Project Summary/Abstract

Project Title:	Maximizing Availability of High-Quality Early Childhood Care and Education for Vulnerable and Underserved Children B-5 in Georgia
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With funding and support from the *Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five*, Georgia will design and implement activities to help ensure that Georgia's children from birth to age five have equal access to high-quality early childhood care and education. Although all children and families in Georgia will benefit, the activities in the grant specifically target the unique needs of children and families from vulnerable and underserved populations, such as children living in poverty, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, children who live in rural areas, and children with disabilities.

The following five activities will be implemented:

- Conduct a state-level comprehensive Needs Assessment of the Birth to Five mixed delivery system;
- Develop a statewide Strategic Plan to strengthen the state's B-5 System for serving children birth to age five and their families;
- Maximize Family Knowledge and Choice by expanding families' knowledge of programs and services through strengthened communication; by providing authentic opportunities to engage families; and by developing and supporting Family Peer Ambassadors;
- Share best practices through Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives; and
- Improve quality by developing learning opportunities and resources to support dual language learners.

The comprehensive plan that results from this work will strengthen the alignment, integration, and coordination of Georgia's B-5 System, coordinate funding streams and service delivery, encourage partnerships, and maximize the availability of high quality early childhood care and education options for families from underserved and vulnerable populations.

STATE OF GEORGIA
Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)
HHS-2018-ACF-OCC-TP-1379

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Expected Outcomes

As outlined in *Section I. Program Description* of the FOA, the PDG B-5 program purposes/goals include a focus on increased efficiency, coordination, and better use of existing resources through strong partnerships among child serving agencies. Additionally, priority is placed on expanding parental choice and knowledge to enhance school readiness. To address these purposes/goals, Georgia has proposed to focus on outcomes related to the needs of the system, ECE workforce and community partners, and children and families (see *Logic Model* for outcomes for each group). Activities described in this application are designed to address the needs of each group while also aiding the state in understanding gaps in the current mixed delivery system, especially in areas of support for children from vulnerable and underserved populations. Outcomes for each activity are listed in the corresponding Activity Description.

Approach

Georgia proposes activities that will provide critical information about its mixed delivery system, deliver a comprehensive strategic plan that addresses the needs of its vulnerable and underserved populations, and address needs related to family choice and early learning leadership. Once the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan are complete, the state proposes an activity related to dual language learners – a growing population with specific school readiness needs and challenges.

In terms of the overall project, the state will first ensure it has appropriate infrastructure and management in place. This entails hiring needed staff, contracting with external partners, and identifying all relevant stakeholders to participate in the different activities. The state will also set up a reporting system for the evaluation measures to communicate with all appropriate PDG B-5 leadership so needed revisions can be made during implementation. In terms of conducting

each PDG activity, the state has outlined an approach that includes finalizing planning, completing each activity within the proposed timeline, utilizing data and evaluation for continuous quality improvement, and concluding the work with a final report or implementation activity. As described in *Organizational Capacity and Management*, the state proposes the creation of a Cross-Agency Child Council that will review the work throughout the project and will provide an overall PDG B-5 perspective to ensure work is aligned and meeting the vision. As the work concludes, the state will issue summary briefs detailing the work and how it will be sustained.

The state has identified these potential obstacles and challenges for the PDG work:

Gubernatorial Transition: Georgia will inaugurate a new Governor in January 2019. Current Governor Nathan Deal's administration has been a supporter of early learning in the state and has facilitated the moving to a B-8 comprehensive early childhood system approach. The lead agency for this grant, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), has put into place a comprehensive transition plan. Furthermore, both major party candidates have early education in their platforms. Given these components, the state will be able to mitigate any potential challenges of a gubernatorial transition.

Timeline: the timeline for the activities is ambitious. However, the state has experience in administering grants and implementing multiple projects simultaneously. As can be seen from the different activity plans, the state has allotted time for finalizing plans and beginning the work. DECAL's infrastructure will facilitate quick hiring of key personnel and having an Instructional Supports division and an in-house research team will ensure that additional planning and data compiling/collection can begin on Day One.

Activity One Approach: B-5 Statewide Needs Assessment Plan

Georgia proposes a thorough Needs Assessment that includes assessing the availability, quality, and alignment of the state's existing early childhood care and education (ECE) programs and supports to determine how well they meet the needs of children from birth to age 5 (B-5) and their families in populations that are more likely to be vulnerable, underserved, or located in rural areas. Drawing on a wealth of resources, i.e., existing ECE research; experienced ECE researchers; a robust Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS); and engaged partners, the Needs Assessment will analyze needs, barriers, misalignments, and gaps to inform development of a Strategic Plan that strengthens integration and coordination within Georgia's mixed delivery system. Strategies resulting from the Needs Assessment will help Georgia "move the needle" on the key metrics of access, quality, engagement, support, and school readiness to provide optimal services to children and families in critical subpopulations. Beyond this grant, the Needs Assessment will be updated periodically and function as a catalyst for more expansive research and evaluation.

Key Terms for Needs Assessment and PDG B-5 Grant	
Term	**Georgia Definition**
Access	The ability of "parents, with reasonable effort and affordability, [to] enroll their child in an arrangement that supports the child's development and meets the parents' needs."[1]
Availability	A measure of the supply, desired and licensed capacity, enrollment, and vacancy levels of ECE programs in a specified geographic area. This information, along with family awareness of it, helps determine what constitutes reasonable effort when assessing access. This information, along with data on total number of ECE programs, also allows evaluation of both program-level and child-level availability[2].

[1] Friese, S., Lin, V., Forry, N. & Tout, K. (2017). *Defining and Measuring Access to High Quality Early Care and Education: A Guidebook for Policymakers and Researchers*. (pp. 5). OPRE Report #2017-08. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

[2] Friese, S., Lin, V., Forry, N. & Tout, K. (2017). *Defining and Measuring Access to High Quality Early Care and Education: A Guidebook for Policymakers and Researchers*. OPRE Report #2017-08. Washington, DC: Office of

Capacity	The number of slots within a child care program. Desired capacity is the ideal number of slots as determined by the program. Licensed capacity is the maximum number of allowable slots as determined by the licensing authority.
Children in Rural Areas	The number of children, including those from migrant families, who live in a county with a population of less than 50,000 or in an area designated as rural based on a military installation exclusion clause.
Quality Early Childhood Care and Education	ECE programs that meet rigorous standards for enriching direct experiences of children through nurturing interactions with teachers and well-organized and engaging routines, activities, lessons, and materials. The criteria also require classroom environments with highly skilled and trained teachers, structured curricula, desirable child-to-teacher ratios, and supplemental services designed to meet child and family needs[3].
School Readiness	The measure of children's growth, ideally supported by a collaboration among families, schools, and communities, in the following fundamental domains: physical development including physical health, well-being, and motor skills; social-emotional development including self-regulation and relationships with peers and adults; cognition and general knowledge including mathematics and problem-solving; language & literacy development including language understanding and use, emergent literacy, and early writing; and approaches to learning including initiative, attentiveness, persistence, and play[4].
Underserved	Children and families whose needs are not met by available services, or who are not able to access existing services that meet their needs.
Vulnerable	Children at risk for not meeting developmental milestones or school readiness benchmarks.

Capacity to Conduct a Needs Assessment: A strength of Georgia's ECE system is its strong research focus, with a robust research and evaluation agenda. Recent research projects include a longitudinal evaluation of Georgia's Pre-K Program and a validation study of Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS), known as Quality Rated. A testament to the state's research capacity is the recent award of a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation to conduct research related to the state's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plan.

Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

[3] Barbarin, O.A., Bryant, D., Burchinal, M., Downer, J.T.,, Early, D., Hamre, B.K., Howes, C., Mashburn, A.J., & Pianta, R..C. (2008). *Measures of classroom quality in prekindergarten and children's development of academic, language, and social skills*. Child Development, 78 (3) 732-749.

[4] GEEARS: Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students. (2017). *A Framework for School Readiness in Georgia.* http://geears.org/wp-content/uploads/GA-School-Readiness-Framework.pdf

Finally, Georgia has vast experience in stakeholder engagement, which will help ensure a comprehensive Needs Assessment. For example, DECAL currently convenes an external Quality Rated Validation Committee that reviews the research methods and TQRIS validation study findings. Also, in 2016 in partnership with the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, the state conducted focus groups and surveys with providers and families about Georgia's CAPS subsidy system.

Process for Conducting Needs Assessment: The Needs Assessment will be conducted from January to June with a final report issued by July 31, 2019 and will utilize qualitative and quantitative research methods to collect and analyze data. The Needs Assessment will also be aligned with other research and evaluation activities. DECAL will be the lead for the state's Needs Assessment and, along with its Research and Policy Analysis Team, will work with other relevant state agencies, local community partners, and external stakeholder groups to meet coordination and facilitation needs, to develop and determine how to answer the research questions, to compile and organize existing research, and to collect and analyze additional data needed for this project.

Tasks	Administrative Actions	Research Actions
Task 1: Plan for Conducting Needs Assessment (First Quarter 2019)	Work with ECE partner agencies to: • Identify contractors to help collect and organize research data; and to plan and compile final report. • Identify facilitator for Needs Assessment Advisory Committee Meetings • Identify external stakeholders with ECE expertise and diverse perspectives to serve on the Needs Assessment Advisory Committee. • Set dates for monthly meetings and finalize meeting structure and agenda, including data and research findings, analysis, and reporting and communication plans.	NA

Task 2: Finalize the Scope of the Needs Assessment (January and February 2019)	• Finalize scope of Needs Assessment with partners in January and with the Advisory Committee in February. • Work with Advisory Committee to ensure Needs Assessment aligns with the vision and outcomes. • Ensure that Needs Assessment addresses gaps in data and research about ECE program and facility quality and availability.	• Identify existing research, data, and sources. • Identify additional data needed; complete data collection and analysis • Review research questions and determine how to answer them. • Review and revise ECE programs to be included. • Review subpopulations of children to be examined. • Identify resources to address funding and service barriers.
Task 3: Conduct Data Analyses and Research (Second and Third Quarters 2019)	• Continually organize data analyses and collection to align with the purpose and goals of the Needs Assessment and to answer the research questions.	• Compile and organize existing data and research • Collect new data and analyze • Ensure existing and new data and research relates to the subpopulations and Needs Assessment questions. • Structure new research, results, data, and analysis to align with research questions, purpose, and goals. • Utilize CACDS for data collection/ organization.

Task 4: Conduct Needs Assessment Advisory Committee Meetings (First, Second, and Third Quarters 2019)	• Organize, convene and conduct monthly meetings to review the Needs Assessment, Strategic Plan, and research and data collection activities. • Facilitate feedback loops between research and program leaders related to interpreting and analyzing data results and research findings, communicating the findings, and determining next steps • Discuss additional research and evaluations to support Georgia's approach to continuous quality improvement.	• Compile ongoing data analyses and research. • Collect data and feedback summaries from Needs Assessment Advisory Committee meetings.
Task 5: Finalize Needs Assessment (Third Quarter 2019)	• Review all findings and data analyses. • Delve into the findings and analyses to determine how they relate to the availability and quality of existing ECE programs, especially for subpopulations. • Create final report and include in the Strategic Plan • Create one-pagers on findings covering key topics and identified subpopulations.	• Compile all findings, including Needs Assessment Advisory Committee discussion notes and recommendations. • Conduct final analyses and determine next steps.

Use of Other Needs Assessments and Links to the Logic Model/Vision Statement:

Georgia's Needs Assessment will support the PDG B-5 vision (see *Logic Model)* by providing data that demonstrates how well the state's mixed delivery system provides equitable access to children, especially those who are from vulnerable and underserved populations, and rural areas. The Needs Assessment research questions align with the core components of the Vision Statement: 1) vulnerable, underserved, and rural-area populations; 2) equitable access to high-quality early childhood experiences; 3) integrated and coordinated mixed delivery system; and 4) strong foundation for success in school and throughout life. The Needs Assessment will provide data related to the outcomes detailed in the state's Logic Model.

Other state documents will inform the Needs Assessment including past research and Georgia's Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan. The state will leverage four

years of RTT-ELC reports, three years of Quality Rated Validation reports, and a current research study about Georgia's Pre-K Program waiting list. Georgia's current CCDF plan details many of the supports for children and families from vulnerable and underserved populations, and rural areas. DECAL will also work closely with the Georgia Department of Public Health and Georgia Department of Education to leverage MIECHV and state and local Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) reports.

Scope of Georgia's Proposed Needs Assessment: The scope of Needs Assessment requires determining: 1) what ECE programs should be included; 2) which subpopulations of children and families are defined for the purposes of this grant as vulnerable, underserved, and residing in rural areas, and 3) what specific research questions will be answered by the Needs Assessment.

Early Childhood Care and Education Programs : Georgia's Needs Assessment will be at the B-5 Early Childhood State System level and will examine the quality, availability, and alignment of core ECE programs and services. The state has identified the following programs as being included in the Needs Assessment: Child and Adult Care Food Program, child care programs (including licensed child care learning centers and family child care learning homes, and licensing-exempt programs receiving subsidies), Childcare and Parent Services, Early Head Start, Georgia's Pre-K, Head Start, IDEA Programs, MIECHV, Quality Rated, and other programs and services funded through ESSA and CCDBG. These other programs include initiatives related to infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, children who are dual language learners, and the workforce. Where possible, data from other statewide programs such as Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and Foster Care will be incorporated to support findings related to the programs listed above.

Subpopulations of Children and Families Included: The Needs Assessment will provide critical information related to Georgia's children and families. It will facilitate data disaggregation of critical subpopulations so Georgia can evaluate how well its B-5 mixed delivery system meets their needs. The state has identified seven subpopulations of children and families classified as being vulnerable and/or underserved. *Vulnerable* refers to groups of children who may have a greater likelihood of not meeting key school readiness and development benchmarks. *Underserved* refers to groups for whom available ECE services do not meet demand or who do not have access to the programs and services meeting their needs.

The Needs Assessment will identify more efficient and effective ways of targeting and supporting children and families from these subpopulations. For each of the subpopulations, research shows that high-quality Early Education has large impacts on school readiness skills. Research (and Georgia data) continue to suggest that access to high-quality ECE for these groups may be limited. The table below lists key data points and definitions for the subpopulations.

Children Living in Poverty	For the purposes of Georgia's PDG B-5 Grant, children in poverty are defined as those whose income is at 100% FPL. Georgia's overall poverty rate is higher than the national average (15 to 13) with several Georgia counties having a poverty rate between 35 and 40%.[5] The poverty rate for children in Georgia is 21% compared to 18% nationally.[6] According to the 2018 Georgia KidsCount data report, 23% of children ages zero to five are in families living in poverty.[7]
Dual Language	Georgia's DLL population continues to grow. If the same percentage of DLLs (16%) of children 5 to 17 is applied to the birth to five population, then the state has over 124,000 children in homes where a language other than only

[5] KIDS COUNT Data Center, A Project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2018). *Georgia: Population in poverty*. Retrieved from https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/52-population-in-poverty?loc=12&loct=2#detailed/2/12/true/871,870,573,869,36,868,867,133,38,35/any/339,340

[6] KIDS COUNT Data Center, A Project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2018). *Georgia: Children in poverty (100 percent poverty).* Retrieved from https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/43-children-in-poverty-100-percent-poverty?loc=12&loct=2#detailed/2/12/true/871,870,573,869,36,868,867,133,38,35/any/321,322

[7] KIDS COUNT Data Center, A Project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2018). *Georgia: Children living in households with a high housing cost burden*. Retrieved from https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/7244-children-living-in-households-with-a-high-housing-cost-burden?loc=12&loct=2#detailed/2/12/false/870,573,869,36,868,867,133,38,35,18/any/14287,14288

Learners (DLL)	English is spoken.[8] Recently conducted state research[9] found children who are dual language learners were more likely to begin their Pre-K and Kindergarten years significantly behind their same-age peers.
Children with Disabilities	In 2014, 2.1% (8,322) of children birth to two and 4.4% (17,725) of children ages 3 to 5 were served under IDEA Part C and IDEA Part B respectively.[10] This is compared to 2.9% under IDEA Part C and 6.1% under Part B nationally.[10] In terms of high-quality inclusive options, over a quarter of children (26%) 3-5 with a disability are served in segregated services.[10]
Children in Foster Care and Protective Services	This subpopulation includes both children in Foster Care as well as children who remain in their home with an active protective services case. This is approximately 6,147 children birth through five statewide.[11] In Georgia, the graduation rate for children in Foster Care is11% and increasing access to early education will provide foundational support for this subpopulation.
Children Experiencing Homelessness	According to Georgia KidsCount data from 2016, 61% of children in low-income households are living with families burdened by high housing costs.[12] In 2014, Georgia had the 7th highest number of homeless students and the 28th highest rate of student homelessness in the U.S.[13] It is also estimated that 16% of students who are homeless have also been diagnosed with a disability.[13] Families and children experiencing homelessness face additional barriers in accessing high-quality early education.
Infants and Toddlers	Based on Georgia data, this is an underserved group with families of these youngest children having limited access to high-quality ECE options. A 2016 Economic Impact Study of Georgia's ECE industry[14] found that only 15% of infants and 22% of toddlers are receiving formal early education. A 2008 study of ECE program quality found that two-thirds of infant and toddler

[8] United States Census Bureau. (2017). *2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*. Retrieved from https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/summary_file/2017/data/?#

[9] Peisner-Feinberg, E. S., Garwood, J. D., & Mokrova, I. L. (2016). Children's Outcomes and Classroom Quality from Pre-K through Kindergarten: Findings from Year 2 of Georgia's Pre-K Longitudinal Study. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute. Retrieved from http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/GAPreKEvalLongitudinalYr2Report.pdf

[10] Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education. (2016). *38th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2016*. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/2016/parts-b-c/38th-arc-for-idea.pdf

[11] Division of Family and Children Services. (2018). *Demographics of Children in Foster Care*. Retrieved from http://fostergeorgia.com/demographics-of-children-in-foster-care/

[12] KIDS COUNT Data Center, A Project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2018). *Georgia: Children living in low-income households with a high housing cost burden*. Retrieved from https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/71-children-in-low-income-households-with-a-high-housing-cost-burden?loc=12&loct=2#detailed/2/12/false/870,573,869,36,868,867,133,38,35,18/any/376,377

[13] Institute for Children, Poverty, & Homelessness (ICPH). (2016). *Georgia Has More Homeless Students in Rural Areas Than in Cities: Student Homeless Snapshot November 2016*. Retrieved from https://www.icphusa.org/reports/georgia-has-more-homeless-students-in-rural-areas-than-in-cities/

[14] Georgia State University: Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, &The University of Georgia: Carl Vinson Institute of Government. (2016). *Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Georgia.* Retrieved from http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/EconImpactReport.pdf

	classrooms are low quality[15]. Current analyses on the availability of infant and toddler care indicate the state has many areas "child care deserts" with little or no access to high quality infant and toddler care.
Children and Families in Rural Areas	Georgia has a significant rural population with limited access to high quality ECE and therefore more likely to be underserved. Specifically, 118 (74%) of Georgia's 159 counties are classified as rural.[8] Approximately 132,005 (20%) children 0-4 years of age live in rural counties in Georgia.[16] The Needs Assessment will help specifically identify child care deserts in rural areas and how this disaggregates by services and age groups.

The following table outlines the research categories and potential questions in the development process. These categories and sources will be reviewed, revised, and expanded in Task 2 of the process. Additionally, data sources for each of the questions will be identified.

Categories	Potential Needs Assessment Research Questions[17]
General Demographics	• What does Georgia's B-5 child population look like in terms of key demographics, such as race/ethnicity, poverty level, dual language learners, rural residence, etc.? • What percentage of Georgia's B-5 child population and their families are vulnerable or underserved, or reside in rural areas?
ECE Availability	• What are the ECE program participation rates of B-5 children from vulnerable and underserved populations or from rural areas? • How many eligible B-5 children in each of these groups are on waiting lists to enter ECE programs? Which programs?
Family Choice and Engagement	• How can the state increase families' knowledge of Georgia's B-5 mixed delivery system? • How do families, especially those from vulnerable and underserved families, access information regarding the system? • How can the state increase families' knowledge of developmental milestones and school readiness?
Governance and Collaboration	• What cross-agency working groups or councils currently exist? Are they effective? • How are stakeholders engaged in the current ECE governance structure? • What barriers for stakeholders – workforce, families, etc.– are created by the current ECE governance structure?
ECE Leadership and Workforce	• What are the demographics and educational characteristics of the ECE workforce? What barriers to pursuing credentials or degrees exist?

[15] Maxwell, K. L., Early, D. M., Bryant, D., Kraus, S., Hume, K., & Crawford, G. (2009). *Georgia study of early care and education: Child care center findings.* Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, FPG Child Development Institute. Retrieved from http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/ChildCare_Report.pdf

[16] Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) internal administrative data.

[17] As discussed in the *Analysis Plan*, one of the first processes of the Needs Assessment will be to revise and finalize potential needs assessment questions.

	• What is the economic well-being of ECE educators? How does this vary by age of children taught, program type, educational attainment, or race/ethnicity? • What are annual turnover rates and the consequences of turnover?
Program Quality and Improvement	• What is the cost of reaching and maintaining higher levels of ECE program quality? Does it vary by program type? Does it vary by Quality Rated star level? Does it vary by student age group? • What is the distribution of Quality Rated star ratings across Georgia? • Are licensure requirements a barrier to families accessing high quality programs?
IDEA Programs	• How many B-5 children currently receive services from the state's Part C program? From the Part B 619 program? What are the percentages by age? geography? gender? race/ethnicity? • What percentage of the state's B-5 children with disabilities are served in inclusive settings? • How many children experience a timely transition from Part C to Part B?
Early Childhood Education	• Which school readiness skills do Georgia's B-5 mixed delivery system support best? Which skills are not as well supported? • What is the relationship between quality and children's growth?
Data Systems	• What is the culture of data and research in the state? • Is all relevant program data captured?
Monitoring and Accountability	• On average, how long does it take for programs to become Quality Rated? • What is the average processing time for a CAPS application? Does this vary for Quality Rated Subsidy Grants? • How many families are eligible for CAPS and Georgia's Pre-K but are not being served?
Financing	• How are agencies maximizing and leveraging state and federal funding streams to support a high-quality continuum of care? • How are programs braiding funding streams at the community level to improve service access and quality?

Analysis Plan: The state will use existing resources to collect, compile, and analyze data from the Needs Assessment. The first step (collection) will be to finalize the research questions and then determine the best data sources and plan for collection. In the second step (compiling), DECAL's Research and Policy Analysis Team with support from an outside contractor will begin compiling, organizing, and summarizing recent Georgia research data and begin collecting additional data needed. The third step (analyzing) will be organizing and analyzing all the data in relation to the finalized research questions.

Measuring the Unduplicated Number of Children: A key tool in developing Georgia's Needs Assessment will be the state's Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS), which is known in Georgia as the Cross-Agency Child Level Data System (CACDS). This system will facilitate the state's ability to measure the unduplicated number of children being served in early childhood care and education programs at the state and local level. As described below, once the full capability of CACDS is built out under PDG B-5, the state will be able to measure the unduplicated number of children awaiting services in these programs.

CACDS, begun under the State Advisory Council Grant and expanded under the ELC Grant, is housed at DECAL and is able to produce reports using de-identified, individual-level child data from the state's key ECE programs, including the state's CAPS program, Early Head Start, Georgia's Pre-K, Head Start, IDEA Part B Section 619, IDEA Part C, and Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Services (MIECHV). Georgia has signed data sharing agreements with each of the state agencies that administer these programs, as well as all Head Start grantees in the state. CACDS also includes program-level data from child care provider licensing and Quality Rated records; the U.S Census Bureau; and the U.S. Postal Service that include population-level demographic information. CACDS allows the state's early childhood leadership to measure unduplicated counts of children who are served in each of the existing programs.

Georgia has a strong existing cross-agency governance structure that supports CACDS, and this structure is being leveraged throughout the state's PDG B-5 work through the committees supporting the Needs Assessment and the Strategic Plan. With the Needs Assessment, the state will build out the capability of CACDS to easily run reports utilizing Census Data in addition to child level participation data. While Census data is already housed in

CACDS, by building out the reporting functionality of matching programmatic data with Census data, the state will better be able to measure and report on unduplicated counts of children being served in the state's programs and the unduplicated number of children awaiting services.

Outcomes: The short-term outcomes expected from Georgia's Needs Assessment are: 1) Georgia has a completed Needs Assessment that details the quality, availability, and alignment of existing ECE programs and services; 2) Georgia's ECE stakeholders have a clearer understanding of current gaps in the quality, availability, and alignment of existing ECE programs and services especially for children and families more likely to be from vulnerable and underserved populations; and 3) Georgia has a "roadmap" of data and research to inform the Strategic Plan and other ECE activities. The long-term outcomes are: 1) Georgia has developed a methodology and instituted a process for updating and revising the Needs Assessment; and 2) as a result of collecting and compiling Needs Assessment data, information about access to high-quality ECE programs and services has increased.

Activity Two Approach: B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan

DECAL has an agency-specific strategic plan guiding the work of the department. Georgia currently does not, however, have a statewide, cross-sector, early childhood strategic plan. The PDG B-5 will enable Georgia to develop a single, statewide early childhood strategic plan building on the state's existing resources and partnerships to 1) improve governance through formalized coordination and collaboration; 2) improve program quality to better serve children and families; and 3) increase overall participation of children, especially those from underserved and vulnerable populations.

Process for Developing the Strategic Plan: DECAL will build on the state's current ECE governance structure for CACDS to form the State Strategic Plan Governance Committee

(Governance Committee). The Governance Committee will be one of the Working Committees of the Cross Agency Child Council. Each key child serving state agency will appoint two staff members to serve on the Governance Committee. The Head Start State Collaboration Director, a representative from the Governor's policy staff, and a representative from the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget will also serve on the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee will lead the strategic planning process and ensure the Strategic Plan covers all relevant, appropriate, and needed areas. In addition to the two DECAL senior leaders serving on the Governance Committee, DECAL will also house staff who will support the work. While relying on existing internal agency staff to execute the strategic plan, Georgia will also engage content experts and a professional, third party facilitator to support the strategic planning process.

Strategic Planning Process			
Stage	Actions	Primary Parties	Timeline
Stage 1: Planning and Preparation	-Identify contractor to facilitate strategic planning. -Reach out to agency heads to identify representatives for the Governance Committee. -Identify when the Governance Committee will meet and develop meeting structure. -Identify subject matter experts (if needed).	DECAL Staff	January-March
Stage 2: Establish Governance Committee & Conduct Meetings	-Host two-day kick-off meeting for Governance Committee to develop shared purpose and scope of Strategic Plan and to review existing strategic plans held by each agency. -Refine and finalize membership of advisory groups. -Meet three times to review best practice and existing status of governance, program quality, and access. -Review findings of July Needs Assessment Report.	DECAL Staff, Contracted Facilitator, Contracted Subject Matter Experts, Governance Committee	April-August
Stage 3: Establish Advisory Groups & Conduct Meetings	-Host one-day kick-off meeting for advisory groups (see below for description of groups) to meet jointly with Governance Committee to understand purpose and scope of state Strategic Plan. -Meet individually as advisory groups to provide feedback governance, program quality, and access.	DECAL Staff, Contracted Facilitator, Subject Matter Experts, Governance Committee,	June-August

	-Meet to review findings of July 2019 Needs Assessment Report and to make Strategic Plan recommendations to Governance Committee.	Advisory Groups 1-3	
Stage 4: Refinement of Strategic Plan	-Based on the findings of the July 2019 Needs Assessment, conduct additional stakeholder outreach as needed via survey, focus group, and other methods to inform Strategic Plan. -Based on the findings of the July 2019 Needs Assessment, contract with additional subject matter experts to inform Strategic Plan.	DECAL Staff, Contracted Facilitator, Subject Matter Experts, Governance Committee, Advisory Groups, Needs Assessment Committee	August-October
Stage 5: Launch of Strategic Plan & Ongoing Feedback	-Launch the Strategic Plan via an interactive website to gather feedback on the plan and connect site visitors to state early childhood resources. -Governance Committee moves to a quarterly meeting schedule to review data and update Strategic Plan. -Advisory groups move to a bi-annual meeting schedule to review data and update Strategic Plan.	DECAL Staff, Website Contractor, Governance Committee, Advisory Bodies	October - Ongoing

The Governance Committee will engage staff, partners, and stakeholders through three Strategic Plan advisory groups. First, the Family Peer Ambassadors, described in *Activity Three Approach: Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge*, will ensure family voice is included in developing the Strategic Plan. Family Peer Ambassadors will be compensated for participation. The Family Peer Ambassadors constitute Advisory Group One.

Second, the Executive Cabinet of the state's grade level reading affiliate, Get Georgia Reading, will be leveraged to ensure that an existing, cross-sector group will be used to inform the plan. The Get Georgia Reading Executive Cabinet includes 60 leaders from business and industry, state agencies, child advocacy organizations, private and family foundations, health and behavioral health, higher education, local school districts, and statewide community service organizations. This group has met for more than eight years (through gubernatorial transition) to improve cross-system coordination to ensure that all children are on a path to reading on grade

level by the end of third grade. The campaign's host organization is Georgia Family Connection Partnership which administers a statewide network of collaboratives in each of Georgia's 159 counties and is also the state's Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count grantee. The Executive Cabinet of Get Georgia Reading constitutes Advisory Group Two.

Third, the DECAL Advisory Committee is an existing body made up of child care learning center directors, family child care providers, local school system superintendents, charter school principals, child care association representatives, family advocates, and family-serving organizations. This Committee constitutes Advisory Group Three.

Finally, the Needs Assessment Stakeholder Committee, described in the *Needs Assessment Plan*, will serve as an ongoing advisory body throughout the implementation of the PDG B-5, including formally reporting the Needs Assessment findings to the Governance Committee and advisory groups.

Partnership Opportunities and Outcomes: The strategic planning process leverages the state's existing network of community partners, advocates, and local leaders who already work collaboratively to serve as advisory groups. This approach also strategically lessens barriers that have previously hampered collaboration, such as geography and turnover in leadership at the state and local level. For example, budgeting for stipends and travel for family participants will support family participation in strategic planning.

Because all the committees and advisory groups described in Activities One and Two are existing cross-agency collaborative entities, these groups will continue to exist after their formal role in implementing the PDG B-5. To assess progress, the Needs Assessment Stakeholder Committee described in the *Needs Assessment Plan* will continue to meet to monitor change over time. In addition, they will also review the reports available in CACDS to identify persisting

service gaps and to recommend needed analysis and research. The Governance Committee will continue to meet on a biannual basis to review the recommendations of the Needs Assessment Stakeholder Committee and progress on the Strategic Plan. The Governance Committee will reconvene the advisory groups to review progress and provide additional feedback.

The short-term outcome for the Strategic Planning process is that Georgia has a comprehensive Strategic Plan to inform future work toward a coordinated mixed delivery system. Long-term outcomes are: 1) Georgia has a coordinated mixed delivery governance structure that results in effective coordination and collaboration across all areas of the system; 2) statewide executive leaders are invested in and committed to building a strong mixed delivery system that addresses the needs of all children and families, especially those from vulnerable and underserved populations; and 3) children and families have access to high-quality services across all sectors of the mixed delivery system.

Activity Three Approach: Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge

Background and Barriers/Gaps: Georgia has made significant investments in providing families with information about early childhood education programs and services in Georgia's mixed delivery system. Activities and supports have been designed to supply families with information about available slots in child care, childcare health and safety inspections, and quality ratings and to link them to other services and resources, including a website that serves as a Family Portal. However, these efforts have been largely provider-focused and have not always addressed the unique concerns and needs of families.

While existing systems and resources have provided families with increased access to Georgia's B-5 system, the state has identified a need to strengthen its family engagement activities to ensure authentic family input into policies and programs. Additionally, there is a

need for more streamlined coordination between child- and family-serving agencies to ensure that the mixed delivery system is efficient and easy to access. With funding from PDG B-5, Georgia will implement projects to streamline the early childhood system by coordinating services and strengthening partnerships with families.

Activity Description: Project 1: To ensure families are provided with timely, accurate information in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner, Georgia will engage with families to obtain authentic input into the content and structure of websites and other tools designed to provide information to families. During the grant year, Georgia will work with families to create a plan to identify the information and features they find beneficial and to determine the most accessible and family-friendly formats and sources. Strategies will be developed to obtain family input, especially from families in vulnerable and underserved populations. Focus groups, surveys, parent cafes, and other strategies will provide the state with opportunities to solicit information about how families define quality and what information they want when making child care choices. After year one of the grant, this information will be used to enhance existing resources such as Georgia's Family Portal website and to create new tools and resources to ensure maximum family choice and knowledge. The collection of the family input will be the only activity during the grant year to facilitate meeting the grant timeframe.

Activity Description: Project 2: To ensure that families are aware of the resources available through the mixed delivery system, the state will develop and implement a plan for a statewide marketing and public awareness campaign. The campaign will be developed through expanding an existing contract with an agency specializing in media influence and with the state's public broadcasting group, Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB), and will use best

practices from a family survey developed by Zero to Three[18]. A partnership between DECAL, the Georgia Department of Public Health (IDEA Part C), and the Georgia Department of Education (IDEA Part B), the campaign will expand the state's successful *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* initiative from focusing primarily on the early learning workforce to include families and other community leaders. The content will focus on supporting families' ability to monitor their children's development, identify concerns and individual needs, and find programs and services to meet those needs. The CDC's suite of materials, *Learn the Signs. Act Early*., will be the basis for the campaign and will include promotion of their print materials, website, video clips, and app. Public service announcements and social media posts will be designed and developed and are planned for release by GPB during their child and family programming.

Activity Description: Project 3: To deepen partnerships with families, Georgia will create a cadre of Family Peer Ambassadors who will engage families from vulnerable and underserved populations in activities designed to provide them with timely, accurate information about their children's development and strategies they can use to support their children's school readiness. DECAL will build upon existing work by the Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS, see *Organizational Capacity and Management*), in their Early Education Training Academy (***E²TA),*** which is funded through a grant from the Goizueta Foundation. This project will partner with GEEARS and leverage the Goizueta funding to support training for families on the importance of ensuring their children arrive to kindergarten on time and of continued engaged parental support throughout their children's school years. This training will also focus on meaningful leadership development experiences to expand the capacity of families to advocate for children and to participate in state and community civic engagement including

[18] Tuning In: Parents of Young Children Tell Us What They Think, Know and Need is a comprehensive research undertaking by ZERO TO THREE and the Bezos Family Foundation, 2016.

participation on the PDG B-5 stakeholder groups. The Family Peer Ambassadors will receive financial support for their participation including time, travel and child care costs.

One important task of the Family Peer Ambassadors will be to offer parent and family training to cohorts of families in their communities allowing participants to receive information in a culturally and linguistically sensitive manner from people with experiences similar to theirs. Georgia will partner with experts from the Satcher Health Leadership Institute at Morehouse School of Medicine to train the Family Peer Ambassadors on the Institute's *Smart and Secure Children Parenting Leadership* program, which aims to increase quality parenting to strengthen vulnerable families raising children 0-5 years old. The content for this evidence-based, ten-session series includes brain development, developmental milestones and how to seek services for children for whom there are concerns, supporting strong school readiness skills, parental self-care, and other topics related to transition and school readiness. Additionally, Satcher Health Leadership staff and partners will conduct listening tours to determine the specific strengths and needs of each area and will tailor the content accordingly. The program will be structured at the community level and will be piloted in 12 communities across the state. For a description of the pilot communities, see *Mixed-Delivery System.*

Conclusion Performance Measures, and Outcomes: In addition to gaining leadership and parenting skills, Ambassadors will provide valuable insight and input into policies and initiatives as active participants in their community's Early Learning Collaboratives and by serving on the state level Cross-Agency Children's Council described in *Organizational Capacity and Management*.

Performance measures for the projects are: 1) Family focus groups, cafes, and surveys are conducted in all areas of the state, and data is used to create and modify resources; 2) media

campaign plan is implemented; 3) all 12 targeted communities have Family Peer Ambassadors identified and trained; and 4) family Peer Ambassadors have identified and begun training families in their communities. Long-term outcomes are: 1) Families have a better understanding of Georgia's mixed delivery system; 2) resources and website better meet families' needs, especially families who are vulnerable and underserved; 3) families have access to meaningful information about early childhood education programs and resources for their children; 4) families have increased skills and understanding of child development and school readiness skills; and 5) families have improved leadership skills and are more engaged in their communities.

Activity Four Approach: Sharing Best Practices among State Early Childhood Care and Education providers

Background: Ensuring a successful transition across early learning programs and into Kindergarten and the early elementary grades requires supporting professionals who work with children across the birth to third grade continuum. Support should include helping professionals develop a clear understanding of child development, social emotional needs, mental health supports, instructional leadership, and family engagement. Georgia has supported the development of this foundational knowledge by providing technical assistance (TA) and access to Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for professionals whose programs participate in key state initiatives. These include training and TA provided by child care resource and referral agencies (CCR&Rs) to programs participating in the state's QRIS and TA provided by a cadre of staff with expertise in specific areas (i.e., Pre-K, infant toddler, and inclusion). When working with leaders, TA providers focus on building capacity for the individual to become an

instructional leader who understands best practices when working with young children and their families and ways to support teachers in developing effective instructional skills.

Additionally, Georgia has supported communities in developing collaborative, community-based leadership teams through the Early Education Empowerment Zones (E3Z) project, funded by Georgia's RTT-ELC funds, and through collaborative relationships with the Get Georgia Reading campaign. These teams have focused on building community-based Birth to Eight Teams to support early learning and school transitions in local communities.

Barriers/Gaps: Although Georgia has laid a foundation for supporting communities, as described in *Organizational Capacity and Management*, one area that needs more focus is intentional support for early learning leaders who are directly managing programs. This group of leaders includes center directors, elementary principals, Head Start and Early Head Start administrators, leaders of Home Visiting programs, and Georgia's Pre-K Program directors. Adequate support for children transitioning between programs and into Kindergarten and the early elementary grades requires that leaders understand child development across the entire continuum, how to identify areas of risk in meeting developmental milestones, and available resources for children and families who need additional supports. Further, among early learning leaders, Georgia has the opportunity to build stronger community networks where leaders are able to support each other in attaining this foundational knowledge while also developing a deeper understanding of community resources and building partnerships with other community partners who support children and families. To address these gaps, Georgia proposes to institute an Early Learning Leadership Collaborative opportunity for leaders in the state's 12 targeted communities.

Activity Description: Georgia's Early Learning Leadership Collaborative (ELLC) program will be piloted in the state's 12 targeted communities with the following goals: 1) Increase early learning leaders' knowledge of best practices in early learning instruction and child development that support successful transitions across early learning programs and into Kindergarten and the early elementary grades; 2) Provide opportunity for collaboration among community leaders to focus on creating alignment among programs; and 3) Develop community leaders who understand trauma-informed care and are able to effectively respond to the needs of children and families experiencing trauma.

To form each ELLC, Georgia will select one elementary school in each targeted community as the hub. Elementary schools will be selected based upon the number of children attending the school who are vulnerable and/or underserved. Early learning programs in the school's catchment area will be included as part of the community's ELLC with a focus on programs that include Early Head Start, Head Start, or Georgia's Pre-K. The elementary school principal and administrative leadership from the early learning programs will be expected to participate; it is anticipated that each ELLC will include approximately 12 members.

Each ELLC will have access to training opportunities to support the previously described goals, including leadership institutes that allow all ELLCs to learn together, community-based training on trauma-informed care, and community action planning.

Training Opportunities	**Format**	**Topics[19]**	**Partnership/Contractual Opportunities**
Early Learning Leadership Institutes	- All ELLCs meet together - 4 full-day institutes - Approx. 12 members per ELLC	- Instructional leadership - Child development - Social emotional development	- National experts in instructional leadership (Partnerships will follow state procurement rules.)

[19] Will include additional topics as determined by ELLC needs.

Building a Response to Trauma	- Community-based training - 1 full-day training - 1 full-day action planning - Approx. 12 members per ELLC and other community leaders (e.g., local law enforcement, healthcare providers) - Max. 30 participants per ELLC	- Brain development - Resiliency - Creating a response to trauma action plan	- Georgia State University's Child Welfare Training Collaborative
Community Action Planning	- Community-based meetings - Once every other month - 3-hour meetings - Approx. 12 members per ELLC	- Supporting Kindergarten transition and alignment of programs - Implementing knowledge learned during institutes - Community partnership development	- National experts in birth to third grade alignment (Partnerships will follow state procurement rules.)

In addition to providing training opportunities, Georgia will provide grants to ELLCs to support attaining the goals detailed in their community-based action plans. Each ELLC will be eligible to apply for a maximum of $20,000 in funding. Stipends will also be offered to offset some travel costs if needed (max. 2 participants per ELLC).

Performance Measures and Outcomes: The ELLC pilot will allow Georgia to test the theory that engaging in community-level professional development and action planning (with an intentional focus on early learning leaders managing programs) supports a smooth transition from early learning to Kindergarten. Performance measures for the program are: 1) All 12 targeted communities have an ELLC with representation from all previously described audiences; 2) most ELLC members regularly attend institutes, training, and community-based action planning sessions; and 3) all ELLCs have clearly defined goals and implement a community-based program based on needs identified during the action planning process. Long-term outcomes of the ELLC pilot are: 1) Georgia has a better understanding of how to support

early learning leaders using a community-based model; 2) early learning leaders are better able to access community resources to support children and families; and 3) utilizing knowledge gained during the pilot project, Georgia has a plan for scaling the ELLC model to other communities.

Activity Five Approach: Improving Overall Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs/Providers/Services

Background: As explained in *Activity Four Approach: Sharing Best Practices*, ensuring a successful transition from early learning programs into Kindergarten and the elementary grades includes supporting professionals who work with children across the entire birth to third grade continuum. As shared earlier in this application, one area of focus for Georgia is children's reading scores at third grade. The Get Georgia Reading Campaign has created state and community level data and strategies to support children's literacy, particularly children from vulnerable and underserved populations. One crucial area of growth for early learning professionals in Georgia is in understanding how to support the literacy development of young children who are dual language learners.

DECAL has provided targeted support in this area through its Summer Transition Program (STP) for rising Pre-K students. The Rising Pre-K STP program is designed to support a smooth transition into Pre-K for children whose first language is Spanish and who have limited English proficiency. In addition to the STP program, Georgia has invested in professional learning opportunities for targeted audiences through a partnership with WIDA Early Years. Participants in the WIDA Early Years professional learning program included state-approved trainers, technical college and university faculty, center directors, and DECAL TA staff. The purpose of the program was to build capacity among these targeted professionals to create

meaningful approaches to working with young children who are dual language learners and their families. Professional learning topics included the WIDA Early Years Promising Practices approach and understanding the alignment between the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) and WIDA Early English Language Development Standards.

Barriers/Gaps: While Georgia has made some investments in supporting early learning professionals who work with children who are dual language learners and their families, it appears these investments may not be effectively translating to teacher practice. The state's longitudinal study of Georgia's Pre-K Program[20] has followed a sample of children who participated in Georgia's Pre-K, taking annual measurements of progress to understand long term effects of participation. Results from the longitudinal study indicated that there are opportunities for growth in supporting children who are dual language learners. The study found that children who are dual language learners were more likely to begin Pre-K and Kindergarten significantly behind their same-age peers. Additionally, Spanish-speaking children who participated in Georgia's Pre-K Program made progress on language, literacy, math, and social skills over time when tested in English; however, this progress was not sufficient to allow them to catch up to their same-age peers. Further, while there was some improvement in skills tested in English, it appeared their proficiency in Spanish was declining over the same time period.

While Georgia's Pre-K longitudinal study provided some information about the experiences of children who are dual language learners in Georgia's Pre-K, there are questions that remain regarding the types of supports needed for all Georgia's children who are dual language learners in early learning programs. Additionally, when considering the findings from

[20] Peisner-Feinberg, E., Mokrova, I., & Van Manen, K. (2018). *Children's Outcomes through Second Grade: Findings from Year 4 of Georgia's Pre-K Longitudinal Study.* Manuscript in preparation. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.

the Pre-K longitudinal study, it appears the professional learning opportunities provided to date have not had a meaningful impact on instruction for children who are dual language learners and on support for their families. The state's proposed Needs Assessment will include questions about the types of supports needed for early learning professionals to adequately work with children who are dual language learners and their families. The state proposes to use information gained from the Needs Assessment to inform the development of training and resources to support early learning professionals working with children who are dual language learners and their families.

Activity Description: Georgia will convene an advisory committee to make decisions about training, resources, and standards revisions that may be needed to support early learning professionals working with children who are dual language learners and their families. The work of the advisory committee will be guided by information collected from the Needs Assessment. The advisory committee will include representatives from key Georgia partner organizations and experts in working with children who are dual language learners. Potential partner organizations include the Technical College System of Georgia, the University System of Georgia, the state's Coalition for Dual Language Learners, and the Georgia Department of Education. The following goals will guide the work of Activity Five: 1) Increase early learning professionals' knowledge of best practices in working with children who are dual language learners and their families; 2) provide resources that support early learning professionals in designing meaningful learning experiences for children who are dual language learners; and 3) ensure alignment of the GELDS with best practices for working with children who are dual language learners.

Information from the Needs Assessment will inform specific training opportunities and resources needed for early learning professionals and guide possible adjustments or additions to

the GELDS. Georgia will also use information and lessons learned from the previously described work with WIDA Early Years and the Rising Pre-K STP program. Additionally, Georgia will engage with a national expert in working with children who are dual language learners to guide the work of the advisory committee. Because Activity Five is dependent on the findings from and timing of the Needs Assessment, the state's priority for the remaining time in the grant year will be to gather information from experts in the field and to identify specific training and resource needs for early learning professionals. The actual dissemination of training and resources will occur after the grant year. The following table identifies the planned tasks:

Tasks	**Partnership/Contractual Opportunities**
Form advisory committee to inform possible changes or additions to the standards	National expert in working with children who are dual language learners and their families; state experts to join advisory committee
Identify areas to expand existing GELDS resources to provide supports for working with children who are dual language learners (resources disseminated after the first year of the PDG utilizing subsequent PDG grant, CCDF, or ESSA funds)	State and national experts in instructional standards and/or in working with children who are dual language learners
Develop training plan for roll-out of GELDS changes and additional resources to early learning professionals (resources disseminated after the first year of the PDG utilizing subsequent PDG grant, CCDF, or ESSA funds)	
Purchase classroom resource materials to be distributed to centers in conjunction with training (resources distributed after the first year of the PDG to max. 60 centers)	

Performance Measures and Outcomes: Georgia will have the opportunity to use Needs Assessment data to better understand the needs of children who are dual language learners and their families and explore professional learning needs for early learning professionals working with this group of children. Information gathered will inform the state's decisions about focus areas for Activity Five, which, in turn, should have a positive impact on instructional experiences for Georgia's children who are dual language learners. Program performance measures for

Activity Five are: 1) Georgia will make decisions about training topics that are needed to better support early learning professionals in working with children who are dual language learners; 2) Georgia will complete an analysis of the GELDS to determine changes needed to address the needs of children who are dual language learners; 3) Georgia will engage with state and/or national experts to inform expansion of existing instructional resources and training topics for working with children who are dual language learners; and 4) Georgia will develop a plan for dissemination/delivery of new training topics. Long-term outcomes for Activity Five are: 1) Georgia has a better understanding of professional learning and resources needed to support early learning professionals who work with children who are dual language learners and their families; 2) Georgia has an actionable plan for providing training and resources on working with children who are dual language learners and their families; and 3) early learning professionals are better able to access resources to assist them in working with children who are dual language learners and their families.

Organizational Capacity and Management

Georgia's early care and education system is solidly anchored in DECAL. Georgia is one of the few states in the country with a separate, legislatively created early care and education department devoted to programs and services for children birth through five, their families, and the ECE workforce. Demonstrating its administrative and performance management capacity, DECAL houses the following federal and state programs: Georgia's Pre-K Program, Head Start State Collaboration Office, Quality Rated (Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System), child care licensing, the CCDF state administrator, subsidized child care (CAPS program), the network of child care resource and referral agencies, and federal nutrition programs (the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program).

DECAL is headed by a Commissioner who is appointed by and reports directly to Georgia's Governor, thereby underscoring the importance of children's early learning and development to the state's executive leadership. DECAL is supported by an advisory board, composed of one representative from each of Georgia's 14 congressional districts appointed by the Governor. The board meets at least four times per year and advises/supports the work of the department; statutorily, the board is responsible for approving DECAL's budget and for promulgating rules and regulations.

DECAL administers a budget composed of federal, state, and philanthropic funding with no audit findings for over 10 years. In fiscal year 2019, DECAL's budget is more than $835,699,370 to support the state's continuing commitment to young children and their families. DECAL has experience managing state and federal level grants as evidenced by successful administration of a Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge Grant of $51,739,839 from 2013-2018, an Early Head Start Partnership Grant of $24,382,396 from 2015-2019, and federal USDA nutrition grants of $702,610,844 from 2015-2019. In addition, the department oversees a $365 million budget of state lottery revenue annually.

PDG B-5 Governance Structure

Georgia will leverage two existing high level, functioning entities to anchor its PDG B-5 governance model: the Georgia Children's Cabinet and the Alliance of Education Agency Heads (AEAH). In 2012 Governor Nathan Deal created the Georgia Children's Cabinet composed of the heads of all state agencies that serve the needs of Georgia's children and their families and of select community, philanthropic, education, and business stakeholders. The membership conforms to the requirements for State Advisory Councils as prescribed in the Head Start Reauthorization Act of 2007. The Cabinet recommends policy and practice to improve outcomes for children and families in the areas of child welfare, economic assistance, health, juvenile

justice, and education. In every meeting the Cabinet reviews the ongoing systemic work to improve early childhood education and care. The Cabinet meets every two months.

AEAH is Georgia's P-20 Council and is composed of the heads of the state's seven education agencies. The heads of Georgia's education agencies work collaboratively to ensure a more seamless educational experience for Georgia's students from preschool through K-12 to higher education and the work force. This council has been sustained over eight years and through gubernatorial transition. Regular updates and discussions in Alliance meetings have contributed to building an informed and trusting atmosphere that facilitates ready collaboration across agencies. The Alliance meets bi-monthly.

Because the missions and goals of the Georgia Children's Cabinet and the AEAH align with Georgia's vision for the B-5 Early Childhood System, leveraging these entities will ensure a state level commitment to the PDG. Building on the executive state level commitment, Georgia will form a Cross Agency Child Council (Council) to guide the work of the Needs Assessment and the development of the Strategic Plan. The Council will be composed of key staff from the child serving agencies represented on the Children's Cabinet to ensure a direct reporting structure. In addition, high level staff from advocacy agencies, non-profit groups, ECE providers, and Family Peer Ambassadors will serve on the Council. Working committees will be established, where needed, to inform and review the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan.

State Partnerships

DECAL has a reputation for working collaboratively with other state agencies, federal entities, ECE advocacy groups, ECE professional organizations, private and corporate foundations, universities, and parent groups on behalf of children and families.

Many state agencies will work on Georgia's PDG B-5 grant. The following table identifies those agencies, their relevant programs, and how they will be involved in the grant.

Because these agencies implement programs that directly serve young children and their families or the B-5 workforce, they have experience delivering services in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways. Executive staff from each of these agencies will serve on the Cross-Agency Child Council.

State Agency	Description and Related Agency Programs	Grant Roles & Responsibilities
Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability (DBHDD)	Oversees programs related to child and adolescent behavioral health. This includes family support services, a non-entitlement program which brokers disability specific services.	• Member, Children's Cabinet (State Advisory Council [SAC]) • Member, Cross Agency Child Council • Working Committees participation
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)	Houses many of the state's early education programs and services. This includes being the lead agency for Georgia's Child Care and Development Fund, overseeing child care licensing, and housing the Head Start State Collaboration Office. This also includes: Child Care Resource and Referral, federal Nutrition Programs, Georgia's Pre-K Program, and Quality Rated. DECAL is also an Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership Grantee and has a strong administrative support infrastructure to support PDG B-5.	• Lead entity for Georgia's PDG B-5 grant. Specific responsibilities discussed in next section.
Georgia Department of Education (GADOE)	Oversees K-12 education, including ESSA, and oversees Georgia's IDEA Part B, Section 619, Literacy 4 Georgia Grants, and Title Programs.	• Member, Children's Cabinet (SAC) • Member, AEAH • Co-chair, Cross Agency Child Council • Working Committees participation • Partner, Activities 4 & 5
Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS)	Houses the Division of Family and Children Services (DFACS) which includes Child Protective Services. DHS is also responsible for administering Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP).	• Member, Children's Cabinet (SAC) • Member, Cross Agency Child Council • Working Committees participation

Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH)	Oversees Georgia's public health programs and initiatives such as Maternal Child Health, Children 1st, Women, Infant and Children Food and Nutrition Service, Idea Part C Early Intervention, Newborn Screening, and Home Visiting.	• Member, Children's Cabinet (SAC) • Member, Cross Agency Child Council • Working Committees participation • Partner, Activity 3
Georgia Head Start State Collaboration Office (Housed at DECAL)	Facilitates partnerships between Head Start agencies and other state entities that serve children who are vulnerable and their families.	• Member, Children's Cabinet (SAC) • Member, AEAH • Co-chair, Cross Agency Child Council • Working Committees participation • Partner, Activities 4 & 5
Georgia Office of Student Achievement (GOSA)	Provides policy support to the Governor through research, data analysis, and reports on educational programs.	• Working Committees participation • Needs Assessment partner
Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)	Supervises Georgia's 22 technical colleges on 85 campuses offering 600 program options including many for early educators.	• Member, AEAH • Working Committees participation • Needs Assessment partner
University System of Georgia (USG)	Governing organization for Georgia's 26 public colleges and universities.	• Member, AEAH • Working Committees participation • Needs Assessment partner • Evaluation partner

In addition to partnering with the state agencies in the preceding table, DECAL will also partner with the advocacy and professional organizations in the following table. More private partners may be identified during the first few months of the grant.

Organization	Description	Grant Roles & Responsibilities
Georgia Early Education Alliance for Ready Students (GEEARS)	Advocacy agency supporting high quality early learning and development opportunities for all children ages birth through five.	• Member, Cross Agency Child Council • Needs Assessment partner
Georgia Family Connection	Statewide network of more than 3,000 local- and state-level partners in all 159 counties in	• Working Committees Participation

Partnership (GaFCP)	Georgia. Provides locally based support to strengthen collaboration, identify service gaps, and make effective use of existing resources and services. GaFCP is also Georgia's Kid's Count grantee.	• Needs Assessment partner
Georgia Head Start Association (GHSA)	Statewide association that provides education, leadership, and advocacy to support Head Start programs' efforts to deliver high quality comprehensive services to Georgia's children and families.	• Member, Children's Cabinet (SAC) • Member, Cross Agency Child Council
Georgia Organics	Organization connecting organic food from Georgia farms to Georgia families. Sponsors an extensive Farm to Preschool program designed to help schools promote healthy eating habits in the children and families they serve.	• Working Committees participation • Needs Assessment partner
Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education	Coalition of business, education, community, and government leaders focused on improving student achievement.	• Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan partner
Georgia State University Center for Collaborative Social Work	University program offering trauma-informed care training through its Child Welfare Training Collaborative	• Partner, Activity 4
Georgia Campaign for Grade Level Reading	Get Georgia Reading is the statewide coalition of public and private stakeholders focused on all children reading on grade level by third grade.	• Executive committee will serve as an Advisory Body for Strategic Plan • Partner, Activity 4
Satcher Health Leadership Institute	House at Morehouse College of Medicine. Provides multi-disciplinary research, innovative community-based programs, and strategies to inform health policy solutions and reduce health disparities.	• Working Committees participation • Partner, Activity 3
Voices for Georgia's Children	Child policy and advocacy organization	• Member, Cross Agency Child Council • Partner, Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan
Early Learning Advocacy Organizations	Georgia Child Care Association Professional Family Child Care Association GA Association for Education of Young Children	• Representatives, Working Committees

<u>Lead Entity Roles</u>

DECAL will be the lead entity for Georgia's PDG B-5 Grant. DECAL Commissioner, Amy Jacobs, will represent PDG B-5 on the Children's Cabinet and AEAH. She is DECAL's liaison to the Governor and Legislature and is currently the Chair of the Georgia Center for Early Language and Literacy Board. Commissioner Jacobs has more than 20 years of experience in state government and has extensive experience in agency management, finance, and budgeting.

DECAL's Deputy Commissioner for Pre-K and Instructional Supports, Susan Adams, will be PDG B-5 Executive Lead. Ms. Adams will also lead the Cross Agency Child Council and co-manage Activities One and Two. She has more than 25 years of experience in early childhood education and has extensive experience in grant administration, program development, and state system leadership. She currently is responsible for overseeing several statewide programs with federal and state funding, leads Georgia's P-3 efforts, and served as a co-chairperson of Georgia's ESSA plan.

DECAL's Deputy Commissioner for System Reform, Kristin Bernhard, will co-manage Activity Two. Ms. Bernhard is responsible for Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (Quality Rated), DECAL's Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Grant, Georgia's Child Care Resource and Referral System, and other quality initiatives. She was the lead administrator of Georgia's ELC Grant and has vast experience in conducting stakeholder engagement and partnership development.

Dr. Bentley Ponder, Senior Director of Research and Policy, will co-manage Activity One and will oversee the evaluation of PDG B-5. Dr. Ponder directs DECAL's Research and Policy Analysis division and is responsible for Georgia's CCDF Research and Evaluation Grant. He currently oversees Georgia's Pre-K Longitudinal Study and the state's Quality Rated

Validation study. He has vast experience working with outside contractors and research partners and has managed multiple external evaluation contracts.

In addition, other high-level DECAL staff will oversee projects in Activities 3, 4, and 5. Jennie Couture, DECAL's Director of Practice and Support Services, will oversee the projects in Activity Three. Currently, Ms. Couture is responsible for DECAL's infant and toddler programs, the Inclusion and Behavioral Support Unit, and Family Engagement. In addition, she is the *Learn the Signs, Act Early* Ambassador to Georgia. Dr. Christi Moore, DECAL's Director of Professional Learning, will manage projects in Activities 4 and 5. Currently, Dr. Moore oversees Georgia's Early Learning and Development Standards, DECAL Scholars, Dual Language Learner Supports, and Workforce Development Initiatives.

Three key staff positions will be hired to support Georgia's PDG B-5 administration.

Position	Roles and Responsibilities	Reports To
Grant Administrator	• Oversees day to day operations • Fulfills federal reporting requirements • Serves as a liaison between DECAL and PDG B-5 committees and advisory groups • Maintains budget and project status	Deputy Commissioner for Pre-K and Instructional Supports (Grant Lead)
Grant Coordinator	• Schedules meetings including venue contracts • Facilitates communication between agencies and partners • Resolves any logistical project barriers	Grant Administrator
Data Analyst	• Responsible for data collection and analyses for all PDG B-5 activities including Needs Assessment and Evaluation • Maintains Project Performance Measures and Metrics	Senior Director of Research and Policy

DECAL's Finance, Legal, Communication, and Human Resources divisions will provide grant support as needed.

State B-5 Mixed Delivery System Description and Vision Statement

Georgia's B-5 Mixed Delivery System (referred to as "system" in this section) currently serves over 800,000 children annually birth to five. The system benefits from a strong state

infrastructure that recognizes the need for differentiation based on individual community needs. The table below lists critical programs in the System and includes each program's administrative home, funding streams, and key programmatic descriptions and policies. A complete description of child serving agencies providing administrative homes to the programs can be found in *Organizational Capacity and Management.*

Child Care Licensing Administrative Home: DECAL Funding: CCDF and State Funds	*Description*: Licenses and regulates Child Care Learning Homes, Family Child Care Learning Homes and exempt programs that receive CCDF funds. As of November 2018, there are over 2,400 child care centers and close to 900 family child care learning homes. • Approximately 100 licensing consultants • Visit programs a minimum of twice a year • Focused on monitoring health and safety with TA provided to assist in meeting health and safety requirements
Georgia's Pre-K Administrative Home: DECAL Funding: GA Lottery for Education	*Description*: Serves over 80,000 children each year (approximately 60% of the state's four-year olds) and is available in every county. • Available in a variety of settings, including local school systems, private child care facilities, and Head Start programs • State has also heavily invested in Georgia's Pre-K research which has benefited not only this program but other early education programs • Over 1.7 million children have been served since 1992. • While the program is universal, it is important to note that 58.5% of Pre-K children are classified as low income.
Quality Rated (Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System) Administrative Home: DECAL Initial Funding: RTT: ELC Current Funding: CCDF, Philanthropic funding	*Description:* Georgia's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System • Has seen exponential growth in the last five years and demonstrates the state's commitment to quality • Out of eligible early learning programs, 34% have earned a rating. Another 1,848 early learning programs are currently actively working towards obtaining a Quality Rated star rating. • 52% of children who receive child care subsidy are in star rated facilities. • State is currently piloting Quality Rated Subsidy Grants (QRSG) that are serving 3,000 infants, toddler, and preschoolers. Providers who receive a QRSG are reimbursed at a higher rate for subsidy and are guaranteed a set number of slots for subsidy eligible children for the duration of the grant year. • Current validation study has found tremendous support for the program from rated providers.

Child and Parent Services (CAPS) Administrative Home: DECAL Funding: CCDF	*Description:* Provides child care subsidies to approximately 50,000 low income families per month • Base rates are low; however, the state has high tiered reimbursement rates to pay 10%, 20% and 40% for 1, 2, and 3 star rated programs respectively. • In the last two years, considerable policy revisions implemented including lower family fees, 12 month eligibility, and strengthened services for children with disabilities.
Head Start, Migrant Head Start, Early-Head Start, and Early Head Start Child Care Partnerships Administrative Home: Local grantees and DECAL Funding: Head Start and CCDF	*Description:* Head Start is a critical component of the System and supports families by aligning critical early education and family support services. Over 11,000 and 3,000 children are served in Head Start and Early Head Start respectively. • Alignment of state level early education funding with Head Start and Early Head Start. This includes braiding Georgia's Pre-K and Head Start funds and utilizing subsidy to provide full supports to families. • In 2014, the state became an Early Head Start – Child Care Partnership grantee and has implemented a program serving Spanish Speaking Dual Language Learners in Family Child Care Learning Homes with providers who speak the children's home language. • Telamon Corporation provides child care and preschool for children of eligible farmworkers ages 0-5 in four rural Georgia Counties as part of the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start program. In 2018, these programs served a combined total of 375 children.
IDEA Part B, Section 619 Administrative Home: Georgia Department of Education Funding: IDEA, State Funds	*Description*: The state uses IDEA Part B funding to provide critical early education services to children with disabilities ages 3 to 5. Currently the program serves approximately 4.4% of the population, lower than the national average of 6.1%. • Many children, especially three year olds, are served in segregated environments rather than inclusive settings. • GaDOE works closely with DECAL to collaborate on child find and other activities. The two agencies sponsor a joint position for an early learning PBIS specialist to ensure alignment between the preschool and K-12 PBIS models.
IDEA Part C Administrative Home: GA Department of Public Health Funding: IDEA	*Description:* The state uses IDEA Part C funding to provide critical early education services to children with developmental delays and disabilities ages birth to 3. Currently the program serves approximately 2.1% of the population, lower than the national average of 2.9%. • Georgia's eligibility criteria are rigorous. Children must score 1.5 standard deviations below mean in two developmental areas or 2.0 standard deviations below mean in one developmental area

	• More than 95% of eligible children receive their services in natural environments, including home and child care settings.
Home Visiting Program Administrative Home: Georgia Department of Public Health Funding: MIECHV	*Description:* Evidence-based home visiting program helps at-risk pregnant women and families with children through kindergarten entry. In 2017, the program provided over 17,000 home visits and served over 1,300 households. • Home visiting services are available in 13 counties. 15% of counties served are in rural areas of the state. • 75.7% of the families served were considered low income.
Nutrition Services Administrative Home: DECAL Funding: Federal USDA Grants	*Description:* Two programs provide vital supports for lower-income children and families in terms of reducing food insecurity. The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) ensure that children and adults throughout Georgia have access to nutritious meals while in child care and during the summer when school is not in session. • In 2018 the SFSP served 4.8 million meals across 1643 sites. • In 2018 CACFP served 76.6 million meals in 2,576 sites across the state. • Partners with the Georgia Department of Agriculture and other partners to implement several Farm to ECE initiatives.
Preschool Multi-Tiered System of Support Administrative Home: DECAL Funding: CCDF	*Description:* A prevention-based framework that employs evidence-based practices to prevent early childhood suspension and expulsion by nurturing children's social-emotional competence and support children with challenging behavior within early learning programs. • A warm line is available where calls can be screened to ensure callers receive the appropriate level of service • A statewide network of Inclusion Specialists and Behavior Specialists provides training and coaching on classroom level supports and developing behavior plans for individual children.
Infant and Toddler Program Administrative Home: DECAL Funding: CCDF Infant Toddler Quality Set-Aside, Governor's Office of Student Achievement	Program developed to help providers understand and meet the unique needs of infants and toddlers and to improve the quality of care in those classrooms. • A statewide network of Infant Toddler Specialists helps providers understand and practice a model of relationship-based care that is respectful and responsive to each child's individual needs. • The state's infant toddler work is grounded in the principles of the Program for Infant and Toddler Care • Infant toddler specialists provide onsite coaching, training and other resources to support improved quality in classrooms

Professional Development System Administrative Home: DECAL Funding: CCDF	The Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS) serves as the state's workforce registry, tracking professionals' degrees, credentials, and trainings. GaPDS users can also register for DECAL trainings. Currently, the system has 91,113 users. • GaPDS is used to gather workforce information on participants. • System tracks training applications and keeps record of degrees, credentials, and continuing education for all trainers.

The following funding streams support Georgia's system.

Child Care Development Fund	Authorized through the Child Care Development Block Grant, Georgia receives over $275 million annually. CCDF funds Georgia's Child Care Subsidies, Child Care Resource and Referral System, Quality Rated, and other specific workforce and special population initiatives. These initiatives include Georgia's Preschool Multi-Tiered System of Support and the Georgia Professional Development System. In 2018, Georgia received a four-year $1 million grant to evaluate key CCDF policies and initiatives. This grant is currently evaluating policies and programs related to services for infants and toddlers.
GA Lottery for Education	Georgia is legislatively and constitutionally mandated to use lottery funds to pay for post-secondary education and for the Georgia's Pre-K program. The lottery directs over $365 million annually to Georgia's Pre-K, supporting a high quality program and teacher salary that is on par with K-12. Many in the ECE workforce also benefit from the lottery's post-secondary education supports.
USDA	Funding supports the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Program. USDA also supports many nutrition education programs that DECAL administers.
ESSA	GA's current ESSA plan focuses on supporting the whole child and allows local education agencies flexibility in budgeting funds through a new Consolidated LEA Application. GaDOE and DECAL have provided guidance to LEAs on how to utilize funds to support early learning, social emotional development, and dual language learners.
L4GA Grants	Georgia was awarded a total of $61,579,800 through the federal Striving Readers grant competition. Ninety-five percent of funds were sub-granted to 38 districts through a state grant competition. These funds are allocated for students in schools within a feeder system (including birth-age 5 childcare providers and elementary, middle, and high schools).
IDEA	Funds two programs for young children with disabilities. Part C authorizes federal funding for early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities ages birth to three years, and Part B, Section 619 authorizes supplementary grants to states for preschool programs serving children with disabilities ages three to five. Additionally, in Georgia, Part B receives state preschool funds.
State	Georgia uses state funds in addition to CCDF to fund child care licensing and regulation activities. Additionally, in 2017, the Governor's Office of Student Achievement awarded DECAL state funds to provide coaching and professional development in infant and toddler classrooms to improve language and literacy

	practices. Funds were awarded by the state legislature to the CAPS program to fund additional subsidy certificates.
Philanthropic	To support implementation of its QRIS the state raised over $15 million in private funds from 2014-2018 to support the bonus packages of supplies and materials that child care providers receive upon attaining a star rating and to support a statewide marketing effort to inform families about Quality Rated care. The state also raised over $1 million in in-kind and cash to support a statewide marketing effort to inform families on how to select Quality Rated care.

Successes with Georgia's B-5 Mixed Delivery System

For more than three decades, Georgia has developed and refined a B-5 ECE State System that improves early education experiences for children and families, prompting greater readiness for and the smooth transition to elementary school. In addition, support for early learning has been established and embedded in legislation and policy. The following are key "successes" that demonstrate the evolution of Georgia's system:

1983	Georgia funded and implemented **full-day kindergarten**. This crucial first step set Georgia on a path to be a forerunner and innovator in early childhood education.
1992	**Georgia's Pre-K** was created. The program has served over 1.7 million children and is now a key component of Georgia's educational pipeline. Since the program is universal and available in every county, early education has become part of the fabric of Georgia's educational system and has paved the way for other programs and initiatives.
2004	Georgia's governor and legislature created **DECAL**. This innovative state agency now employs more than 700 full-time staff and houses major state and federal programs (see above chart.)
2012	DECAL was made **lead agency for the CCDF** and began administering the subsidized child care program. This allowed the state to further align the B-5 system and more effectively serve children from low-income families by bringing a major funding source into the agency, supporting most early childhood programs.
2013	Georgia was awarded an **ELC Grant**. In the five years of ELC, the state has exponentially expanded Quality Rated thus increasing access to high-quality for children and families. It has also facilitated innovations such as increased tiered reimbursement based on star level and Quality Rated subsidy grants. ELC also facilitated expansion of supports related to assessment and Georgia's Early Learning and Development Standards, revised workforce competencies, the expansion and utilization of the CACDS, and creation of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment.
2017	Georgia completed the **transfer of subsidy administration** to DECAL The move of eligibility determination aligned all components of subsidy with early education. The state has created a family support division that helps families access resources.

In addition to these key milestones, the System has been supported and strengthened through the following state-level initiatives:

Initiative	Description
Get Georgia Reading	The state has made third grade reading proficiency a priority, with early learning (B-8) a pillar of this campaign. This support has facilitated alignments between early education, K-12, public health, and post-secondary.
Blended Service Model	Since the creation of DECAL, a state priority has been to work with all Head Start partners, Georgia's Pre-K Program, and the CAPS subsidy program to align and build on each other's resources, creating blended funding and service models at the local level.
Philanthropic Support	Philanthropy has been critical to the state's success, including legislative advocacy and funding directly for programs such as Quality Rated. In addition, the Georgia Foundation for Early Care & Learning was legislatively created in 2017, allowing for the state to more easily raise and manage philanthropic funds.
Data Systems	A key component of Georgia's success has been its infrastructure, including data and research. As part of the state's Race to the Top grant, the state created GAAWARDS, which provides P-Labor data and a P-12 longitudinal data system where Kindergarten teachers can utilize assessment scores from Pre-K. This data system is also aligned CACDS, allowing better understanding of children's participation in key programs from birth through workforce.

Georgia's PDG B-5 Mixed Delivery Vision Statement

Unpacking Georgia's vision statement (see *Logic Model)* reveals several key components that illustrate the state's comprehensive approach:

Georgia's Vision Statement…	Significance
…acknowledges the importance of focusing on all children but ensures that vulnerable and underserved populations are specified.	Shows the state's acknowledgement that an effective mixed delivery system, like effective classroom instruction, must differentiate based on needs and what works best.
…notes "access to high-quality early childhood experiences."	Demonstrates Georgia's understanding that to truly impact children and families the state must ensure both access (available slots) and high quality (the slots are high-quality).
…notes the importance of an "integrated and coordinated" mixed delivery system.	Integrated means that similar factors are embedded in each of the parts. Coordinated means that the parts of the mixed delivery system work together.

…notes the importance of using the mixed delivery system to facilitate a strong foundation that provides the basis for school and life success.	Acknowledges how early childhood experiences are foundational and a strong foundation yields strong results.

When taken together, these four components will enhance a mixed delivery system with high quality, coordination and alignment, and an efficient structure that will support more children being served in high-quality settings. To effectively determine whether or not the state's vision statement is increasing the quality, coordination, alignment, and efficiency of programs and services, the state has created five goals.

Goal 1	By 2020, conduct an initial high quality, state-level needs assessment of Georgia's mixed delivery system of early childhood programs, which utilizes existing and new data, and includes developing a process for a periodic updates to the needs assessment.	Georgia will have data on how well the different parts of System are coordinated and aligned and where there are gaps in terms of efficiency and barriers to accessing high quality.
Goal 2	By 2020, develop a state-level strategic plan to improve coordination and alignment of the B-5 Early Childhood State System, which leverages existing resources and initiatives, and increases overall participation of Georgia's children in the System, particularly those who are vulnerable and underserved.	Georgia will have addressed gaps and barriers along with any coordination and alignment needs. This will also ensure that the state has a focus on vulnerable and underserved populations.
Goal 3	By 2020, develop a continuous quality improvement process to support the enhancement of services provided in Georgia's mixed delivery system.	Georgia will have a plan for continuing this purposeful reflection and planning process- showing that the state will continue to work on increasing quality, coordination, alignment, and efficiency.
Goal 4	By 2024, facilitate authentic family engagement at the state and community level by: a. Expanding parent knowledge of the programs, resources and services in Georgia's mixed delivery system; b. Increasing families' knowledge of child development;	Georgia will have timely, family-friendly, and culturally and linguistically responsive communication which strengthens parent knowledge about the System and child development resulting in more successful transitions for children and families.

	c. Supporting successful transitions from early childhood care and education programs to the early elementary grades; d. Provide opportunities for families to contribute to policy development.	Families will have opportunities will to contribute to policy development.
Goal 5	By 2024, strengthen the alignment, integration, and coordination of B-5 Early Childhood State System by: a. Enhancing the existing State Advisory Council by creating a state-level cross agency child council; b. Strengthening existing community Birth to 8 Teams and other local early learning collaborative groups by connecting to the state-level child council; c. Providing professional development to early learning program leaders focusing on leadership competencies, strategic goal setting, transitions, and other identified topics that inform the unique needs of vulnerable and underserved children; d. Identifying opportunities to leverage existing federal, state, community, and non-governmental resources.	Georgia will increase alignment and coordination (subgoals a and b), increased quality (subgoal c), and improved efficiency by identifying new opportunities (subgoal d).

Hurdles and Challenges: The state has identified on-going challenges to Georgia's system that PDG B-5 work may help resolve. One of the strengths of Georgia's system has been its focus on **all** children, which has made early education part of Georgia's educational pipeline. However, a focus on universal programs may mask needs specific to certain subpopulations – such as the ones identified as vulnerable and underserved.

A second challenge is ensuring that children and families in rural areas have access to the same high-quality options as children and families in more populated areas. With an overt focus on rural areas in Georgia's PDG, the state will be able to improve services and access to high quality ECE programs. This is especially evident with the work in *Activity Three*.

Third, a consistent challenge in ECE program are obstacles related to the workforce. As the Economic Impact Study has shown, the workforce is primarily low-wage (though not for Georgia's Pre-K teachers who are on par with their K-12 colleagues) with high turnover. The

state has been working on more effective methods to empower Georgia's workforce. This includes the DECAL Scholars program, the Georgia Professional Development System, and the use of professional learning communities. The state has also devoted resources in its CCDF Research Grant to studying the workforce. The PDG opportunity will support these efforts through the Needs Assessment, Strategic Plan, and Activity Four.

Key Partners and Stakeholders: As described throughout the application, the state has opportunities for stakeholder and partner engagement. The Needs Assessment will also engage an Advisory Committee to advise the state in data collection, analysis, reporting, and interpretation. The Strategic Plan process will include a diverse group of advisory bodies. In Activity 3, Family Peer Ambassadors will ensure that families are key partners. Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives, in Activity 4, will be composed of community leaders. Activity 5 utilizes partners, including those from higher education, to provide expertise in working with children who are dual language learners. In addition, partners and stakeholders will also be engaged in the governance of grant (see *Organization Capacity and Management*).

Most importantly, there are opportunities for collaboration at the community level. As part of Georgia's Early Learning Challenge Grant, four early education empowerment zones were established to carry out local systems-building work. Utilizing CCDF funds, DECAL has scaled its community support strategy to six Community Partnership Coordinators serving every county in Georgia. These positions will be leveraged to provide community-level support to assist families in identifying and obtaining services.

In addition, DECAL will identify two communities in each of the state's six early learning regions. These communities will serve demonstration sites for implementation of projects in Activities Three and Four. Communities will be chosen based on factors such as

poverty level, 0-5 population, and other education and socio-economic data. At least six rural communities will be selected. The communities will have high populations of children who are vulnerable and underserved.

Project Timeline and Milestones

The proposed PDG B-5 timeline was developed as a guide for implementation. Progress towards meeting the project activities' tasks and milestones will be documented through monthly reports and status meetings with projects leads, as well as bi-weekly status updates between the Grant Administrator and Grant Lead. These ongoing check-ins allows for identification of factors that are accelerating or slowing the work and for adjustments to the timeline. In addition, Georgia intentionally developed a timeline with overlapping activities, allowing for adequate time for these adjustments. Activity 5 was developed to be able to be completed within the last quarter of the grant. DECAL has existing an standards advisory group that can be augmented with subject matter experts. In addition, the tasks focus on development during the grant year with implementation in the following year. Note that in the timeline, **milestones** are indicated with **bold font**.

Activity 1: B-5 Statewide Needs Assessment Plan					
Tasks	Subtasks	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Task 1: Planning for Conducting Needs Assessment	Identify External Contractors	X			
	Identify Members of the Needs Assessment Advisory Committee	X			
	Identify Facilitator for Needs Assessment Advisory Committee	X			
Task 2: Finalizing the Scope of Georgia's Needs Assessment	Finalize the Early Education and Care Programs included in the Needs Assessment	X			
	Finalize the Subpopulation Groups included in the Needs Assessment	X			
	Finalize Needs Assessment Research Questions	X			
	Identify Needs Assessment Data Sources	X			
	Identify Data Collection and Analyses Needs	X			
	Create Data Collection Plan	X			
Task 3: Conduct Data Analyses and Research	Compile Existing Data and Research in Needs Assessment format		X	X	
	Collect new data		X	X	
	Conduct new data analyses		X	X	
	Compile new data analyses and research in Needs Assessment format		X	X	
	Compile on-going data analyses and research		X	X	
Task 4: Advisory Committee Meetings	Design each of the 6 monthly Needs Assessment Advisory Committee Meeting	X	X	X	
	Conduct each of the 6 monthly Needs Assessment Advisory Committee Meetings	X	X	X	
	Collect and compile data from stakeholder meetings	X	X	X	
Task 5: Finalize Needs Assessment	**Create final report**			X	
	Create dissimilation one-pagers in key topic areas for different audiences			X	
	Create dissimilation one-pagers for key subpopulation areas for different populations			X	
	Conduct final analyses and identify next steps			X	
Activity 2: B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan					
Tasks	Subtasks	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Task 1: Planning and Preparation	Identify contractor to facilitate strategic planning	X			
	Identify representatives for the Strategic Planning Governance Committee	X			
	Identify subject matter experts (if needed)	X			
	Host two-day kick-off meeting for Governance Committee to develop shared purpose and scope of Strategic Plan		X		

Task 2: Convene Governance Committee	Meet to review best practice and existing status of 1) governance, 2) program quality, and 3) access across state		X	X	
	Meet to review findings of July 2019 Needs Assessment Report			X	
Task 3: Convene Advisory Bodies	**Host one-day kick-off meeting for Advisory Bodies to meet with Governance Committee jointly to understand purpose and scope of state Strategic Plan**			X	
	Meet individually as Advisory Bodies to provide feedback on 1) governance, 2) program quality, and 3) access			X	
	Meet to review findings of July 2019 Needs Assessment Report and to make Strategic Plan recommendations to Governance Committee			X	
Task 4: Refinement of Strategic Plan	Based on the findings of the July 2019 Needs Assessment, conduct additional stakeholder outreach as needed via survey, focus group, and other methods to inform Strategic Plan			X	
	Based on the findings of the July 2019 Needs Assessment, contract with additional subject matter experts as needed to inform Strategic Plan			X	
Task 5: Launch of Strategic Plan & Ongoing Feedback	**Launch the Strategic Plan via an interactive website platform to continue to gather feedback on the plan and connect site visitors to state early childhood resources**				X
Activity 3: Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge					
Projects	Subtasks	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Project One: Strengthen Engagement with Families	Plan surveys, focus groups, and cafes	X			
	10 focus groups/cafes held		X		
	Family survey distributed across state		X		
	Analyze results from surveys, focus groups and cafes			X	
	Family engagement plan completed			X	
	Revise plan based on information from needs assessment/strategic plan				X
Project Two: Plan for Public Awareness and Media Campaign	Identify PR contractor(s)	X			
	Contract with PR firm and GPB completed	X			
	Develop content: website resources, PSA content		X	X	
	Obtain input/reaction from Peer Family Ambassadors			X	
	Film PSAs			X	
	Media buys completed				X
	Roll out resources and air PSAs				X
Project Three:	Negotiate trainer contracts	X			

Family Peer Ambassadors	**Trainer contract(s) completed**	X			
	Recruit family peer ambassadors in pilot communities	X			
	24 Family Peer Ambassadors identified	X			
	Conduct E2TA sessions for Family Peer Ambassadors		X		
	Conduct Smart and Secure Parenting Leadership Training for Family Peer Ambassadors		X		
	Market trainings in communities and identify training groups			X	
	Family Peer Ambassadors conduct parenting trainings				X
	48 Parent trainings conducted				X
Activity 4: Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives					
Tasks	Subtasks	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Task 1: Early Learning Leadership Institutes	**All ELLCs selected**		X		
	Contract with national experts to conduct institutes	X			
	All 4 institutes completed, all ELLCs participate together			X	
	Adjust content and plan as needed, based on information from Needs Assessment			X	
	Follow-up as needed				X
Task 2: Building a Response to Trauma	Contract with state experts in trauma-informed care	X			
	Additional community participants identified by ELLCs (max 30 participants)		X		
	Training and action plans completed by all 12 ELLCs			X	
Task 3: Community Action Planning	Contract with national experts in P-3 alignment	X			
	Provide data from Needs Assessment as needed to inform Community Action Plans			X	
	Action plans completed by all 12 ELLCs			X	
Task 4: ELLC Implementation Grants	Applications distributed to all ELLCs		X		
	ELLC Implementation Grants awarded			X	
	Implementation projects completed				X
Activity 5: Working with Children who are Dual Language Learners and their Families					
Tasks	Subtasks	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Task 1: Convene Advisory Committee	**Committee members identified and invited to participate**				X
	Contract with national expert to facilitate work of committee and to provide consultation for Activity 5 tasks				X
	Committee meetings (4 full days)				X
	Review Needs Assessment data to inform work of committee (i.e., GELDS alignment needs and training/resource development)				X

	Follow-up as needed				X
Task 2: Development of GELDS Resources	**Convene internal work group to inform development of resources**				X
	Consultation with national expert on identified needs				X
	Develop plan for development and distribution of resources in the upcoming year				X
Task 3: Training Plan	**Convene internal work group to inform training needs**				X
	Consultation with national expert on identified needs				X
	Develop plan for development and dissemination of training in the upcoming year				X
Program Performance Evaluation Plan					
Tasks	Subtasks	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Task 1: Identifying Evaluation Supports	Identify External Contractors (aligns with Needs Assessment)	X			
	Identify Members of the Needs Assessment Advisory Committee (this group will also support the evaluation)	X			
Task 2: Developing Performance Measures and Outcome Metrics	**Identify Program Performance Evaluation Measures**	X			
	Identify Metrics for PDG Short-Term, Long Term Outcomes, and Goals	X			
	Identify Data Sources	X			
	Identify Measures and Metrics where additional data collection is needed	X			
	Finalize Program Performance Evaluation Plan	X			
Task 3: Conduct Evaluation	Develop Reporting Process	X			
	Compile Existing Data		X	X	X
	Collect New Data and Conduct Analyses		X	X	X
	Report Evaluation Findings		X	X	X
Task 4: Incorporate Evaluation Results in State's CQI Process	Conduct Bi-weekly Evaluation PDG Meetings		X	X	
	Incorporate Findings in Needs Assessment Advisory Meetings		X	X	
	Revise Activities and Logic Model Based on Program Performance Evaluation		X	X	
Task 5: Create Final Report	**Draft Final Report**				X

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

The Program Performance Evaluation Plan will be finalized during the first two months of the grant and revisited throughout the grant year. It will be used as part of the state's continuous quality improvement process for strengthening and improving Georgia's B-5 mixed delivery system. The Plan will be developed in conjunction with the Needs Assessment and use many of the same resources. Plan development includes five **overlapping** stages: 1) identifying program performance measures, indicators, and any additional evaluation research questions; 2) developing a process and methodology for tracking and reporting these measures and indicators; 3) collecting, compiling, analyzing, and reporting results; 4) utilizing the results for continuous quality improvement related to PDG B-5 activities, the PDG B-5 logic model, and other relevant activities; and 5) incorporating the process into existing research and evaluation efforts.

The Plan will use language from the Results-Based Accountability Framework[21]. This framework distinguishes the differences between "**population**" and "**program**" and differentiates **outcomes, indicators,** and **performance measures**. The following defines key terms for Georgia's PDG B-5 grant. **Population** refers to a certain group or subgroup of people. Examples of populations could be Georgia's ECE workforce or children from rural areas. **Outcomes** refer to a change for a population. Increasing access to high quality for infants and toddlers would be an outcome for this population. **Indicators** are data or results used to assess the level that the outcome has been achieved. For example**,** the number of high-quality, affordable options for infants and toddlers in a given geographic area would be an indicator. **Program** refers to a certain project, initiative, or service. For example, the *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* project in *Activity Three* would be considered a "program" in this framework. Program

[21] Friedman, M. (2008). *Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough: How to Produce Measurable Improvements for Customers and Communities*. Victoria, BC, Canada: Trafford Publishing.

performance measures are those that help evaluate how well a program is working. Program performance measures are generally phrased as "how much," "how well," and "is anyone better off." In Activity Four, the state is proposing to increase professional development for ECE leadership. A program performance measure could be the number of leaders who participated.

Key components of the Plan are indicators and performance measures. As detailed below, the state has identified six program performance evaluation objectives. Two of these include creating indicators for the PDG B-5 outcomes and program performance measures for specific activities or projects.

Program Performance Evaluation Objectives: The state has identified six **PDG B-5 Evaluation Objectives** that will drive the development of Georgia's plan and ensure that the evaluation will be useful in terms of a continuous quality improvement process related to PDG B-5 Activities, Goals, and Short-term and Long-term Outcomes for state and program leadership. When fully developed, Georgia's Plan will thoroughly describe how the state will do the following: **Measure the state's progress in meeting its PDG B-5 Goals (described in the Expected Outcomes Section) and the Short-Term and Long-Term Outcomes (described in the Logic Model).** Specifically, the state will identify indicators for the goals and the Short-term and Long-term Outcomes. **Monitor PDG B-5 program performance through appropriate program performance measures.** For PDG B-5 activities and projects, Georgia will identify specific program performance measures. **Institute a process for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data related to the indicators and program performance measures identified in Objectives 1 and 2.** A key component of the Plan will be the state's process for collecting and reporting evaluation data and results. **Use the Program Performance Evaluation process to identify and address data gaps.** To institute the process detailed above, the Plan will identify data gaps and

data misalignment that will need to be addressed to collect and report evaluation data. **Include the Program Performance Evaluation Plan as part of the state's continuous quality improvement efforts.** Specifically, the state will use the program performance evaluation to make needed revisions to targeted subpopulations, grant activities, and other research. There will be on-going reviews of data and research findings, including bi-weekly evaluation meetings with PDG B-5 leadership and monthly meetings with the Needs Assessment Advisory Committee. These findings will also be shared with the Cross-Agency Child Council and will facilitate "feedback loops." **Align the PDG B-5 Program Performance Evaluation Plan to other on-going research.** To maximize the state's current research agenda and the Program Performance Evaluation Plan, the state will ensure that program performance evaluation aligns with current research activities and the program performance agenda.

Core Components in Georgia's Program Performance Evaluation Plan

The following table details the components that will be embedded in Georgia's Plan. The table incorporates the required elements listed on Pages 30-31 of the funding opportunity.

Required Elements of Georgia's Evaluation Plan	
Element	How the state will address
Addressed in Objective 5 Identify, refine, and finalize, based on findings from the Needs Assessment, the target population or geographic areas identified in the strategic plan that will benefit most from implementation of early childhood care and educated and coordinated services.	Objective 5 describes how the state's program performance evaluation plan will be used for continuous quality improvement, including revising the Needs Assessment. Georgia will review the Needs Assessment data to determine if: 1) quality, availability, and alignment differs for these subpopulations; 2) additional research is needed to better assess quality, availability, and alignment for the identified subpopulations; and 3) if additional subpopulations should be added.
Include a refinement of the project logic model and identify associated process and cost indicators and outcomes.	DECAL's Research and Policy Analysis team will construct a "Project Performance Evaluation" logic model that incorporates the measures and milestones identified as well as the indicators constructed for the short and long-term outcomes.

Addressed in Objective 1 Identify short and long-term child, family, and program/service implementation outcomes linked with proposed strategic plan activities.	Indicators related to the short-term and long-term outcomes will be identified during the first two months of the grant. This includes a process for collecting, analyzing (if needed), and reporting these. Once the Strategic Plan is finalized, the state will revisit and revise these outcomes for alignment and identify any new outcomes and indicators.
Addressed in Objective 2 Identify and finalize indicators and program performance measures necessary to examine proposed process, cost, and program implementation reporting.	During the first two months of the grant, the state will identify program performance measures and indicators and ensure that there are appropriate mechanisms to collect and report the needed data.
Addressed in Objective 4 Identify existing data systems and data elements aligned with proposed metrics and gaps in data needs to be able to address proposed process and implementation reporting.	The state will rely heavily on the state's data systems. These systems will provide much of the child-level data needed for the identified metrics and milestones. During the first two months of the grant, the state will review Needs Assessment research questions and any additional evaluation questions identified during the program performance evaluation plan to identify needed data sources. Any gaps will be immediately addressed by developing an immediate data collection plan or by identifying a plan to collect data in the future.
Addressed in Objective 4 Identify new data sources to complement, as necessary, program and service data to address proposed implementation reporting and, as necessary, plan for the development of a new data system.	Concurrent with the Needs Assessment, the state will identify new data needs and how to address them. The state does not anticipate the need for any new data systems but has requested funding for upgrades to current systems. This includes data infrastructure and reporting and user experience improvement.
Addressed in Objective 3 Identify an appropriate methodological approach that includes a strategy for data collection, sampling, measurement, and analysis.	The state will work with the external partner identified as part of the Needs Assessment for developing all needed methodological approaches. As with the Needs Assessment, the state may have to revise the current reports (such as those in CACDS) and collect additional data. The methodological approach will incorporate both quantitative and qualitative methods, such as surveys and focus groups. The state will incorporate sampling efforts to ensure that identified subpopulations are represented. Where possible, random and stratified sampling designs will be employed. If random sampling cannot be used, the state will make efforts to ensure representation.

Addressed in Objective 6 Work with technical assistance providers to finalize implementation reporting plans.	Georgia has vast experience working with technical assistance providers and values their outside support and perspective. The state currently works with lead evaluators from the Urban Policy Institute on the CCDF Research and Evaluation Grant. The state also used Phase One funding for additional support in data visualization. Finally, DECAL works closely with Child Trends on various evaluation needs.
Addressed in Objective 5 Identify how implementation reporting findings will be used to inform continuous learning and improvement efforts.	The state has vast experience in creating research to policy feedback loops and using research to inform continuous quality improvement. This will include bi-weekly meetings with program leadership and monthly meetings with the Needs Assessment Advisory Committee.

Strategies of Georgia's Program Performance Evaluation Plan Approach

The following subsection details many of the key strategies of Georgia's Program Performance Evaluation approach. This includes detailing how the state will develop the plan, expected partners and processes, how measures and metrics will be constructed, resources that will be utilized, and the overall methodological approach.

Finalizing the Program Performance Plan: Georgia will finalize the Program Performance Evaluation Plan during the first two months of the grant. The process will build on the structure outlined in this section. It entails using external partners and the Needs Assessment Advisory Committee to develop program performance measures for grant activities and indicators for the grant's short-term and long-term outcomes. Once these have been finalized and approved by PDG B-5 leadership and the Cross-Agency Child Council, an evaluation plan will be developed. This plan includes identifying existing data sources and a data collection/analysis plan for any new data needed. This also includes adding any additional research evaluation questions; ensuring that evaluation results are consistently reviewed and are part of the state's continuous quality improvement process; and developing a process for reporting to state leaders and federal partners.

Additionally, Georgia's plan will include appropriate methodological approaches. This includes ensuring that existing data represents the subpopulations identified in the Needs Assessment and that any bias is minimized. Representative sampling, especially with families more likely to be vulnerable and underserved, is not easy, and the state will use a variety of techniques and use external and community resources for sample recruitment efforts.

Ensuring Appropriate Resources Are Allocated: The state's process for developing the Program Performance Evaluation Plan closely parallels the state's plan for developing and finalizing the Needs Assessment. As discussed in the budget, the state is requesting funds for 1 FTE data analyst to support the Needs Assessment and the program performance evaluation. Additionally, DECAL's Research and Policy Analysis Team will help compile and analyze data, report research results, and design evaluation. DECAL's IT Department will provide support in terms of data infrastructure. Finally, the Needs Assessment Advisory Committee will be used to provide feedback on research methodologies and results.

Utilizing Outcome, Process, and Financial Levels of Program Performance Measures and Indicators: The Plan will include performance measures and metrics that are "outcome," "process," and "financial" at the child, family, program, and system level for each activity and overall PDG B-5 goals and outcomes. Outcome measures are those that align with expected results for a task or activity. Process measures are those that are related to the percentage of a task or activity completed. These process measures will also be used to inform continuous quality improvement processes and implementation improvement efforts. Finally, financial measures relate to the spending allocated to a percentage of a project.

Existing Data Systems and New Data Collection: While the state does not foresee a need to create new data systems, the budget includes funding for system upgrades to create new

reports for the Needs Assessment and evaluation. The program performance evaluation will facilitate improvement of data and reporting systems. Also, while the state possesses a trove of administrative data, it has yet to develop a comprehensive data analysis plan. Doing this as part of the Program Performance Evaluation Plan will help identify any data gaps and then develop a plan to address them.

The following data sources will be used for the evaluation: 1) Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS) – data related to Georgia's Early Education Workforce and Training; 2) Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS); 3) KOALA – Georgia's Child Care Licensing data system; 4) Provider Self Service – the web interface for child care providers to update and contribute information to KOALA; 5) Quality Rated; 6) PANDA (GA Pre-K data system) – child level data and provider data; and 8) GAAWARDS – P-Labor Data System.

Logic Model

The logic model is a living document that reflects the theory of change of the overall project and is also a tool to design and manage project activities. Due to its fluid nature, it will be reviewed and updated after the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan are completed. The model will also be periodically reviewed as part of the continuous quality improvement process developed as an activity of this grant. The process for revising the logic model is detailed in *Program Performance Evaluation Plan*: The logic model includes the following components: Vision Statement, Inputs, Activities, Outcomes, and External Influences. The Vision Statement provides overall context and the opportunity to align project activities with the state's goals, expected outcomes, and evaluation metrics. The Inputs are divided into two sections: Infrastructure and Early Childhood Care and Education Programs (ECCEP). These two components were separated to reflect the importance of each in implementing grant activities.

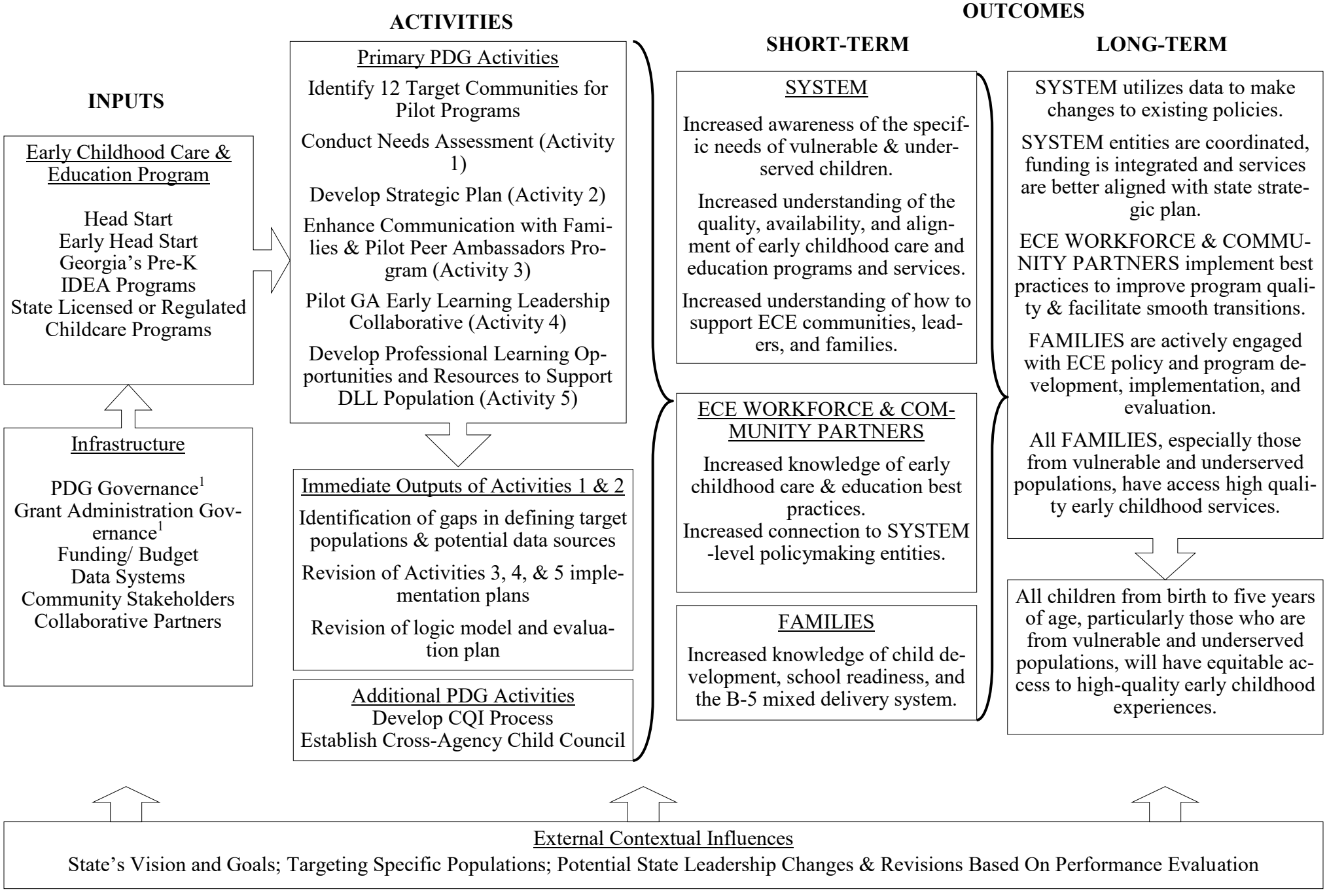
The components under Infrastructure Inputs include the organizational capacity factors required for each of the ECCEPs to serve as grant Inputs. The design acknowledges that change in one input is likely to produce change in the other.

The Activities section includes explicit grant activities outlined throughout the application and additional activities that must be conducted to reach the state's goals and overall vision. The primary Activities for PDG B-5 are listed first. Due to the revisionary nature of the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan, the immediate outputs connected to those activities are presented next. The immediate outputs associated with each activity listed will be discussed in detail and in conjunction with metrics in the *Program Performance Evaluation Plan.* Lastly, additional Activities that are not the primary focus of the grant, but still necessary to achieve the state's goals, are presented at the end of the Activities section.

The Outcomes are the expected results if the state's goals are achieved. As discussed in the *Program Performance Evaluation Plan*, the metrics will confirm if these outcomes have been met. This will help state leaders know if Georgia is moving in the right direction. The Outcomes are divided into two sections: Short-term and Long-term Outcomes. Short-term Outcomes encompass increased awareness, knowledge, skills and/or understanding of grant activity participants or deliverables. Short-term Outcomes are divided by System, ECE Workforce and Community Partners, and Families. The culmination of the projected Short-term Outcomes feeds into the projected Long-term Outcomes. Long-term Outcomes use the knowledge gained as the impetus for action, such as behavior change, or the enforcement of a new policy or initiative. The culmination of the Long-term Outcomes presented in the logic model leads the state toward the overall positive impact on all of Georgia's children. Finally, the logic model includes External Contextual Influences that may impact the project's overall theory of change.

State of Georgia: Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B– 5) Logic Model

Vision Statement: All children in Georgia from birth to five years of age, particularly those who are from vulnerable and underserved populations, will have equitable access to high-quality early childhood experiences through an integrated and coordinated mixed delivery system, which will provide a strong foundation for success in school and throughout life.



[1]See PDG Governance and Grant Administration Governance charts in the Appendix.

Project Sustainability Plan

The critically important need for sustainability is woven throughout the activities of application. The overall sustainability plan focuses on expanding and supporting the state's resources to continue key elements of the grant activities beyond the grant period. Georgia plans to sustain the work through the following key strategies: 1) Embed grant work into the existing state system by leveraging key staff, existing partners, and funding; 2) Develop projects and activities that align with current state programs and initiatives that can be completed within the grant timeframe but can also be sustained; and 3) Connect projects and activities to community-based work to align with local priorities to ensure sustainable funding and community "buy-in."

Georgia's existing system of early care and education will anchor the projects and activities proposed in this grant application. As outlined in *Organizational Management and Capacity*, Georgia's work to meet the early child care and education needs of the state's children from birth to age five is led by DECAL and championed at the state executive level by the well-established Georgia's Children's Cabinet and the Alliance of Education Agency Heads.

The state will create the Cross Agency Child Council and various Working Committees composed of key staff from child serving state agencies, leaders from partner organizations and Family Peer Ambassadors. The Council will continue to function beyond the grant period to lead and facilitate implementation of the Strategic Plan and ongoing Needs Assessment. Leveraging leaders within child serving agencies is a strategic move to ensure sustainability. While state agency heads may change as state priorities change, leaders at the deputy commissioner and director level often remain the same.

In addition to augmenting the state governance structure with the Cross Agency Child Council, Georgia has also identified key existing DECAL staff to lead the grant. Using current

state leaders leverages their existing relationships and their knowledge of and experience with the state's early education programs, policies, and culture. Existing DECAL staff are also aware of current state and federal funding streams and will blend those funds with PDG B-5 funding to support Activities being sustained after the grant period ends. PDG B-5 funds will only be used for three new staff positions: Grant Administrator, Grant Coordinator, and Data Analyst. These two positions can be easily sustained after the grant with existing federal and state funds.

The second strategy to support sustainability was to develop projects and activities that can be completed within the grant timeframe but can also be sustained. Each activity was carefully designed to ensure completion with the timeframe with enough time to revise plans based on the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan. Sufficient support and resources, including contractual data and evaluation partners, meeting facilitators, and subject matter experts were also included in the budget to support this goal.

The third strategy to support sustainability is to connect the work proposed in the grant to community work across the state. Through the ELC grant, Georgia created a full-time community coordinator and set targeted resources to four areas of the state known as Early Education Empowerment Zones (E3Zs). Georgia will build on the lessons learned from the ELC grant by piloting specific grant activities in targeted communities. This strategy allows the state to leverage local funds and resources to support the grant work. Much of the K-12 funding, including ESSA, is allocated to local school districts and will be leveraged at the local level to support and align the PDG B-5 activities into existing ECE community initiatives.

Dissemination Plan

Georgia's dissemination plan has the following three goals: 1) Relevant audiences will understand grant outputs related to their role; 2) Target audiences will be able to share their

feedback on those outputs in real time; 3) Target audiences will feel empowered and equipped to act in their unique roles based on what they have learned.

Georgia will disseminate grant outputs to key target audiences using four methods. The key audiences of the dissemination plan are staff of the state agencies that direct public funding for children from birth to five, early learning providers, families, and community leaders.

The first method of dissemination will be the four key advisory groups used to support the creation of grant deliverables. In Activity One, Georgia will use an existing advisory group, the Quality Rated Validation External Validation Committee, to serve as the Needs Assessment Advisory Committee. In Activity Two, Georgia will use the existing DECAL Advisory Committee and the existing Executive Cabinet of Get Georgia Reading (composed of state agency heads, community leaders, and private sector leaders), and will create a Family Ambassador Advisory Committee.

One key responsibility of the members of these four groups will be to take the content of each meeting and grant outputs back to their respective audiences, communities, and constituencies, and to bring feedback back to subsequent meetings.

The second method will be a dedicated website on which to post grant project outputs and to generate custom reports in response to various audience needs. In Activity Two, DECAL will partner with Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) to develop and produce this stand-alone website. Additionally, DECAL's existing partnership with ECDataWorks and the University of Pennsylvania to develop a user profile for CACDS will be applied to this grant-specific website. Monitoring the role, geographic location, and reason visitors access the site will enable Georgia to collect better data on users to ensure that the targeted audiences are visiting the site.

The third method will be sharing grant project outputs on DECAL's robust social media presence that currently reaches thousands of families, providers, and stakeholders through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and a newly launched "DECAL Download" podcast. DECAL has a dedicated Communications Team that will help produce content through these platforms to reach the targeted audiences. Using social media to disseminate content allows for analytics to be closely tracked to monitor the reach of the material to the target audiences.

Finally, quarterly PDG B-5 webinars will be hosted and allow stakeholders not able to participate in the in-person advisory roles to engage with grant deliverables. These webinars will also provide Georgia a vehicle to share with other states. This low-cost and low-time commitment strategy has proven effective in the past. The registration lists will also allow DECAL to build a distribution list to send follow-up communication about later grant deliverables. The webinars will also be posted on the website developed by GPB.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds

DECAL administers an annual budget of more than $835 million from state and federal funding streams and has extensive experience managing federal and private grants, e.g., the federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF); the Early Learning Challenge grant; an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grant; and a CCDF Research Grant. DECAL also administers federal nutrition programs and Georgia's lottery-funded universal Pre-K program.

The Deputy Commissioner of Finance and Administration ensures that programs/ grants operate within their appropriated budgets and identified funding sources. DECAL maintains sophisticated accounting systems that provide for accurate, current, and complete disclosure of all financial transactions associated with each funding stream. These accounting systems keep these funding streams separately identifiable from other revenues and expenses of the

Department. DECAL adheres to federal and state records retention requirements ensuring source documentation is available for audit purposes.

DECAL will use the existing processes to manage PDG B-5 partners/contractors. Contractors must maintain accounting systems that provide for accurate, current, and complete disclosure of all financial transactions associated using generally accepted accounting practices. Key DECAL staff responsible for maintaining oversight of program activities, staff, and contractors are listed in *Organizational Capacity and Management*. The Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts conducts an annual audit of DECAL's financial records.

The Project Budget and Budget Justification

The total proposed budget for grant management, activities, and evaluation of Georgia's PDG B-5 proposal is $5,957,835 for the budget period. DECAL will utilize existing state funding of $1,787,351 to meet the required 30% match portion of the proposed grant. Therefore, the total amount of federal funding required for the proposed budget is $4,170,484.

Personnel: A Grant Administrator with an estimated annual salary of $95,459 will dedicate 100% of their time to leading and overseeing the grant's agenda and to communicating with DECAL leadership and with stakeholders throughout the state. A Grant Coordinator with an estimated annual salary of $66,158 will dedicate 100% of their time coordinating grant activities according to the implementation plan and budget strategy. A Research and Policy Analyst with an estimated annual salary of $58,547 will dedicate 100% of their time to leading DECAL's efforts to complete the Needs Assessment and grant evaluation process. The annual salaries listed for each proposed FTE are consistent with similar roles currently within DECAL. The total proposed personnel budget is $220,164.

Fringe: The amount of fringe for DECAL employees is calculated at a rate of 63.211% of the current salary. The breakdown: FICA is 7.650%; health insurance is 30.781%; and retirement is 24.78%. All rates are set by the State of Georgia. The total proposed fringe budget is $139,168.

Travel: Travel is required for one multi-night trip to Washington, D.C. for four DECAL employees. Each trip is estimated to be for three nights and three days of travel and will include $200 for airfare, $900 ($300 x 3 nights) for hotel accommodations, $165 ($55 x 3 days) for meals, and $50 for local travel expenses for a total of $1,315 for each employee for the trip. The total proposed travel budget is $5,260.

Equipment: $2,500 per proposed FTE is included for equipment, i.e., one computer, associated peripheral items, and a mobile device for each employee dedicated to the grant. The amount proposed per FTE is based on the cost of similar equipment used by DECAL staff. The total proposed equipment budget is $7,500.

Supplies: $500 per proposed FTE is included for office supplies for a total of $1,500. DECAL will also procure software licenses for use by research staff for a total of $18,620 for Activity 1. Two annual licenses for ARCGIS for $12,000; two annual licenses for NVivo for $2,300; and two annual licenses for SPSS for $4,320. $28,760 is estimated to provide the necessary supplies and materials for stakeholder meetings for the grant activities and for the grant evaluation. For supplies and materials for participants, we anticipate needing $20 per participant per meeting day.

Activity 1 will require seven meeting days for 30 participants at an estimated cost of $4,200. Activity 2 will require nine meeting days for 12 participants at an estimated cost of $2,160; one meeting day for 60 participants at an estimated cost of $1,200; and three meeting days for 10 participants at an estimated cost of $600. Activity 4 will require four meeting days for 175 participants at an estimated cost of $14,000. Activity 5 will require six meeting days for 30 participants at an estimated cost of $3,600. The Evaluation will require five meeting days for 30 participants at an estimated cost of $3,000. Finally, $300,000 is proposed for Activity 5 for 60 award packages of training materials at $5,000 per award. The total proposed supplies budget is $348,880.

Contractual: DECAL intends to procure contracts to support and execute the vision of the activities outlined in the grant proposal. All proposed contract amounts are based on DECAL's experience procuring services to support the department's mission. $250,000 is proposed for state-level facilitation services: $60,000 for Activity 1, $150,000 for Activity 2, and $40,000 for the Evaluation. $1,500,000 is proposed for data and research support services: $1,000,000 for Activity 1, $300,000 for Activity 2, and $200,000 for the Evaluation. $250,000 is proposed for data collection services for Activity 1. $300,000 is proposed for database assessment and development services: $150,000 for Activity 1 and $150,000 for Activity 2. $250,000 is proposed for cost modeling services for Activity 1. $20,000 is proposed for subject matter services for Activity 2. $1,000,000 for web portal development and user experience design services: $400,000 for Activity 2, $400,000 for Activity 3, and $200,000 for the Evaluation.

$200,000 is proposed for media campaign and production services for Activity 3. $200,000 is proposed for family train-the-trainer content and delivery services for Activity 3. $80,000 is proposed for Peer Family Ambassador training management services for Activity 3. These services will reimburse for time and travel for Peer Family Ambassadors.

$275,000 is proposed for trauma-informed care training services for Activity 4. $240,000 is proposed for early learning leadership collaborative grants for Activity 4. $110,000 is proposed for early learning leadership institute training services for Activity 4. $80,000 is proposed for P-3 system consultation services for Activity 4. $30,000 is proposed for DLL consultation services for Activity 5. The total proposed contractual budget is $4,785.000.

Construction: The total construction budget proposed is $0.

Other: $4,700 per proposed FTE is included for office space rent for a total of $14,100. $215,700 is estimated to provide meeting space for stakeholder meetings for the grant activities and evaluation. For meeting space for participants, we anticipate needing $150 per participant per meeting day. Activity 1 will require seven meeting days for 30 participants at an estimated cost of $31,500. Activity 2 will require nine meeting days for 12 participants at an estimated cost of $16,200, one meeting day for 60 participants at an estimated cost of $9,000, and three meeting

days for 10 participants at an estimated cost of $4,500. Activity 4 will require four meeting days for 175 participants at an estimated cost of $105,000. Activity 5 will require six meeting days for 30 participants at an estimated cost of $27,000. The Evaluation will require five meeting days for 30 participants at an estimated cost of $22,500. $19,200 is proposed for travel stipends for Activity 4 to reimburse two participants from each team a total of $200 per meeting for the four meeting days. $143,874 is proposed for training and technical assistance needs and is based on 2.5% of the proposed direct cost of $5,754,972 for the grant. The total proposed budget for Other is $392,874.

Indirect: The total proposed indirect budget is $58,989 equaling one percent of the total proposed cost for direct activities and for training and technical assistance.

Summary by Budget Category	Amount
Personnel	$220,164
Fringes	$139,168
Travel	$5,260
Equipment	$7,500
Supplies	$348,880
Contractual	$4,785,000
Construction	$0
Other	$392,874
Total Direct	$5,989,846
Indirect - 1%	$58,989
Total Budget	$5,957,835
State Match	$1,787,351
Federal Request	$4,170,484
Total Budget	$5,957,835

Personnel	Amount
Grant Administrator	$95,459
Grant Coordinator	$66,158
Research and Policy Analyst	$58,547
Total Direct	$220,164
Fringe	**Amount**
Grant Administrator	$60,341
Grant Coordinator	$41,819
Research and Policy Analyst	$37,008
Total Direct	$139,168
Travel	**Amount**
Travel to National Meeting	$5,260
Total Direct	$5,260

Equipment	Amount
Personal Office Equipment	$7,500
Total Direct	$7,500
Supplies	**Amount**
Office Supplies	$1,500
Software	$18,620
Meeting Supplies and Materials	$28,760
Award Packages of Training Materials	$300,000
Total Direct	$348,880
Contractual	**Amount**
Facilitation Services for Needs Assessment, Strategic Planning, and Evaluation	$250,000
Data and Research Support Services	$1,500,000
Data Collection	$250,000
Database Assessment and Development	$300,000
Cost Model Services for Child Care	$250,000
Subject Matter Experts	$20,000
Web Portal Development and User Experience Design	$1,000,000
Media Campaign and Production Services	$200,000
Family Train-the-Trainer Content and Delivery	$200,000
Peer Family Ambassador Management	$80,000
Trauma Informed Care Training Contract	$275,000
Grants for Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives	$240,000
Early Learning Leadership Institute Training Contract	$110,000
P-3 System Consultation Services	$80,000
DLL Consultation Services	$30,000
Total Direct	$4,785,000
Other	**Amount**
Office Space Rent	$14,100
Meeting Space	$215,700
Travel Stipends	$19,200
Training and Technical Assistance	$143,874
Total Direct	$392,874

Summary by Activity	Amount
Grant Management	$432,594
Activity 1	$1,865,393
Activity 2	$761,197
Activity 3	$1,191,800

Activity 4	$851,632
Activity 5	$364,206
Evaluation	$491,013
Total Direct	$5,957,835

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Program Support Center
Financial Management Service
Division of Cost Allocation

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JUN 09 2014

Mr. H. Ray Higgins, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner
Finance and Administration
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, SE, Suite 754 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Mr. Higgins:

This letter provides approval of the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning Cost Allocation Plan (Plan), submitted on December 28, 2012. The effective date of the Plan is July 1, 2012.

Acceptance of the actual costs in accordance with the approved Plan is subject to the following conditions:

1. The information contained in the Plan and provided by the State in connection with our review of the Plan is complete and accurate in all material respects.

2. The actual costs claimed by the State are allowable under prevailing cost principles, program regulations and law.

3. The claims conform with the administrative and statutory limitations against which they are made.

This approval relates only to the methods of identifying and allocating costs to programs, and nothing contained herein should be construed as approving activities not otherwise authorized by approved program plans or Federal legislation and regulations.

Implementation of the approved cost allocation plan may subsequently be reviewed by authorized Federal staff. The disclosure of inequities during reviews may require changes to the Plan.

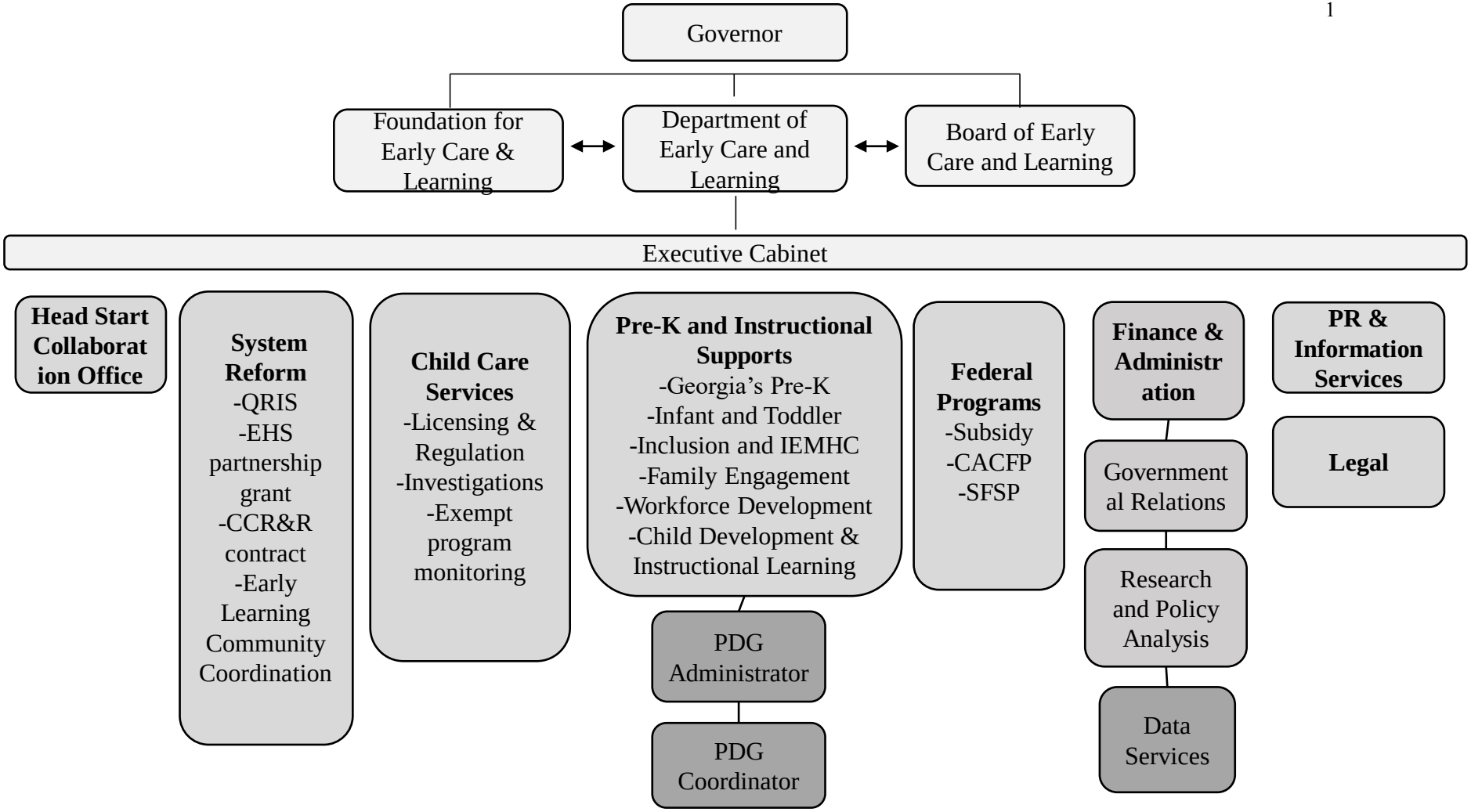
If you have any questions concerning the contents of this letter, please contact Jill Wilson of my staff at (301)-492-4881.

Sincerely,

Arif Karim, Director
Cost Allocation Services

cc: Jackie Glaze, CMS
Nadine Roth, ACF
Francisco Lebron, FNS

Grant Administration Structure



Bold: Divisions with oversight by a Deputy Commissioner or Chief Officer who reports directly to the Commissioner.

New positions funded by PDG.

Governance Structure

Governor

Children's Cabinet
(State Advisory Council)

- Department of Early Care and Learning*
- Department of Education
- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
- Department of Community Health
- Department of Public Health
- Department of Human Services
- Head Start Collaboration Office
- Appointed partner, EL providers and advocacy organizations

Alliance of Education Agency Heads

- Department of Early Care and Learning*
- Technical College System of Georgia
- Department of Education
- Governor's Office of Student Achievement
- Georgia Professional Standards Commission
- Georgia Student Finance Commission
- University System of Georgia

Cross Agency Child Council**
(created by Preschool Development Grant)

- **8** leaders from Child Serving Agencies (deputy level)
- **3** representatives from partners, EL providers and advocacy organizations
- **2** Family Peer Ambassadors

Working Committees (subject matter experts)
Committees will be developed based on identified needs of Preschool Development Grant and will include members from Child Serving Agencies, partners, EL providers, advocacy organizations, and Family Peer Ambassadors as appropriate..

*Department of Early Care and Learning is the PDG Lead Agency
**Co-chaired by Department of Early Care and Learning and Department of Education

STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0090

Nathan Deal
GOVERNOR

November 1, 2018

The Honorable Alex M. Azar, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

As Governor of Georgia, I am submitting the attached proposal in response to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Request for Applications for the *Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5).* With this letter, I pledge my administration's unwavering support for the work proposed in this application that will impact Georgia's young children, their families, and ultimately, the future of our state.

Georgia is one of only a few states with a department of state government – Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) – whose job is to ensure that all children in the state receive high quality early learning experiences in safe and healthy environments when in out-of-home child care. During my eight years as Governor, First Lady Sandra Deal and I have worked closely with DECAL on many issues relating to high quality early childhood education and care.

In 2013, Georgia was awarded a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (ELC) grant that has enabled our state to make great strides in improving early childhood education and care. The grant period for the ELC is ending, and while much has been accomplished through DECAL's responsible leadership and stewardship of the ELC funding, we want to do more to ensure optimal outcomes for children, especially the children identified in the *PDG B-5* Request for Applications.

Because of DECAL's experience effectively collaborating with public and private entities on behalf of children and families; administering and blending federal, state, and philanthropic funding streams; and maintaining a stellar reputation for customer service when dealing with families, child care providers, school systems, stakeholders, lawmakers, and the public, I have designated DECAL as the lead agency for implementing the work proposed in this application.

The projects and activities in this proposal complement and build on the work achieved through the ELC grant and will focus on our state's most vulnerable children and families. By investing in this newly proposed work, you will build on the federal investment made in Georgia through the ELC as we continue implementing a coordinated system of early care and education that supports children's success in school and beyond.

Thank you for your favorable consideration of Georgia's application.

Sincerely,

Nathan Deal

Nathan Deal

Changes to Georgia's Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5)

Georgia requested to receive $4,170,484 of federal funding in its PDG B-5 application. In order to allow for more states to be funded, the grant administrators (U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Education) offered to fund many states at a lower-than-requested rate, including Georgia. Georgia was ultimately awarded **$2,961,044** in federal funding.

Georgia revised its budget to accommodate this award amount. Georgia's strategy for revising the budget focused on maintaining the funds necessary to complete the primary intents of the grant: Conducting a Needs Assessment (Activity 1) and Developing a Strategic Plan (Activity 2). To maintain sufficient funds for these activities, Georgia reduced the scope of Activities 3 and 4 and eliminated funds for Activity 5 and the Evaluation. These changes are summarized below.

- Activity 1: Reduced funds.
    - Based on current contract negotiations, the cost for Data and Research Support Services is less than estimated.

- Activity 2: No changes.

- Activity 3: Reduced funds.
    - The scope of work for this activity was revised to better align with the grant timeline.
    - Reduce Web Portal Design Services. The focus of Year 1 will be the collection and analysis of data to better understand family needs regarding access and availability of early learning programs. After Year 1 of PDG B-5, enhancements will be made to the website based on family feedback with subsequent PDG B-5 funds or other federal and state funds.
    - Reduce copy of Family Ambassador Program. Family ambassadors will still be identified statewide and trained during Year 1 of PDG B-5. Originally, the Family Ambassadors were to be trained in both the Early Education Training Academy and the Satcher Safe and Secure Families trainings. Existing funds have been identified to conduct the Early Education Training Academy during Year 1 of PDG. However, the Satcher Safe and Secure Families "train the trainer" and statewide scale-up of the training will be conducted with subsequent PDG B-5 funds or other federal and state funds after completion of Year 1.
- Activity 4: Reduced funds.
    - The number of communities served was reduced from twelve to six.
    - This reduction allows for Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives to be conducted in each of Georgia's six regions while meeting the revised budget.

- Activity 5: Eliminated funds for this activity.
    - Activity will be conducted in Years 2-5 of PDG B-5.

- Evaluation: Eliminated funds for this activity.
    - Funds from Activity 1 can support evaluation of PDG B-5 activities. In addition, the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (the lead state agency) has an existing Research and Policy Analysis team to support ongoing evaluation.