spring 2022), AZ saw a decline in the number of children meeting widely held expectations. In looking at the domains of language, literacy, and social emotional development the number of children meeting or exceeding widely held expectations declined as a result of the COVID. The number of children performing below widely held expectations is as follows for pre- and post-pandemic: Language 33% vs 28%; Literacy 29% vs 23%; and Social Emotional Development 28% vs 22%.

Children, who enter Kindergarten or first grade with these deficits, have a difficult time catching up by third grade. Based on demographic studies, low-income and disadvantaged children, children of color, and native children are most likely to lack school readiness skills. Recent data analysis work done by ROA on K-3 benchmark data draws attention to the immediate need to focus on early learning and literacy for our youngest students. Looking at kindergarteners, specifically, the percentage of students on track to read at grade-level dropped

by more than half compared to the previous year. Correspondingly, significantly more students scored at risk (the lowest achievement level) in that year.

This data demonstrates the need for continued investments in high-quality and evidence-based professional development anchored in the SOR for early learning. This informs our goals and strategies as it highlights the fact that AZ students living in poverty need additional support. The goals and strategies listed below seek to capitalize and build on the SFEC model identified in Activity Three via capacity building initiatives for families and those that support them.

ADE is proposing the scaling up of three key initiatives in collaboration with ROA, as identified within Arizona's Early Literacy Policy Framework (ELPF): (1) Bringing evidence-based literacy solutions to scale; (2) Building educator capacity in the SOR; and (3) expand and sustain equitable access to high-quality early learning. In addition, ADE will leverage ROA's Smart Talk campaign and modules. Inspired by Georgia's Talk With Me Baby initiative, the Smart Talk campaign is designed for any adult (family or caregiver) interacting with young children so that they may gain a deeper understanding about the importance of quality, back-and-forth conversations. The campaign and accompanying training modules are designed to help strengthen the skills of those engaging with young children to support learning and development at home and in early learning settings. The Smart Talk campaign includes the following modules: Module 1: An Introduction; Module 2: Brain Development and Research; Module 3: Language Nutrition; Module 4: Language Transactions. ADE will work in collaboration with ROA staff to deliver the modules statewide with an emphasis in aligning the delivery of the modules with the AZ SFEC.

In addition, ADE will build internal staff capacity in the Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC). 25 staff members will complete the Train-the-Trainer model for this comprehensive training system that promotes responsive, caring relationships for infants and toddlers and employs evidence-based training materials and strategies for the ECCE field.

Increasing Access to Inclusive Settings (Bonus Area)

In AZ, Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) is administered through the coordination and collaboration of two agencies: ADE and DES. Eligible infants and toddlers are served through the AZ Early Intervention program (AzEIP) for IDEA Part C. Eligible children ages 3-5 are served through ADE Exceptional Student Services (ESS) section for IDEA Part B.

ADE monitors and provides technical assistance to public schools enrolling preschool aged children with disabilities to ensure that they receive a free appropriate public education. Staff work collaboratively with local entities to ensure children with disabilities have access to inclusive settings and are able to receive their special education services in the program appropriate for the child and in accordance with parent choice.

Although AZ has seen incremental gains since the inception of the initial PDG grant, it will leverage the infrastructure building this PDG B5 grant has to offer to increase the number of children with disabilities receiving their services with their typical developing peers to be more comparable to the national average. In order to support this ambitious goal, ADE proposes to support and engage in four key strategies: 1) leveraging the Inclusion Task Force (ITF) as an inclusion raising awareness campaign; 2) Engage in PD cohorts around the Itinerant Service Model; 3) Train state personnel and subgrantees on the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP); and 4)

Hire an inclusion specialist to support providers in the mixed delivery system on how to partner with districts and create quality inclusive settings.

Over the past five years there has been improvement in the interest and practice of offering inclusive settings for children with disabilities. While impacted by COVID, in that preschool children without disabilities stopped attending school district programs and the ratios of children with disabilities in regular early childhood programs declined, once the COVID precautions were reduced, we have picked up from where we left off. At the initiation of the first PDG grant our state reported 22% of the children in Regular Early Childhood Programs (RECP). Currently we are at 31% of our children with disabilities are attending RECPs.

ADE plans to leverage the ITF to build on existing efforts to increase the number of each childhood setting and decrease the number of segregated ECSE Programs. The ITF identifies progress, challenges and strategies to improve inclusive opportunities and practices in licensed and unlicensed programs to reduce the incidence of placement in separate, segregated settings. Inclusion initiatives are developing the capacity of ECCE to support children with disabilities through the Pyramid Model Project and the Itinerant Service Model Project.

System coordination and collaboration among key partners is essential for the ECCE in AZ. Over time, and with support of previous PDG opportunities, AZ has been able to maximize resources and improve effectiveness of services. These collaborations also promote the ongoing development and continuous quality improvement of a statewide ECCE system that supports the health and development of all young children in AZ.

Activity Six: Subgrants to Enhance Quality and Expand Access to Existing and New Programs

ADE proposes increasing access to high-quality early learning in high needs communities through a mixed delivery system providing early learning opportunities for children without equitable access. ECCE opportunities were scarce in AZ before the pandemic and COVID exacerbated pre-pandemic problems. A 2018 study by the Center for American Progress found that 48% of Arizonans lived in child care deserts, defined as any Census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no child care providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots. As previously mentioned in Activity Five, the Bipartisan Policy Center found that the child care gap, the number of children who potentially need care but whose families cannot reasonably access formal care by driving, in AZ was 25.2%. This meant more than 76,690 children in AZ needed access to early learning, a NAEYC survey conducted in September 2022 showed that the majority of child care providers are open but operating at only 67% of their pre-pandemic capacity. It revealed the cause of this shortfall: 90% of programs were experiencing staffing shortages. Programs are dealing with the workforce shortage in a variety of ways, all of which limit access to early learning for children. 27% of programs have longer waitlists; 20% have unopened classrooms; and 23% have reduced their operating hours.

Subgrant Option A

AZ is proposing to allocate up to $19 million over the three years of the PDG grant to fund high quality subgrants for children B-5 utilizing Subgrant Option A which gives subgrants directly to local programs in targeted communities. 60% of the funding from this grant in Year 1

and 75% of funding in Years 2-3 has been dedicated to two strategies meant to increase access for children. First, ADE will support startup and expansion for ECCE programs to help high needs communities serve infants and toddlers. Secondly, ADE will subgrant funds directly to support B-5 ECCE slots. This approach will allow AZ to serve an additional estimated 1,000 children each year of the grant across 50 providers/programs. The annual slot rate for subgrant programs will be: Infants $27,324; Toddlers $16,800 and Preschool $13,764.

In the first two years of the grant, ADE will provide opportunities for startup and/or expansion funding for ECCE programs to offer high-quality early learning environments for infants and toddlers who reside in high needs communities across the state. Existing programs, such as Head Start, will have the opportunity to offer extended day services, if not currently offered, and reduce student-teacher ratios. Priority will be placed on infant-toddler care and will model the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership project. Subgrant recipients will participate in a wage enhancement pilot program which will require ECCE staff to be paid utilizing the AZ Educator Salary Scale, more information is available in Activity Two.

Programs will be determined eligible and invited to apply according to the following data points: high DCS removals, tribal and rural communities, access to health services, ECCE gap percentage, the percentage of families within 300% or below the federal poverty level, the county and/or local school district's percentage of children scoring proficient or higher on both the ELA and Math portions of the 3rd grade statewide assessment, and the program's proposed capacity to serve infants and toddlers. Specific programs will be chosen using a detailed scoring rubric.

ADE will create a guidance manual to communicate expectations for successful implementation. Subgrantees will be convened in a community of practice in order to receive support in implementing any contractual agreements leading to successful statewide implementation of the grant.

Subgrantee Expectations

Based on the updating of the needs and assets information, AZ has identified the need for continuing to build a stronger B-5 system within local communities. Participating subgrantees will be required to participate in the local education agency ECQUIP process. This structure allows for goal setting and identification of local activities meant to transition children, share data, and improve family participation. ADE will incentivize collaborations (ECQUIP) by requiring subgrantees to use a portion of their allocations to offer mini grants to fund specific projects that support and build on the goals and activities of their ECQUIP plans, including stipends for family and partner participation. Additional information can be found in Activity Five. All subgrantees must address transitional supports for infant-toddlers to preschool and preschool to kindergarten within their plans as well.

The DCC investment in QF will allow all programs to fully participate in this quality improvement endeavor. Selected subgrantees who are not already participating in QF will be required to submit an application within the first 3 months of selection. Programs are expected to achieve a quality score of 3 or higher by year 2. Due to the time limited funds DCC is using to expand QF, there is no guarantee of access to QF after Year 2 of this grant. As a result, ADE will dedicate funding in Year 3 to ensure participants extend throughout the life of this grant. As

referenced in Activity 4, subgrantees will be required to pay staff according to the AZ Educator Salary Scale.

Identified subgrantees will be required to identify a parent engagement strategy including how to connect families with evidence-based resources meant to support the local needs. If applicable, this may include participation in a local Read On community, implementation and/or connection to a Family Engagement and Literacy Hub, or a Family Resource Center. Subgrantees will be required to provide culturally and linguistically sensitive materials, resources, and activities to families in their communities.

Selected participants will have to adhere to the PGHQ as measured by the onsite and desktop monitoring to be performed by ADE. Programs will also be expected to implement a research or evidence-based curriculum that is aligned to the Arizona Early Learning Standards (AZELS) and/or Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines (ITDG). Programs will be expected to implement an ongoing progress monitoring system utilizing the State Board approved tool. Children enrolled in the participating programs will be issued a unique identifier (Bonus One), AzED number. This unique identifier places children into the Arizona's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) (Bonus One). AZEDs will be utilized to track child outcomes data for grant-funded children and compare to KEA data to analyze school readiness for kindergarten children. Programs must create processes for data sharing as children transition through age level programs including into kindergarten.

Targeted Outcomes

ADE will utilize the statewide ECCE program and child outcomes data to track program implementation and effectives. The ITF will develop a concrete plan to improve the inclusion data already described in Activity Five. The ITF will determine a timeline for convening and benchmarking activities to achieve the goal of increasing inclusion from 31% to 50%. To help achieve this goal, subgrantees will be expected to hold a minimum of 10% of slots for children with disabilities. In addition, the newly identified FTE responsible for inclusion will obtain training in the ICP tool, as well as provide technical assistance, training and support in utilization of the tool for identified subgrantees. ADE will also work with System Partners and the ITF to identify ways to build capacity within the state.

ADE will post a subgrant application (Subgrant Option A) in the Grants Management Enterprise (GME) system. GME is the ADE's system for providing direct grant awards to programs. Awarded programs will be selected via scoring rubric by most-in-need indicators (i.e. rural/tribal, startup recipient, slots for infant-toddlers). Programs receiving PDG subgrant funds will receive monitoring, technical assistance, and site visits from ADE ECE Program Specialists. PDG program data will be collected via the Education Monitoring and Compliance (EMAC) system. EMAC is the system used to gather program data including attendance, budget allocations, staff compensation, and ECQUIP plans. Desktop monitoring, data collection tasks, evaluations, and onsite visits are all built into the EMAC system and allows ADE to track program progress and evaluation, as well as fiscal and reporting data to be submitted throughout the PDG grant program. ADE will conduct an annual on-site monitoring visit to ensure quality learning and grant compliance. In addition, information will be collected from the subgrantees to

be analyzed relative to any accreditation data, Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS) and the appropriate Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale®, Third Edition (ECERS-3).

ADE's overall approach is based on the findings from needs assessment and strategic plans of the key System Partners. The approach was conceived from collective work that has been occurring since the last PDG application. This opportunity allows for ADE to address key goals in building stronger opportunities for children in high needs communities. It is anticipated that as many as 1,000 children will benefit from this work through access and increased effective instruction. Investments made in the family and the ECCE workforce will also impact the outcomes for children, the extent to which the proposed approach supports a comprehensive B-5 ECCE system, including infants and toddlers.

Organizational Capacity, Meaningful Governance, Stakeholder Engagement, Monitoring, Data Use and Evaluation, and Continuous Quality Improvement

Organizational Capacity

The Early Childhood B-5 System is administered primarily through three state agencies (ADE, DES, and FTF). Since the previous PDG application, there have been two significant changes in these organizations. First, within ADE the work of ECCE now takes place under two units: Academic Standards (Early Childhood Education) and Exceptional Student Services (Early Childhood Special Education). Secondly, DES created the Division of Child Care which oversees the child subsidy program for AZ. Collectively the System Partners coordinate work

among each other and with other members of the B-5 System through the collective impact model, Read on AZ and the AZ Early Childhood Alliance AZECA.

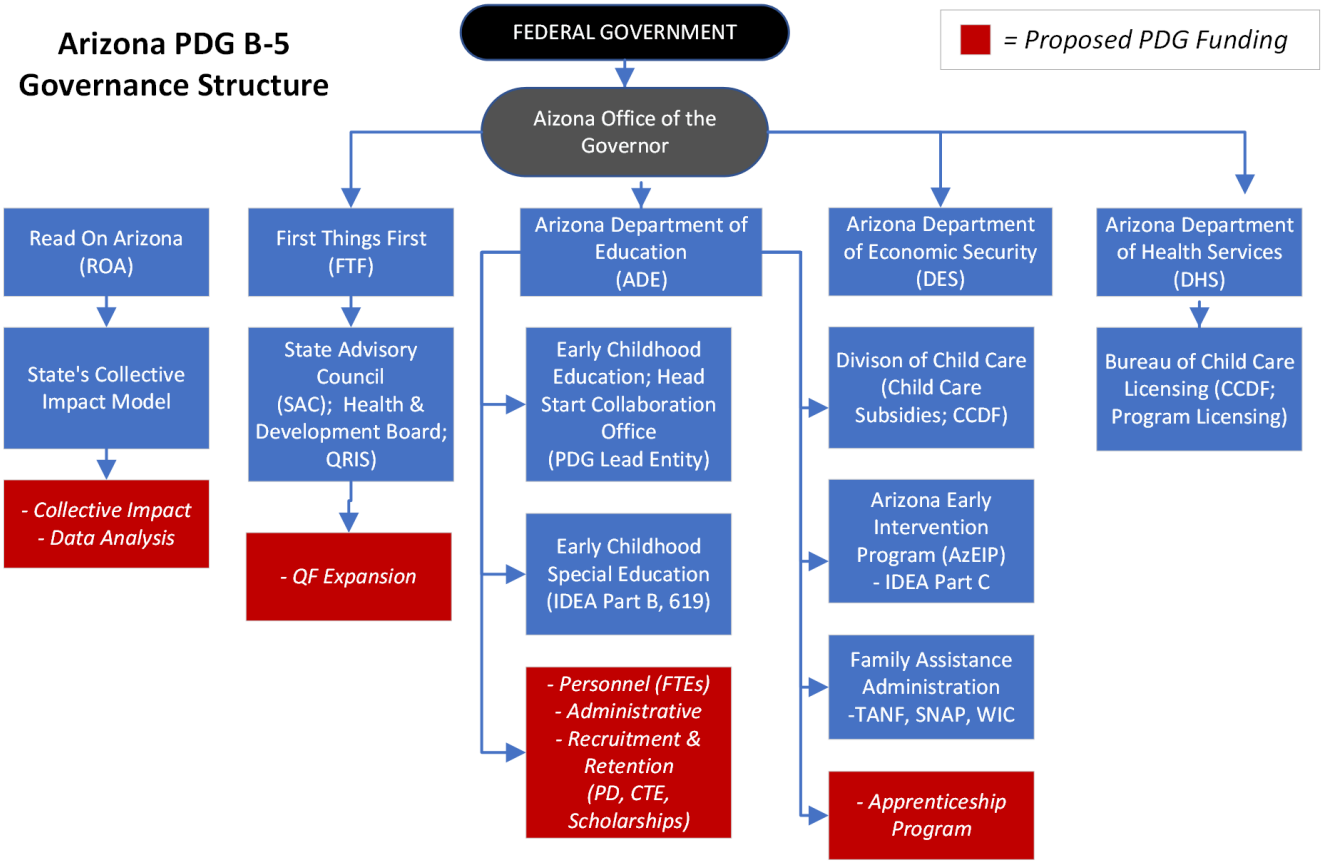
ADE will be the administrative home of the grant and has the appropriate level of infrastructure and leadership to administer the federal grant requirements. Successful implementation requires coordination and collaboration among partners to increase the quality of ECCE system. ADE will use its current structure to ensure compliance and achievement of strategic tasks. ADE will lean into the expertise and experience of the following internal divisions: Procurement, Research and Evaluation, Grants Management, and Finance. ADE Early Childhood Specialists (ECPS) are currently regionally assigned to support programs. The ECPS will be responsible for coordination and facilitation of site visits, evaluation, planning and exploration of our current mixed delivery B-5 system. ADE will hire two additional program specialists to support workforce recruitment and retention and inclusionary practices. More details are available in the Timeline and Milestone Document found in Appendix B.

Meaningful Governance and Stakeholder Engagement

The Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board (FTF Board) serves as the SAC in AZ. FTF funds early education, family support and preventive children's health programs and services. The FTF Board sets the vision for the organization and determines the priorities for FTF within Arizona's broader early childhood system. FTF intentionally includes parents of young children, child care providers, early childhood educators and health professionals in the membership of each of the 28 regional partnership councils, including tribal nations, throughout the state. This ensures that each of these groups has a voice in decision-

making. FTF will oversee the assessment, planning, and implementation of the QF expansion and workforce registry modernization outlined in the grant application

DES serves as the state's child care subsidy system (DCC) and the agency that provides TANF, Medicaid, WIC, SNAP, and IDEA Part B services. DCC informs qualifying families, both verbally and in writing, about Head Start eligibility and collaborates with Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships to ensure continuity of services. DCC also provides IDEA Part C services for children with identified special needs under the AZ Early Intervention Program (AzEIP). DCC will oversee the assessment, planning, and implementation of the Apprenticeship Program outline in the grant.



ADE oversees the IDEA 619 Part B, administered by the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Unit under the Exceptional Student Services (ESS). In addition, ADE oversees the creation of the AZELS, ITDG, and PGHQ, as well as, their associated professional development. Furthermore, ADE currently oversees the administration and monitoring of the HQEL grant. ADE will oversee the assessment, planning, and implementation of the infant-toddler startup program, B-5 slot allocation, ATA scholarships, high-quality PD, inclusion efforts, and ECCE recruitment and retention efforts.

Continuous Quality Improvement

As described in Activity Six, ADE will oversee the monitoring of the program using data uploaded into the EMAC and GME systems, staff interviews, and onsite visits. Data gleaned from this process will be used to inform and guide continuous quality improvement efforts. Furthermore, ADE will utilize key data from program self-assessments and action plans submitted via the ECQUIP process to inform continuous quality improvement at the program level and augment program supports accordingly.

Accountability

In year one of the grant, ADE and System Partners will leverage a process similar to the use of the Evaluating State Accountability Systems Under the ESEA. This process will help ECCE state leadership to reflect on how their accountability systems are functioning and identify strategies for continuous improvement. Based on the results of the evaluation, partners will work collectively to identify shared priorities and goals related to strengthening accountability systems individually and collectively. Currently, System Partners make attempts to incorporate family

and provider voice in policy decisions, for example, FTF as the SAC has designated slots for family seats on local regional councils. System Partners also utilize feedback loops for policy implementation with a focus on high needs/priority especially in rural and tribal communities that include families and providers.

Oversight

Funds to be distributed to Subgrantees through MOUs, interagency agreements, contracts, or other mechanisms authorized by State procurement laws. Through a competitive process, ADE will contract with subgrantees as outlined in Activity Five. Subgrantees will be monitored through ADE's GME, which ADE considers a binding agreement. Funds will be used to build and develop high-quality, inclusive early care and education programs that effectively serve children from high-need community populations, and subgrantees must participate in a pathway that will lead to quality. Accordingly, subgrantees will be required to be licensed (prior to serving children); provide evidence of their ability to braid or layer funds in order to sustain and support a high-quality program; be a DES authorized provider or become a DES authorized provider during the grant award period; and either be willing to participate in QF and earn or maintain a 3-star rating, or hold a National Early Childhood Accreditation or become accredited during the grant award period. Further details are outlined in Activity Five.

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

This mixed-methods evaluation plan examines implementation, formative, and impact outcomes related to the program's primary goals. Both the implementation and formative components of this evaluation rely primarily on single-group pre- and post-designs that

document annual fidelity to the proposal through evidence of outputs. The impact portion of this evaluation employs similar single-group pre- and post- correlational designs as well as several quasi-experiments. Participant responses are the primary inputs for the single-group analyses while student and family outcome data reported by the state and other partner agencies are the focus of the quasi-experiments.

Implementation Evaluation Questions – At what level of fidelity were the programs/services implemented? If fidelity level is not high, what changes are needed to improve fidelity? *Formative Evaluation Questions* – Are programs/services being created and delivered on the proposed timeline? What barriers exist to effective implementation of these programs/services? Are interim targets being met? *Impact Evaluation Questions* – Do the services and resources empower the SEA and state partnership leadership to strengthen ECCE system infrastructures? Do the collective services and resources result in increased literacy and early learning outcomes rates in targeted communities? Do the collective services and resources result in increased family engagement in targeted communities?

Goals and Indicators – A variety of instruments and measures will be used to determine the program's success. Broadly, these include a) counts/roles of participants attending trainings, b) training materials, c) numbers of trainings, d) pre/ post-training surveys to include satisfaction and outcome measures f) follow-up participant interviews, g) child outcomes data, h) number of participants serviced in apprenticeship programs i) compensation data j) program quality indicators.

Analysis of Implementation and Formative Outcomes – Analysis will be conducted per site to examine fidelity to implementation and to determine differences. Qualitative data will be

analyzed using constant comparative and discourse analysis. Quantitative data will be analyzed with descriptive statistics and tests of significance.

Analysis of impact outcomes – The impact evaluation focuses on both proximal and distal outcomes. Data will be analyzed for missing data. In situations of attrition or non-response, a full-information estimator will be used to reduce bias. Further, participant characteristics will be analyzed to determine if missingness is at random or if bias must be accounted for in other ways. Distal outcomes will be analyzed using quasi-experimental designs. For literacy and early learning outcomes, multilevel propensity score matching will be used. To this end, programs in regions with selected subgrantee locations will be considered treatment programs and matched programs in non-participating regions will be considered control programs/sites.

To determine if the program was effective at increasing parent engagement, attendance at events aimed at increasing parents' capacity to support child learning will be analyzed using a difference-in-differences design. Events in regions where hubs are located will be considered treatment groups and those in regions where hubs are not located will be considered control groups.

Data Use

ADE used of $2.2 million from the 2014 PDG grant to support infrastructure-building in information technology (IT) to align ECCE data with the ADE's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS). This included building applications in ADE's systems to create unique identifiers for all B-5 students, not just preschool students with disabilities. Once this application was created, it was able to be utilized by any entity in AZ that provided early childhood education to any of

Arizona's children, including Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Because of this application and the ability for all entities to generate the unique identifier, ADE was able to link ECCE data across the mixed delivery system.

In addition to the successful data integration of early childhood student level data, was the successful activity of displaying data to parents, schools, and teachers on ADE's School Report Cards (SRC) site. This task connected student level data to specific entities using unique identifiers for school districts and program sites in AZ. This unique identifier ensures that data can be displayed at district, school, and site/program level for all districts and sites in our state including child care centers and Head Starts and follows the child until post-secondary education.

Additionally, in year one of PDG implementation, ADE partnered with ROA and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) to launch a data-mapping tool called "MapLIT.". Developed as a population-level integrated data system (IDS), MapLit combines data from a range of programs (DCC, ADE, census, child care licensing, etc.) that serve children and families to demonstrate its impact on school readiness and early literacy.

Dissemination Plan

The dissemination plan supports communities to plan, develop and implement high quality ECCE in vulnerable populations. AZ will initially leverage the communications and social media platforms of ECCE partners. This approach will focus on the creation of common nomenclature crafted around PDG activities and updates to be shared across partner websites, blogs, newsletters, social media, etc. In addition, ADE will use its communication department to

develop a myriad of messaging content and strategies to share periodically and routinely to report on the numerous activities being engaged in and supported to demonstrate the impact of the grant initiatives being funded by this opportunity.

Furthermore, AZ proposes to host an annual stakeholder convening to share and discuss the impact of the grant activities and initiatives. This will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to coalesce around the evolution of Arizona's ECCE infrastructure as a result of the opportunities provided via this funding opportunity. This process will include an annual review of data from the needs assessment and program performance evaluation plan to identify strengths.

Logic Model

AZ PDG B-5 Grant Logic Model				
Project Goal 1: Strengthen engagement and access to services, information, and resources for families.				
Target Population	**Activities**	**Inputs**	**Outputs**	**Short-Term Outcomes**
Families in high need/low service areas	Develop regional family engagement/ literacy hubs Collaborate to identify locations of regional hubs Identify evidence-based resources for families Build capacity of family engagement/ literacy hub staff	SFEC virtual center Relevant data Collaborative partners Key staff Budget Resources Updated B-5 Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan	Regional family engagement/ literacy hubs Enhanced SFEC virtual center	Increased capacity of families to support their child's learning Increased capacity of staff to support families with evidence-based resources and strategies

Project Goal 2: Increase the capacity of the early childhood workforce.				
Target Population	**Activities**	**Inputs**	**Outputs**	**Short-Term Outcomes**
Early childhood educators in high needs/low service communities Pre-service ECCE educators ECCE educators who have left the profession	Hire a B-5 workforce liaison Increase recruitment and retention of ECCE workforce Pilot a workforce enhancement strategy Increase availability of professional learning opportunities based on standards and guidelines Modernize the AZ Workforce Registry Hold a statewide school readiness summit Increase participation in the ECQUIP process	AZ Early Childhood Professional Development Network Quality First AZ Teachers Academy Key staff for recruitment and retention Collaborative partners Updated B-5 Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan	College Scholarships Enhanced Professional Development Network Apprenticeship Completion Child outcomes data Educator certification data AZ Workforce Registry data	Increase in the number of early childhood educators who are degreed and certificated. Increase in the number early childhood educators returning to the classroom
Project Goal 3: Increase equitable access to high-quality, inclusive ECCE settings for children.				
Target Population	**Activities**	**Inputs**	**Outputs**	**Short-Term Outcomes**
Early childhood program administrators	Identify subgrantees	First Things First Expansion Lab	ICP data	Increase in the percentage of children in inclusive settings

in high needs/low service communities Children B-5 in high needs/low service Young children with disabilities	Increase equitable access to high quality learning opportunities Increase access to high quality inclusive settings for children with disabilities Increase administrator capacity on the Itinerant Service Model Increase subgrantee capacity on the Inclusive Classroom Profile Increase administrator capacity on ECCE funding streams Perform ongoing progress monitoring for young children	Key Staff for inclusion supports Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP) Itinerant Service Model ECCE Funding Manual Updated B-5 Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan AZED ID numbers for participating children	Itinerant Service Model Data Quality Inclusive Classrooms Child outcomes data ECCE sites braiding and blending multiple funding streams	Increase in the number of inclusive early learning settings available in high needs communities Increase in the number of children in high-needs communities accessing high quality early learning Increase in the number of administrator braiding funds. Increase in the number of children in the State's Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) Increase in the number of children meeting widely held expectations.

Long-Term Outcomes	**Success Measures**
More families with enhanced capacity to support the developmental and academic needs of their child	Increase in families participating in engagement opportunities, supports and services in high need/low service areas will increase
More ECCE educators will have increased knowledge in the science of reading and evidence-based practices	Number of ECCE educators completing professional learning opportunities will increase

More children will enter school prepared to succeed and on track to meet 3rd grade reading proficiency levels	More of the B-5 workforce will be adequately compensated Percentage of children in high quality, inclusive early learning settings will increase Percentage of children meeting or exceeding widely held expectations will increase measured by TSG data School readiness measured by KEA data

Project Sustainability Plan

Arizona's sustainability strategy has prioritized activities that can be embedded within its current work to ensure longevity and commitment at the statewide systems and local level. The chart below outlines Arizona's plan to ensure sustainability for PDG projects to achieve long term goals around our state's five priorities of: family and community engagement, workforce development, equitable access to quality affordable care, workforce compensation, and serving children in inclusive settings.

Key Projects	**Sustainability Plan**
Needs Assessment & Strategic Plan	PDG funds will be used to support PPEP efforts. ADE will continue to engage in data collection efforts under the HSSCO grant to inform and update needs assessment and strategic planning efforts.
Workforce Development	PDG will provide funds to increase the number of Arizona B-5 educators accessing critical supports such as scholarships, the apprenticeship program, and professional development. The sustaining of these efforts lies in the embedding of these activities into current work to ensure longevity and commitment at the state level. DCC will continue to fund and support apprenticeships, FTF will continue to prioritize funding for professional development and coaching, ADE has legislation and legislative funds to support literacy coaching in the PK-3rd grade space, and the ATA will continue providing scholarships to AZ educators.

Family Engagement	PDG will allow for the growth and expansion of regionally based early literacy hubs, expansion and enhancement of the virtual statewide family engagement site, and for expanded statewide use of a common Family Engagement (FE) framework and evidence based supports. The sustaining of these activities will be the virtual SFEC will be maintained on the ROA website with backbone funding supports, the FE framework and EB supports, resources, and trainings will be housed on a statewide clearing house to be maintained by ROA using backbone supports, the FE framework will be maintained by ADE as part of the 2st century grant initiative, Head Start Collaboration Office funds, and FTF set-aside funds for supports as a prioritized strategy for 2024-2027.
Professional Development Network and Registry	PDG funds will be utilized for the modernization of the Workforce Registry. The sustaining of these enhanced features and functions will be maintained using FTF operational cost set aside for this work. Professional development in PITC train-the-trainer will allow AZ educators to continue building capacity for infant-toddler educators.
Collective Impact	PDG will provide the funds to advance the activities that stakeholders and advisory board members recommend to in the 2023 Policy Framework for Accelerating Early Literacy in Arizona. The sustaining of these efforts will be through backbone funding provided by partners and has been included for approval in the ADE annual budget beginning in FY2024.
Access to High Quality Early Learning	PDG funds will be used to expand access to high-quality early learning across the B-5 continuum. The current elected Superintendent of Public Instruction has vocalized the prioritization of early learning as part of their 2022 re-election campaign. As part of this campaign promise, if re-elected, they intend to prioritize and advocate for additional funding, at scale, for early learning. In addition, Arizona's Early Childhood Action (AZECA) Alliance policy subcommittee has formally submitted recommendations to the AZ legislation for funding beginning in FY2024 for early learning.

Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information

ADE is a state educational agency, authorized to collect and maintain student educational records and to receive information from local educational agencies consistent with applicable state and federal laws and subject to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), 20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b) and 34 C.F.R. Part 99. Consistent with FERPA, ADE may disclose personally identifiable information ("PII") from students' education records to its authorized representative without written consent in connection with the audit or evaluation exception of FERPA pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232g(b)(1)(C), (b)(3), and (b)(5) and 34 C.F.R. §§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35. Additionally, ADE is permitted to re-disclose data pursuant to 34 C.F.R. § 99.33 on the condition that the party it discloses the data to will not re-disclose the data unless a valid FERPA exception applies.

AZ PDG B-5 GRANT MILESTONES AND TIMELINE

Activity #1: Update Comprehensive Statewide, B-5 Needs Assessment		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE System Partners	Updated comprehensive statewide, B-5 needs assessment to inform major tasks in Goals 1-3.	**X**		

Activity #2: Update Statewide B-5 Strategic Plan		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE System Partners	Use ECCE fiscal mapping and ongoing ECCE collaborative strategic planning process to update statewide B-5 strategic plan to inform major tasks in Goals 1-3.		**X**	

Goal 1: Strengthen engagement and access to birth through 3rd grade services, information, and resources for families.				
Strategy: Develop four regional family engagement/literacy hubs that provide coordination and alignment to B-3rd grade evidence-based supports, trainings, and resources that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and targeted to the needs of the community and region in which they are located.				
Activity: #3: Maximizing Parent and Family Engagement in the B-5 System		**Year**		
Lead/Partners	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Read On AZ ADE	Collaborate to identify locations of regional hubs.	**X**		
Read On AZ ADE	Develop regional family engagement/literacy hubs.	**X**	**X**	**X**

ADE System Partners	Conduct an inventory about family engagement opportunities with System Partners.		**X**	
Strategy: Expand resources available to families and community members through regional family engagement/literacy hubs and online statewide family engagement center.				
Activity #3: Maximizing Parent and Family Engagement in the B-5 System		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
Read On AZ ADE Regional Family Engagement Hubs	Updated needs assessment and feedback from high needs communities will inform identification of evidence-based resources needed to support families in their communities.		**X**	**X**
Read On AZ ADE	Updated needs assessment and strategic plan will help inform identification of evidence-based resources for families for virtual statewide family engagement center.	**X**		

Goal 2: Increase capacity of early childhood workforce.				
Strategy: Use of a dedicated FTE to serve as a Workforce Liaison for B-5 retention and recruitment purposes.				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices. **Bonus #1: Coordinated Application, Eligibility, and Enrollment for Families**		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE	ADE will hire a Workforce Liaison to serve as a liaison for the ECCE workforce with internal/external efforts.	**X**		
ADE System Partners	Collaborate with statewide Professional Development Advisory Group.	**X**	**X**	**X**
ADE IHE	Collaborate with Institutes of Higher (IHE) Education.	**X**	**X**	**X**
ADE	Collaborate with Career and Technical Education (CTE) Early Childhood Specialist and High School programs.	**X**	**X**	**X**

ADE	Participate with Recruitment and Retention efforts	**X**	**X**	**X**
Strategy: Increase recruitment and retention of ECCE workforce.				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Bonus Option #2: Workforce Compensation**		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE	Promote AZ Teacher Academy (ATA) program, which pays tuition for educator prep programs at major colleges/universities for educators who teach in AZ schools.	**X**	**X**	**X**
ADE	Leverage new Experienced Educator Rule, which allows certified teachers to renew certificates that have been expired (2-10 years) for $20 with no PD requirement.	**X**	**X**	**X**
ADE DES	ADE will provide subgrant funding to support and enhance DCC apprenticeship program, the Professional Career Pathway Project (PCPP).		**X**	**X**
Strategy: Pilot a workforce wage enhancement strategy for identified subgrantees.* **Subgrantees are those programs identified in high needs communities who will be awarded PDG funding.*				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Bonus Option #2: Workforce Compensation**		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE DES	Increase the field's capacity and understanding regarding the DCC's AZ Early Childhood Educator Salary Scale.	**X**		
ADE	Ensure subgrantees* are compensating staff based on the AZ Educator Salary Scale, as reported annually in ADE reporting system.	**X**	**X**	**X**
Strategy: Increase availability of professional learning opportunities based on standards and guidelines.				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Activity #5: Support Program Quality Improvement**		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**

ADE System Partners	Increase the number of trainings available in the AZ Workforce Registry on Social Emotional Development, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Early Learning Standards, and Infant Toddler Development.	**X**	**X**	**X**
ADE Read On AZ	Increase the number of early literacy trainings available to B-5 educators in the Science of Reading.		**X**	**X**
ADE System Partners	Update the Standards and Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten (English and Spanish).		**X**	**X**
ADE	ADE will provide professional development opportunities to build capacity of B-5 workforce in infant-toddler development (PITC) and early literacy (LETRS).		**X**	**X**
Strategy: Modernization of the AZ Workforce Registry.				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Activity #5: Support Program Quality Improvement** **Bonus #1: Coordinated Application, Eligibility, and Enrollment for Families**		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE FTF	ADE will provide funding to FTF to lead in coordination with System Partners a collaboratively determined vision to modernize the AZ Workforce Registry.		**X**	**X**
Strategy: Hold a School Readiness Summit for ECCE providers, families, and community stakeholders.				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Activity #5: Support Program Quality Improvement** **Bonus #1: Coordinated Application, Eligibility, and Enrollment for Families**		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE System Partners	ADE will host a School Readiness Summit that focuses on Kindergarten transitions, alignment to the School Readiness Framework, and increasing capacity and understanding of B-5 workforce around best practices in early learning and literacy.		**X**	
Strategy: Increase participation from ECCE programs, families, and community partners in Early Childhood Quality Improvement Practices (ECQUIP) program.				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Activity #5: Support Program Quality Improvement**		**Year**		

Bonus #1: Coordinated Application, Eligibility, and Enrollment for Families				
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE	ADE will complete the process of updating and publishing the revised ECQUIP manual.	**X**		
ADE	Increase training and participation from ECCE programs, families, and community partners in the Early Childhood Quality Improvement Practices (ECQUIP) process.		**X**	**X**

Goal 3: Increase equitable access to high quality inclusive ECCE settings for children in high needs communities.				
Strategy: Subgrants to support equitable access to high quality early learning opportunities.				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Activity #5: Support Program Quality Improvement** **Activity #6: Subgrants to Enhance Quality and Expand Access to Existing and New Programs** **Bonus Option #1: Coordinated Application, Eligibility, Enrollment for Families** **Bonus Option #3: Inclusive Settings**		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE	ADE will provide funding for startup / expansion five infant-toddler ECCE programs in high needs communities through a procurement process.	**X**	**X**	
ADE FTF	ADE will provide funding for subgrantees electing to continue their participation in QF from July 2024 to December 2025 (after DCC provided funding has ended).			**X**
ADE System Partners	ADE will use data analysis work to identify sites eligible to apply for subgrants.	**X**		
ADE	ADE will provide subgrant (slot) funding to awarded B-5 ECCE sites. ADE will provide technical assistance, monitoring, and collect data from subgrant sites.		**X**	**X**
Strategy: Increase access to high quality, inclusive settings for children with disabilities.				
Bonus Option #3: Inclusive Settings		**Year**		

Lead/Partner	Major Task	1	2	3
ADE	ADE will support subgrantees to reserve 10% of their slots for children with disabilities.		X	X
ADE	ADE will provide training to support inclusion, including the Inclusion Classroom Profile (ICP) through the use of a dedicated FTE.	X	X	X
ADE	ADE will provide funding to support annual statewide Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) Summit.		X	X
Strategy: Educate providers on use of funding streams to support high quality early learning				
Activity #4: Support the B-5 Workforce and Disseminate Best Practices **Bonus Option #1: Coordinated Application, Eligibility, Enrollment for Families** **Bonus Option #3: Inclusive Settings**		**Year**		
Lead/Partner	**Major Task**	**1**	**2**	**3**
ADE System Partners	ADE and System Partners will develop and offer training on blending and braiding funding to provide inclusive high-quality settings.		X	X
ADE System Partners	ADE will revise the ECCE Funding manual by collaborating with system partners to update funding opportunities and allowable/disallowable costs.	X	X	X
ROA System Partners	ROA and System Partners will assess current investments in Arizona's ECCE system.	X		
ROA System Partners	ROA and System Partners will perform cost modeling activities and estimate the true cost of high quality ECCE to calculate need.		X	
ROA System Partners	ROA and System Partners will identify options for new revenue to support a high quality ECCE system for AZ.		X	X