



# US DOE Preschool Development Grants Competition

*“Expansion Grant”*

# Today's Agenda

- ▶ **Introduction of Grant-writing Team**
  - Kelly Hunter, Director, Early Development and Learning Resources
  - Evelyn Keating, Program Manager, Office of Early Learning
  - Susan Mitchell, Senior Advisor, Office of Early Learning
- ▶ **Overview of the Federal Grant for Preschool Expansion**
  - Purpose and goals
  - Requirements
- ▶ **Delaware's Proposed Plan**
  - Goals and Objectives
  - Model
  - Supportive Strategies
- ▶ **Timeline for feedback and grant submission**

# Overview of the Federal Grant for Preschool Expansion

# Grant Overview

- ▶ 4-year grant
- ▶ \$10 million/year with a total of \$40 million available for DE
- ▶ Purpose: “to support State and local efforts to **build, develop, and expand High-Quality Preschool Programs** so that more children from low- and moderate-income families enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school and in life”
- ▶ DE is eligible for the ***Expansion Grant*** to:
  - **Implement and sustain High-Quality Preschool Programs** that reach and serve additional eligible children in two or more **High-Need Communities**.
  - **Make preschool program infrastructure and quality improvements needed to deliver High-Quality Preschool Programs**
- ▶ Implementation through a **mixed delivery system**: schools, licensed child care centers, Head Start & ECAP programs, and community-based organizations

# Grant Overview

States are to design **ambitious and achievable plans** that include:

- **Expanding access** to High-Quality Preschool Programs to children at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line
- Ensuring the **creation of new State Preschool Program slots**
- **Improvement of existing State Preschool Program slots**
- **Clear reasons for selecting each High-Need Community**
- **System for monitoring programs** for continuous improvement
- **Establishing and maintaining strong relationships** between Local Educational Agencies and other Early Learning Providers
- **Aligning** High-Quality Preschool Programs with programs and systems that serve children from birth through third grade
- **Sustaining** High-Quality Preschool Programs for children after the grant period

# Federal Definition of High-Quality Preschool Program

## Instruction

- Developmentally appropriate
- Culturally and linguistically responsive instruction
- Evidence-based curricula
- Learning environments aligned with State Early Learning and Development Standards, for at least the year prior to kindergarten entry
- Individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities

## Staff

- Teachers with bachelors degrees in early childhood education or bachelor's degrees in any field with a State-approved alternate pathway
- Teaching assistants with appropriate credentials
- Instructional staff salaries that are comparable to the salaries of local K-12 instructional staff
- High-quality professional development for all staff

# Federal Definition of High-Quality Preschool Program (continued)

## Classroom Design

- ▶ Child-to-instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1
- ▶ Class size of no more than 20
  - At a minimum, one teacher with high staff qualifications
- ▶ Full-day program – 6.5 hours
- ▶ Inclusion of children with disabilities

## Program

- ▶ Program evaluation to ensure continuous improvement
- ▶ On-site or accessible Comprehensive Services for children and community partnerships that promote families' access to services that support their children's learning and development
- ▶ Evidence-based health and safety standards

# Federal Definition of High-Need Community

- ▶ **Geographically defined area**
  - May include:
    - City
    - Town
    - County
    - Neighborhood
    - District
    - Rural or tribal area
  
- ▶ **Area must have a high level of need as determined by the State**



# Absolute Priorities

- ▶ Must be fully addressed in order to win a grant
- ▶ Absolute Priority One
  - Increasing Access to High-Quality Preschool Programs in High-Need Communities
- ▶ Absolute Priority Two
  - State must have received an award under the Early Learning Challenge
- ▶ ***Priority Three relates to applicants that did not receive an Learning Challenge Grant (does not apply to Delaware)***

# Competitive Priorities

- ▶ Opportunity to earn extra or competitive points
- ▶ **Competitive Priority 1 – Contributing Matching Funds**
- ▶ **Competitive Priority 2 – Supporting a Continuum of Early Learning and Development**
  - Address the creation of a more seamless progression of supports and interventions from birth through third grade
- ▶ **Competitive Priority 3 – Creating New High-Quality State Preschool Program Slots**
  - Demonstration of use at least 50% of the state's Federal grant award to create new State Preschool Program slots in High-Quality Preschool Programs

# Ambitious and Achievable Plan

- ▶ Opportunity to **builds on state's progress** to date
  - Goal is to align and not duplicate
- ▶ Provides voluntary High-Quality Preschool Programs to sub-grantees in ***at least two High-Need Communities***
- ▶ Increases the number and percentage of Eligible Children served in High-Quality Preschool Programs
  - Creation of new slots
  - Improvement of existing State preschool program slots (as applicable)
- Provides High-Quality Preschool Programs to Eligible Children no later than the end of year one of the grant period

# Delaware's Proposed Plan

Exciting opportunity

Lead the nation with innovation

Build on our current success

Extend our accomplishments

# Delaware's Pre-kindergarten Program Vision "First for Fours" (draft)

**"First for Fours"** Pre-kindergarten Program will advance a Delaware vision of high quality pre-kindergarten to meet the following goals and objectives:

1. Expand the quantity of state-funded pre-kindergarten slots available to low-income children and their families within two or more of DE's high priority zones.
2. Enhance the quality of pre-kindergarten classrooms to serve as models of excellence for comprehensive services, family engagement, and children and families with diverse learning needs.
3. Utilize diverse statewide and community partners to integrate strategies and resources into classroom and program practice to support quality relationships with families, children and staff.
4. Leverage strengths in the state's early learning system and ensure continued improvements in the birth through grade 2 continuum of learning and development.

# Delaware's Model (draft)

- ▶ **50% new slots for four year olds**
  - In a minimum of two high needs areas
  - In school districts, child care, ECAP and Head Start
  - 180 instructional days, 6.5 instructional hours/day
  
- ▶ **45% quality enhancement slots**
  - Extend the day/year in ECAP and Head Start sites
  - Offer summer enrichment programs
  - 180 instructional days, 6.5 instructional hours/day
  - Enhancements to community organizations (BA parity, comprehensive services)
  
- ◀ **Early learning provider requirements for participation:**
  - DE Star 5 or school district, Head Start or ECAP
  - Strive to become a DE Stars 5+
  - Meet DE's vision (noted on the previous slide)
  - Meet all the federal priorities for High-Quality Preschool Program

# Federal Application Requirements

- A. Executive Summary
- B. Commitment to State Preschool Programs
- C. Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs
- D. Expanding High-Quality Preschool Programs in Each High-Need Community
- E. Collaborating with Each Sub-grantee and Ensuring Strong Partnerships
- F. Alignment within a Birth through Third Grade Continuum
- G. Budget and Sustainability

# C. Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs : Delaware's Proposed Response – State Infrastructure

- ▶ **Early Learning Foundations (ELFs)**
  - Review and revise to better align with the Common Core
  - Create a crosswalk of the ELFs with other standards for children such as DEC, Head Start, home visiting and NAEYC
- ▶ **Workforce Competencies**
  - Review and expand to integrate DEC and NAEYC professional standards and to be more inclusive of before/after school to expand linkages
- ▶ **Program Standards**
  - Identify program standards, consistent with Stars and the definition of High-Quality that will verify at Star 5+
  - Incorporate into Delaware Stars technical assistance and verification process
- ▶ **Coaching Models**
  - Pilot coaching models in selected classrooms for inclusion and classroom instruction
- ▶ **Positive Behavioral Support**
  - Initiate preschool Positive Behavioral Support training and development



## C(2). Ensuring Quality in Preschool Programs : Delaware's Proposed Response – State Infrastructure

- ▶ Adopt the use of a **teacher observation tool** including training and phased-in approach
- ▶ Offer **Strengthening Families** parent education sessions
- ▶ Design new **Delaware professional development model for early childhood** that focuses on intensive coaching and supports to create model programs of excellence
- ▶ Offer leadership teams **professional development across sectors**, including school principals and community-based early learning program leaders

## D. Ensuring High-Quality Preschool Programs in Each High-Need Community: Delaware's Proposed Response

- ▶ Mix of expansion and enhancement slots
- ▶ Supports to programs to meet definition of High-Quality Preschool Program
  - Reduced class size
  - Highly qualified teaching staff
  - Expanded comprehensive services
  - Core series of professional development to support high quality implementation
  - Coaching pilots

# E. Collaborating with Each Sub-grantee and Ensuring Strong Partnerships: Delaware's Proposed Response

- ▶ Program oversight:
  - Delaware Department of Education, Early Development and Learning Resources Unit (EDLR)
  - Staffed by Project Manager and two education specialists
- ▶ Coordination with ECAP, HSSCO, 619 oversight within EDLR
- ▶ Coordination with Delaware Stars
- ▶ Description of expectations within MOUs and Contract agreements
- ▶ System of meetings, individualized supports and professional development

# F. Alignment within a Birth through Third Grade Continuum: Delaware's Proposed Response

- ▶ POC Pilot participation
- ▶ Delaware Help Me Grow 211 resource and referral service, expansion of HV referral system being developed
- ▶ **Transition Taskforce**
  - Develop statewide materials to be used locally
  - Support Kindergarten Registration campaign
- ▶ Design a Transition Conference for Pre-K and K teachers
- ▶ **Develop a Core Series of Professional Development**
  - Support the areas of high quality
  - Mix of webinar and face to face
  - ERS and Strengthening Families orientations for administrators, assessment and curriculum sessions, child abuse and neglect, CARE
- ▶ Offer an **Early Learning Leadership Institute**
- ▶ **Expand providers' access to child-specific assessment data dashboard** in the Early Learning Insight early childhood integrated data system (ECIDS)
- ▶ Complete and roll-out **professional development on data-driven decision making**
- ▶ **Connect Pre-K and K teachers'** use of ELFs, Common Core to support reading and writing skill development

# Timeline and Process for Feedback

# Submission Timeline

- Submission deadline: October 14
  - Federal government closed – October 13
  - System shut-down – October 11–14
- **Delaware's submission: October 10**
- Award notification: December

# Feedback and Comments may be sent to:

Kelly Hunter, Ed.D.  
Director, Early Development and Learning Resources

[kelly.hunter@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:kelly.hunter@doe.k12.de.us)

***By 12:00 pm October 6***

Consideration will be given to all comments that offer strategies to strengthen Delaware's plan.

Thank you for your attendance and commitment to young children!

