

**NEW YORK STATE PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT
BIRTH THROUGH FIVE RENEWAL APPLICATION**
Submitted by the NYS Council on Children and Families

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Project Summary

- New York State Preschool Development Birth through Five Renewal Grant
- Submitted by the New York State Council on Children and Families
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The vision of the New York State Preschool Development Birth through Five Renewal project is that all young children are healthy, learning, and thriving in families supported by and connected to a full complement of services and resources essential for successful development. Leveraging and scaling lessons learned from prior NYSB5 grants and other statewide cross-sector early childhood initiatives, the NYS Council on Children and Families (CCF) will use a collective impact approach that supports the ECE workforce and a mixed delivery system that is informed by family voice; inclusive of race ethnicity, culture, language, geography, and socio-economic status; and provides access to high-quality and comprehensive services to establish a more equitable and sustainable system for New York's children birth through five and their families.

Specifically, CCF will lead and collaborate with the NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council, NYS Office of Children and Family Services, NYS Department of Health, NYS Office of Mental Health, NYS Education Department, NYS Head Start Collaboration Office, and a growing number of other state agencies, councils, local public and private agencies, community-based organizations, and, most importantly, parents representing underserved children and communities, to achieve:

1. A strategically updated needs assessment that delivers a more nuanced understanding of the diversity of child and parent needs, workforce well-being, and systems' supply and demand.
2. A strategic plan rooted in stronger collaboration and connection to the implementing agencies and providers to guide the creation of an equitable and quality early childhood system.
3. Increased opportunities for meaningful and diverse community and family participation to promote parent knowledge and leadership that strengthens the state's mixed delivery system.
4. Expanded and alternative workforce opportunities, including career pathways for individuals to enter and advance in the early childhood field and to be fairly and equitably compensated.
5. Data integration practices that strengthen and align NY's primary ECE workforce data systems.
6. Increased awareness and enhanced access to early developmental health and community services for families and young children, particularly those who are underserved, through cross-sector distribution and training on the CDC's *Learn the Signs, Act Early* campaign and building a free, parent-friendly, non-clinical, culturally sensitive developmental screening tool.
7. Prevention of exclusionary disciplinary practices by targeted investments in the Pyramid Model to Support the Social and Emotional Development of Infants and Young Children.
8. Added support for the mental health and well-being of ECE providers in rural and underserved areas, by facilitating peer support networks and access to health and mental health services.
9. Advancement, development, and dissemination of strategies to help programs for young children and families identify and access resources to support long-term stability.
10. Sustained impact of NYSB5 and other cross-sector early childhood initiatives, by aligning efforts, braiding funds, and promoting a collective impact approach to achieve shared goals.

Project Narrative

Need for Assistance

NYS is the fourth most populous state in the country, with 19.5 million people.¹ Of this total, approximately 1.4 million are young children (under 6 years).² The cultural and geographical diversity of NYS correlates with variations in the health and well-being of children and families, as revealed by numerous NYS needs assessment findings detailed in Activity 1. While New York leads the nation in access to childhood health insurance (97% of all children are insured), the state ranks among the worst in the country for developmental screening practices.³ Another significant impediment to early childhood and maternal well-being in NYS relates to the number of young children and families living in poverty. Twenty percent of infants and toddlers are poor, with higher rates for Black (28%) and Hispanic/Latino (25%) children.⁴ Even greater racial disparities exist for children living in high-poverty areas (Black children – 31%, Hispanic children – 26%, white children – 8%).⁵ As well, racial disparities exist with respect to housing costs. On average, families with children spend more than 30% of their income on housing, while Black families spend 45% and Hispanic families 49%.⁶ It is estimated that one in 10 children ages birth to 5 are homeless.⁷ Ten percent of young families experience food insecurity in NYS.⁸

The goal of the NYSB5 initiative is for every child in New York to be supported by an effective mixed delivery system (MDS) that is informed by family voice and provides access to high quality,

¹ American Community Survey (2019).

² U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division released June 2020.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration. Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative. *2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health* (2018-2019).

⁴ Annie E. Casey Foundation, KIDS Count Data Center (2019). Child population by race and age group in NY.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ U.S. DOE. *Policy and Program Studies Services Early Childhood Homelessness State Profiles* (2018).

⁸ Feeding America. *Food Insecurity in NY*. Retrieved 1/17/2021 from:

<https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2016/overall/new-york>

equitable, and comprehensive early care and learning environments and services essential for successful development. New York’s expansive early childhood infrastructure and investment in health, education, nutrition, social, and other needed services reflect a strong commitment to supporting young children and families, and with NYSB5 support, the state’s MDS has been further aligned and strengthened over the past five years. Yet, despite the many broad-based early childhood programs and services available in NYS, from health insurance to high-quality early childhood education programs, gaps in awareness and access persist, particularly for certain groups of young children and families, including those living in high-poverty and rural communities.

Expected Outcomes and Approach

This proposal sets forth a plan to build and fortify New York’s mutually reinforcing early childhood initiatives to create a more sustainable, cross-sector quality system, with a focus on historically and systemically underserved children and families.⁹ CCF, as the lead agency for this NYS Preschool Development Birth Through Five Renewal Grant (hereinafter “NYSB5 Grant”) application will advance the state’s vision to ensure that all young children are healthy, learning, and thriving in families that are supported by a full complement of services and resources essential for successful development and ready to enter kindergarten. CCF’s approach to achieving this vision is rooted in collaboration and partnership, and will build on lessons learned from previous NYSB5 activities and statewide early childhood efforts, to achieve the following outcomes:

⁹ “Underserved” children and families include: children in low-income families, living in high-poverty communities, learning two or multiple languages, who are unhoused, involved with the child welfare system, in kinship care, with disabilities or at risk for disabilities, with special healthcare needs, whose parents or caregivers work nontraditional hours or are migrant or seasonal workers, from immigrant families, who have experienced trauma or whose parents/caregivers have a history of or are at risk for mental health or substance abuse disorders, and other needs identified in the statewide needs assessment as a priority population of the state.

- Focus on equity as a key driver, by removing barriers and bias and increasing access to high-quality ECE programs for typically underserved children (e.g., children in low-income families, children who may require early intervention/special education services, immigrant and refugee families, families living in rural, and remote areas of the state) (see all activities).
- An updated Needs Assessment (NA) that addresses gaps in the state’s prior NYSB5 NAs, by including the voices of families who formerly were not included (see Activity 1).
- A tailored Strategic Plan (SP) that is responsive to NA findings and more widely used as a guide by policymakers, state agency implementers, and families (see Activity 2).
- More collaborative family participation through leadership development, improved family choice and knowledge, and engagement in NYSB5 program implementation. The Family and Community Engagement Liaison will lead this critical work (see Activity 3/entire application).
- Increased awareness and enhanced access to early developmental health and community services for infants and toddlers, by widespread, cross-sector promotion and training on the CDC’s *Learn the Signs, Act Early (LTSAE)* campaign and family-centered strategies to support easier and faster access to services (see Activity 3 and Bonus Option 2).
- Early childhood workforce support and wellness, by piloting non-traditional pathways to career advancement, expanding and revising the ECE Career Ladder, and recommending policy changes to adopt just and equitable compensation and benefit packages (see Activity 4).
- Improved ECE program quality, by using a two-generation approach, trauma-informed care, cultural humility and responsiveness, and linguistic competence, by the strategic expansion of the Pyramid Model to provide social and emotional supports. A Pyramid Model Impact Plan will be conducted. Our hypothesized results are that suspensions and expulsions of young children, especially those who have experienced systematic discrimination and

marginalization, will be reduced/eliminated. This work will be guided by a new NYSB5 position, a Pyramid Model Policy Coordinator (see Activity 5).

- Augmented and sustained impact of NYSB5 and other cross-sector initiatives, by braiding funds and using a collective impact approach to develop and maintain innovative public/private partnerships and to develop and expand ECE program models in rural areas (see Activity 6).
- Exploration of the assignment of a unique identifier at birth in partnership with the NYS Education Department (SED) and NYS Department of Health (DOH) as a critical first step in the development of a NYS early childhood integrated data system (see Bonus Option 2).

The approach and details to achieving the above outcomes and sustaining positive system changes to New York’s early childhood system are set forth in the remainder of this proposal.

ACTIVITY 1: Needs Assessment Update

Plan: Updating the Needs Assessment (NA): The plan to update the NYSB5 NA is to build on prior NYSB5 NAs and other related assessments (e.g., Title V Maternal and Child Health Services¹⁰, Early Intervention Program¹¹, Head Start/Early Head Start¹²). While NYSB5 NA findings to date provide strategic direction for NYSB5 projects, the data collected have been from a largely homogeneous group, failing to reflect the diversity of experiences, particularly of those too often overlooked or marginalized. For example, the 2019 NYSB5 NA was informed by over 2,200 electronic survey respondents and 32 focus groups from the ECE field, direct care staff, administrators, and parents. The dataset was mostly female (96%), white (90%), with at least an associate degree (87%), and over half had an income over \$75,000 (57%).¹³

¹⁰ NYS DOH (2020). *MCH Services Title V Block Grant FY 2021 Application/ FY 2019 Annual Report*.

¹¹ U.S. Department of Education. *Annual Performance Report: Part C of IDEA* (FFY 2022).

¹² NYS CCF. *NYS Head Start Collaboration Needs Assessment* (2022).

¹³ NYS CCF. *NYS Birth through Five Preschool Development Grant Needs Assessment Reports* (2019-2021).

In 2020, the NYSB5 NA again used an electronic survey that was disseminated to parents to learn about their experiences with ECE programs and services related to the pandemic. Aiming to gather responses from a more diverse audience, the survey was translated into multiple languages (Spanish, Russian, Korean, Bengali, Haitian Creole, Simplified Chinese, and Yiddish), but responses (651) were still from a largely homogenous group. Respondents were female (85%), white (74%), and primarily spoke English (83%), and approximately two-thirds were employed part- or full-time (68%) and had an annual household income of \$50,000 or higher (63%).¹⁴ In 2021, CCF used a different method to gather NYSB5 NA data, conducting statewide focus groups, in each of the state's 10 economic development regions, with parents and caregivers (using American Sign Language, Spanish, and Mandarin interpreters). The dataset showed some more diversity¹⁵; yet, the need remains to better understand the distinctive needs and assets of different communities (e.g., economically secure/low-income, or mixed, rural/urban) and demographic groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, immigrant), as well as children and families (e.g., involved with the child welfare system, with disabilities or at risk of disabilities, have experienced trauma). Highlights of available data on the needs of young children and families are below, followed by Table 1 that details the plan to update the NYSB5 NA to address gaps and gather a more nuanced understanding of needs to illuminate and guide the strengthening of the state's early childhood system.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Survey responses were from those identifying as female (52%), Black/African American (50%), white (36%), Hispanic/Latinx (15%), Asian (6%), American Indian/Alaska Native (4%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (4%). 37% had a household annual income of more than \$75,000, 26% were receiving child care assistance, and 11% reported being unhoused. NYS CCF. *NYSB5 Needs Assessment* (2021).

NYS Current Early Childhood Concerns, Poverty: Child poverty is a problem and policy priority for NYS. Nearly 1 in 5 children live in poverty in NYS, with upstate cities ranking second, fifth, and seventh among the largest cities in the U.S. with the highest rates of child poverty in the country (between 40 to 46% of children in Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo were living in poverty in 2022).¹⁶ Children living in households without resources for food, clothing, and/or shelter face a significant threat to their healthy development, social-emotional functioning, and academic achievement.¹⁷ To address these issues, NY’s Governor established the Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council (CPRAC), in 2021, to reduce child poverty by 50% over the next decade.¹⁸ The executive director of CCF is a member of CPRAC, supporting alignment of efforts.

NYS ECE Concerns, EI (IDEA Part C of Section 619) Services: When reviewing services for children with developmental concerns, 2022 data from the NYS DOH Early Intervention Program (EIP) indicate that, of the 62,572 children referred to EI, 36,004 qualified for services (58%). Of these children, 37%, did not receive timely services in 30 days or fewer (as required).¹⁹ A report on the EIP by the NYS Office of the State Comptroller (OCS) (2023) found that, in part, a lack of EI providers and challenges obtaining parental consent impede access to services.²⁰ Equity is also an issue, with white children generally being referred at a younger age and Black children being less likely to receive services within the prescribed time frame.²¹

NYS Concerns, Mental and Behavioral Health Needs of the Workforce: According to preliminary findings from the 2023 NYS Early Childhood Educators Health and Wellbeing Survey, ECE

¹⁶ NYS Office of the State Comptroller. *DiNapoli Report Examines Troubling Child Poverty Trends* (2024).

¹⁷ American Psychological Association. *Mental Health Effects of Poverty, Hunger, and Homelessness on Children* (2020). <https://www.apa.org/topics/socioeconomic-status/poverty-hunger-homelessness-children>.

¹⁸ NYS Social Services Law section 131-zz.

¹⁹ Early Intervention Referrals by County for Program Year 2017-2018. NYEIS data (2019).

²⁰ NYS OSC. *Audit Finds More than Half Not Receiving Early Intervention Services* (February 2023).

²¹ Ibid.

providers are struggling economically, physically, and emotionally. Half live below 185% of the federal poverty line and 33% experience food insecurity. 75% are overweight, 75% acknowledge moderate or high stress, and 56% feel emotionally exhausted. Additionally, 80% identified feeling reduced personal accomplishment and unable to contribute meaningfully to their job. Looking to the future, at least 20% reported planning to leave their current position or the ECE career entirely.²² Data from the Aspire Registry (New York’s early childhood workforce registry) reveal that most teaching staff, family child care providers, and center directors do not have health insurance despite meeting eligibility criteria for Medicaid. The highest salaries are among center directors (\$50,000), followed by assistant directors (\$45,000), lead teachers (\$37,960), and assistant teachers (\$29,000). When comparing these salaries to the average living wages using data from MIT Living Wage Calculator, stark contrasts are found. The living wage income for a family with one adult and one child for NY’s most rural county is \$68,045, while in NYC it’s \$97,937.²³ Results from the 2023 NYSB5-funded Pay Parity Study conducted by the City University of NY Professional Development Institute (CUNY PDI) found that salaries remain flat for ECE professionals regardless of their experience and that there is a lack of parity between ECE professionals working in child care programs versus in prekindergarten programs administered by school districts.

NYS Concerns, Rural Capacity: Approximately 4.2 million people live in rural communities in NYS (or 21.5% of the state’s total population).²⁴ In comparison to the rest of NYS, rural counties struggle more with labor force participation, transportation, internet connectivity, and access to

²² Bellows L. et al. *NY Early Childhood Educators Health and Wellbeing Survey Preliminary Results*. Cornell University (2023).

²³ NY Works for Children. *Aspire Registry Data Stories* (2024).

²⁴ Sipple, J and Scardamalia, *State of Rural New York*. Rural Housing Coalition of NY (2023).

food, health care, and early intervention/therapeutic services.²⁵ The child care supply is especially scarce, with up to nine children for every one vacancy/slot in some communities.²⁶ Rural county participation in the NA will help identify the distinct needs of other underserved groups living in rural areas, such as migrant and seasonal farming families and families living on Tribal lands. Further, building on information gleaned from the NYS Regional Economic Development Councils that have focused on downtown revitalization and child care, this NYSB5 Renewal NA will provide additional information on the feasibility of using vacant building space in rural downtowns for child care, and explore possibilities to develop public-private partnerships and funding models to create and sustain ECE programs (see Activity 6 for details).

TABLE 1: Plan and Scope of the Needs Assessment

Gaps in Past NYSB5 NAs	2024 -2025 NYSB5 NA Scope and Plan to Update
Prior NYSB5 NAs primarily were informed by a snowball sampling method and distributed electronically through distribution channels of the state agency partners and the ECAC. This approach did not yield diverse responses.	CCF will work with a research organization with proven success of gathering feedback from systematically excluded families and communities. Feedback from families will be engaged using multiple methods. Cross-sector partners (as listed in the Organizational Capacity Section (p. 53) and File 2 of this application) will be used to inform outreach.
Understanding of supply of ECE services versus needs of children and families, broken down by program type, demographics, and geography (e.g., rural areas). Unduplicated count of children in MDS ECE programs or those waiting for services.	CCF will collect available statistics on the number and demographics of children B-5 served in existing programs and those waiting for services, broken down by age, demographics, and program type. CCF also will survey families and providers. Assignment of a unique identifier at birth is a critical first step to better analysis (See Activity 6).
Assessment of factors impacting access to quality care for children and families, particularly underserved ones.	CCF will collect feedback from families in multiple formats to learn why families may not be accessing quality care.
Understanding of gaps in awareness and challenges accessing mental health and social supports for families of children B-5.	Again, CCF will collect feedback in multiple formats to ensure families from different backgrounds are reached.
Nuanced understanding of factors impacting access to EI services, particularly for children and families living in areas with limited services (high-poverty communities, rural areas). Assessment of transitions from EI to preschool special education and to kindergarten.	Review referrals disaggregated by race, geography, etc., scan of current provider capacity, gaps in transitions from EI to preschool special education. Continue to partner with DOH Bureau of EI (IDEA Part C), EI Coordinating Council, SED Office of Special Education and the Commissioner’s Advisory Panel for Special Education, and families with lived experience in the EI system and preschool special education (IDEA Part B).

²⁵ *Rural New York: Challenges and Opportunities*. NYS Office of the State Comptroller (2023).

²⁶ *2023 Child Care in NYS*. NYS Department of Labor (2023).

Assessment of the factors limiting knowledge of developmental health and assessment of developmental milestones.	Partner with the NYS Head Start Collaboration Office, Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Health Integration Project, and NYS <i>LTSAE</i> Ambassadors, explore how current early learning systems and health can work collaboratively based on the framework by the Center for Healthcare Care Strategies. ²⁷
In-depth understanding of the barriers to recruitment and retention of the ECE workforce families.	Partner with Child Care Availability Task Force (CCATF) and NYS Department of Labor (DOL) to better understand needs, awareness, and access to mental health and social supports for the ECE workforce, by connecting with local Family Child Care Resource Networks and CRRs.
Assessment of the feasibility of a statewide early childhood data system, with corresponding next steps.	Identify gaps in the state’s data sharing mechanisms, provide recommendations to increase access to data to understand the needs of children and the workforce, and conduct a feasibility study of assigning a unique identifier at birth. (See Activity 6)
Assessment of factors impacting available services in underserved communities (rural, high poverty) and for underserved populations (infants/toddlers, children with disabilities, families involved with the child welfare system, immigrants, etc.).	Partner with existing groups to better understand and address barriers to serving certain populations. Groups will include but not be limited to: the network of CRRs providing business navigators in rural areas and infant/toddler specialists. Work with key partners (CPRAC, Strong Starts (child welfare) Court Initiative, Office of New Americans).

Needs Assessment Process: CCF will partner with a research organization with the capacity to reach underserved populations. Due to the historic lack of diversity among prior NA respondents, established relationships and the ability to engage communities to gather diverse perspectives will be critical. The research organization will be expected to synthesize existing data from CCF’s state agency and local partners to decrease duplication of efforts, and to identify areas in need of more targeted data collection and analysis. The NA process will promote a statewide shared vision, diversity of perspective, and collective action approach. It will be conducted in three phases.

Phase I: Statewide regional NA Kickoff Listening Sessions, held virtually to hear from state early childhood system partners (policymakers, providers, advocates) and, most importantly, parents and families (see collaborating partners, p. 55). Phase I provides an opportunity to conduct a cross-sector scan to comprehensively identify and review recent NAs, followed by surveys and focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of the barriers families face in finding and accessing quality

²⁷ Hammer, G. and Casau, A. *Aligning State Systems for Improved Health and Well-Being Outcomes: A Framework for Collaborative Change*. Center for Healthcare Strategies (2023).

early childhood programs and services. During this phase, the early childhood field will be actively engaged to share their concerns and challenges, as well as their ideas, solutions, and innovations.

Phase II: Mid-course adjustments and opportunity to share preliminary results with NA partners as well as contribute to ongoing development of NYSB5 activities. An open comment period that allows for input in multiple formats (virtually, by e-mail, hard copy) to ensure that diverse experiences are being included, that light is being shined on the intersection of race, nationality, class, and geography, as well as to ensure transparency and consideration of process shifts.

Phase III: Through statewide virtual convenings, NA findings will be shared, questions answered, and the lived experiences of underserved families highlighted. Further, Phase III will solicit audience insights to inform the updated NYSB5 Strategic Plan, promoting a sense of individual and community ownership and shared leadership (as described in Activity 2).

Engaging Key Partners: Over the past few years, numerous NYS agencies, councils, and organizations have issued reports assessing the needs of young children and families. Specifically, the following groups have issued reports: CPRAC,²⁸ Governor’s CCATF,²⁹ NYS Head Start Collaboration Office,³⁰ NYS OSC,³¹ Title V,³² NYSED IDEA Part B,³³ NYS DOH,³⁴ Help Me Grow,³⁵ NYS Child Care Development Plan,³⁶ Children with Special Health Care Needs,³⁷ NYS DOL Child Care Statistics Report,³⁸ and Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) agencies.

²⁸ NYS Governor’s Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council. *2023 Progress Report* (2023).

²⁹ NYS OCFS & NYS DOL. *Making Child Care More Affordable, Accessible and Equitable for New Yorkers* (2024).

³⁰ NYS Head Start Collaboration Office. *Head Start Needs Assessment Report* (2023).

³¹ *Ibid* at 24.

³² NYS DOH. *Maternal and Child Health Services Title V Block Grant NY FY 2024 Application/ FY 2022 Annual Report* (2023).

³³ *Stakeholder Involvement for Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2020-2025*. NYSED (2020).

³⁴ NYS DOH. *NYS Maternal and Child Health Dashboard* (2024).

³⁵ Jaslow, Risa. *Review of Help Me Grow in NYS: A Roadmap to Strengthening and Expanding Innovation for the Littlest New Yorkers*. Edited by Help Me Grow NY (2023).

³⁶ NYS OCFS Division of Child Care Services. <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/Stateplan/>.

³⁷ NYS DOH. *NYS Profile of Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs* (2019-20).

³⁸ DOL, NYS. *2023 Childcare Report – NYS DOL Reports* (2023).

Private organizations also have teamed with universities in NY (e.g., Cornell University)³⁹ to conduct needs assessments specific to the child care landscape. These reports will be analyzed and the NYSB5 Renewal NA will more comprehensively identify and review emerging needs and update processes to ensure that families with diverse experiences (different cultures, races, socio-economic strata, geographic areas, etc.) have opportunities to share their lived experiences. CCF will also continue to work with a robust network of partners, as detailed in Organizational Capacity (p. 53). Critically important to the success of this updated NA will be the active and ongoing participation of parents and families, particularly those who have not had the opportunity to have their life experiences inform policies.

ACTIVITY 2: Strategic Plan Update

Approach: Building on Prior Strategic Planning Efforts: The current NYSB5/ECAC Strategic Plan (SP) (updated in 2023) provides a solid foundation to guide the State’s comprehensive and coordinated services’ plan for young children and families. This SP will build on the reported accomplishments and learnings of the current SP, as well as the findings of the updated NYSB5 NA and other environmental scans and findings. For the tailored update to the SP, CCF will continue to work with the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), which is co-chaired by the NYS Head Start Collaboration Director (housed at CCF) and the Executive Director of the NY Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (housed at CUNY). The methodology to support the state’s updated NYSB5/ECAC SP will allow for further alignment and collaborative interagency partnerships and efforts (e.g., the OCFS - CCDF Plan, DOH - Title V Maternal and Child Health Action Plan, NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH) - Healthy Steps Initiative, SED –

³⁹ Ibid at 21.

Part B State Performance Plan, Governor’s CCATF and CPRAC) to be both leveraged and strengthened. Notably, the NYS ECAC cross-sector SP initially served as the basis for updating the NYSB5/ECAC Strategic Plan, starting in 2020 and most recently in 2023. For this project, the SP development will begin with the current SP and use updated NA findings gleaned from a scan of existing NAs and robust parent input, and insights from Phase III NA activities (p. 12). A facilitator will be identified to work in collaboration with CCF, the ECAC, and NA researchers as well as a family participation consultant (discussed in Activity 3) to design a statewide virtual Strategic Planning Convening. The **NYSB5/ECAC Coordinator** will further support this coordination and Convening. The Convening will provide a forum to discuss the plan, identify additional opportunities to leverage existing efforts, standardize messaging, and engage stakeholders as leaders, all helping to develop and implement financing and policy strategies to move ECE programs toward systemic improvements and sustainability.

Building Upon Previous Work, Ensuring Use of the NYSB5/ECAC SP: To further connect and promote the use of the NYSB5/ECAC SP, CCF plans to cross-pollinate with other state agency efforts (named above) to create a sense of shared ownership. Additionally, efforts will be made to connect the SP with those it will directly impact (families) and those who will be responsible for its execution (state agency leaders and providers). A socializing strategy will be essential to ensure that the SP serves its intended purpose: to guide the implementation of the state’s collective efforts to comprehensively support and serve young children and families.

Key Partner Involvement: The updated SP process will engage the partners involved in the NA process (Organizational Capacity p. 53). It will also continue to be informed by ECAC members, representing all the stakeholders identified in the FOA, including representatives from: state agencies, community partners, unions, advocacy organizations, think tanks, philanthropic

organizations, businesses, CRRs, early care and learning council, P-12 school districts, Head Start, child care, special education, early intervention, health, and mental health. An outstanding and critical need and continued focus moving forward is expansion of parent voice. The current NYSB5/ECAC SP expressly recommends that “No policy or program should be recommended without the full and direct participation of the families and communities affected.” The ECAC created a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) to actualize this recommendation. Yet, as described in Activity 3, increasing the size and strength of the PAC and other means of engaging parents and families remains an area in need of focused attention. With this grant, CCF will advance its commitment to valuing families to update the SP based on NA findings informed by families and providers, making concerted efforts to reach typically underserved populations, such as families who speak languages other than English, have children with disabilities, and/or live in rural or remote areas or areas with a high concentration of poverty.

Alignment with the Child Care and Development Fund Plan: A number of NYSB5 initiatives have been woven into the draft 2025 - 2027 CCDF plan including the NYS Pyramid Model for Social and Emotional Development of Infants and Young Children (Pyramid Model), the Aspire Registry, QUALITYstarsNY, professional development and training, Early Childhood Career Centers, and enhanced scholarships for professional development. The updated SP provides an opportunity to showcase NYSB5 supports and increase alignment with the CCDF plan, including coordinated efforts related to workforce stabilization and professional development opportunities, as well as expanding family access to the Child Care Assistance Program, prioritizing CCAP access for vulnerable families, and reducing CCAP administrative barriers to enrollment.

Coordination with Head Start: As mentioned above, the NYS Head Start Collaboration Director also serves as co-chair of the ECAC and supports and supervises the early childhood team at CCF.

These multiple and mutually reinforcing roles naturally foster the systems-building policy work of the ECAC and alignment of NYSB5 and Head Start Collaboration priorities. A few examples of the ways this coordination manifests to improve practices include: improved coordination between Head Start, child care, and prekindergarten programs, and preschool special education providers; expanded family and community outreach to increase access to WIC, SNAP, and summer meals; and the creation of a cross-sector, public-private partnership to improve the oral health of young children that has culminated in two statewide summits and the launch of a new web resource.

Strategies to Support Transitions: Young children and families experience many transitions. To support and help families feel secure and ready to make the move to a new setting, it's key that these periods of change are responsive to family needs and engage all stakeholders. Accordingly, the SP will include recommendations to promote innovative and cross-sector collaboration to guide and best prepare young children and families. Recommended partners will include but not be limited to the SED's Office of Early Learning and Office of Special Education (Part B of IDEA), DOH's Bureau of Early Intervention (Part C of IDEA), Head Start, OCFS Division of Child Care – CCDF administrator, community schools, inclusion specialists, health clinics, pediatricians, and other community organizations. Lessons learned from prior NYSB5 Kindergarten Transition activities that focused on strategically reaching children in underserved communities and recognized the importance of in-person engagement will help inform SP updates, as will the state's revised early intervention to preschool special education transition guidance.

Support Access to ECE Programs: While state investments have contributed to the stabilization and expansion of the ECE landscape in NYS, some families continue to indicate that they turn down employment due to the lack of access to affordable child care.⁴⁰ For families who need care

⁴⁰ Cornell University School of Industrial Labor Relations and University of Buffalo, SUNY Department of Sociology. *The Status of Child Care in NYS* (March 2024).

during non-traditional hours or have a child with developmental disabilities, the challenges of access are magnified. Similarly, families of children with special health care needs face more financial strain and spend more time coordinating their child's care.⁴¹ Children with disabilities (especially infants and toddlers, and children of color) who need early intervention services are reported to have service access challenges.⁴² Increasing access to child care and needed support services for families contributes to economic success in communities and economic mobility and well-being for families.

Collaborate to Support the Workforce and Improve the Quality of ECE Programs to Meet the Diverse Needs of Children and Families. In addition to alignment with the CCDF Plan and other workforce supports (Early Childhood Career Centers, Aspire Registry, professional development opportunities), the SP will identify other innovative solutions based on NA findings. Such solutions may include strategies to better coordinate professional development offerings in languages other than English, access to mental health and wellness services, creation of inclusive spaces for children with disabilities, and guidance on supporting children and their caregivers to respond to challenging behaviors. The Pyramid Model, an evidence-based framework, to support improved experiences for children, families, and providers, will be strategically expanded to underserved areas to reach children with developmental delays or disabilities and others who are marginalized due to race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and gender identity. This focused expansion will be guided by the **Pyramid Model Policy Coordinator** and the NY Pyramid Model State Leadership Team's Action Plan for sustained statewide impact (described in Activity 5).

Address Needs Based on Recent and Significant Shifts in Demographics, Needs, Resources. The NYSB5 SP will continue to weave together the growing number of early childhood system efforts

⁴¹ NYS Department of Health. *NYS Profile of Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs* (2019-20).

⁴² Ibid at 24

underway, all with the shared goal of building an early childhood system that provides access to high-quality and comprehensive services for young children and families in NYS. The SP will be updated in response to new NA biannual updates, mid-course corrections recommended by the NYSB5 PPEP (p. 61), and insights based on data trends and large-scale events, such as the influx of migrants and refugees to NYS, and changes in federal and NYS laws, regulations, and policies, or the economy impacting young children and families. Additionally, the SP will be responsive to recommendations by other plans and initiatives underway to support early childhood well-being in NYS. Supporting alignment of these state-level early childhood initiatives has been exemplified by the current NYSB5 Project Director closely partnering with multiple state agencies and the ECAC leadership to support the implementation of the ECAC/NYSB5 SP's goals. Continued participation in these cross-sector and collaborative initiatives will extend and be advanced with the implementation of the NYSB5 Renewal grant. The ECAC will use insights from Renewal grant activities to advance recommendations to the NYS Governor's Office, with the common aim of achieving a comprehensive, equitable, and sustainable early childhood system.

Measuring Progress: Valid and reliable measures that directly and regularly track progress toward specified goals will be identified and tracked, with a key progress measure being the identification of NYSB5 activity insights that translate to policy recommendations. Working with the many NYSB5 partners, and a research organization, multiple methods of data collection and clear metrics will be used to generate and analyze information at the child/parent, program, and state levels to assess progress (PPEP, p. 61).

ACTIVITY 3: Maximizing Family Participation

Approach: Parents and families are a child's first teachers, underscoring how essential family knowledge and empowerment are to a child's healthy development. Reaching parents and families,

particularly those who have been systematically underserved or marginalized, will continue to be a focus of this grant. CCF will draw from, and partner with, existing family groups to better understand diverse experiences and to inform the development of needed services, strategies, and outreach to learn from, educate, and support families connecting to the ECE system. These groups include: the NYS Parenting Education Partnership, Education Trust- New York's Parent Institute, Head Start Policy Councils, and Families Together in NYS. This project will also capitalize on information and lessons learned from prior NYSB5 grants, the ECCS project, Head Start Collaboration project, and other outreach efforts to families. It will be guided by DOH's Title V findings, which highlighted the need for emphasis to be placed on ensuring that health care and other service providers be more respectful, compassionate, and reflective of their patient's languages and cultures, so that they do not feel judged or stigmatized, and for language barriers to be addressed.⁴³ CCF will continue to work to enhance understanding of the diverse experience of families, as described in this Activity.

Focus on Increasing Knowledge, Skills, and Resources to Support Family Well-Being: An ongoing goal of the NSYB5 project has been to share helpful and easily accessible information with families. Over the past 5 years, many family-centered resources have been developed, translated, and distributed electronically and in print to families and providers statewide. Each resource, in plain language, provides guidance and contact information on NYS programs and services for young children and families. For example, the NYS Parent Portal (www.nysparenting.org) includes a mapping resource for families to locate licensed and regulated child care and home visiting programs, that was recently updated (with NYSB5 funds) to include sites that have accepted child care assistance and that are designated as breastfeeding friendly. CCF created a

⁴³ NYS DOH. Maternal and Child Health Services Title V Block Grant New York FY 2024 Application/ FY 2022 Annual Report (July 28, 2023).

resource folder, *Family Guide to NYS Early Childhood Services*, a two-pocket folder that includes resources for young children, prenatal to age five, on child care, Head Start, early intervention, special education, and State-administered prekindergarten, as well as on supports for immigrant and refugee families, safety, mental health, domestic violence, addiction supports, health services, food, and other basic needs. This folder was translated into 16 languages⁴⁴ and is being distributed statewide, with the help of the DOH Bureau of Early Intervention, OCFS Division of Child Care Services, Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) and local departments of social services, Help Me Grow-NY, MIECHV and state/private funded home visiting programs, NYS birthing hospitals, home visiting programs, Healthy Steps' sites and other pediatric practices, and libraries. Future strategies and outreach will be informed by diverse family experiences to support the successful sharing of vital resources and to connect parents with needed services. In addition, CCF created an activity book (in English and Spanish) entitled *Let's Talk About NYS Animals* that includes social skills development, fine motor activities for children, and tips for parents/caregivers to support brain development.

Involving Families and Caregivers in State and Program Decisions about Policies, Practices, and Plans. In 2020, CCF partnered with CUNY PDI to hire a statewide family engagement coordinator who established the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) to inform the ECAC. The PAC, the first of its kind in NYS, accomplished several goals, including developing a family engagement brief and a PAC manual. Since funding for the family engagement position ended in 2022, participation in the PAC significantly waned, with only one parent remaining active. To learn and acquire skills to improve the State's ability to integrate and sustain family voice, over the past two years, CCF sought federal TA. Based on the TA and experience, a **Family Participation and Engagement**

⁴⁴ *Family Guide to NYS Services* translated into Arabic, Bengali, Dari, Haitian Creole, French, Italian, Korean, Pashto, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Ukrainian, Urdu, Wolof, Yiddish
HHS-2024-ACF-ECD-TP-0055 NYS Council on Children and Families PDGB5 Renewal Grant

Consultant (FPEC) with strong statewide relationships with family support organizations will be engaged to lead the development of a renewed and more active statewide family engagement framework. This work will complement the exciting work that's happening around NYS. For example, Raising NY (a cross-sector, statewide coalition of parent, early childhood, education, civil rights, business, and health organizations) launched a 10-month Early Childhood Parent Policy Advocacy Lab that works to equip parents and caregivers from across the state with the tools necessary to inform policymakers and advocate for systemic changes. Similarly, the Early Childhood Alliance in Central NY employs parent partners to help families navigate community-based supports and has an Advisory Council that helps guide its work and policy agenda. The FPEC will work closely with these initiatives and other parent groups, such as the OCFS Child Welfare Parent Advisory Group. The participation of families during the NA and SP process will be the first step to ensuring that the state's MDS considers and institutionalizes the lived experience of parents and caregivers.

Improving Connections to Link Parents to Programs and Services to Support Healthy Development: NYSB5's **Family and Community Engagement Liaison (FCEL)** leads statewide early childhood information sessions on early childhood resources with families and providers. Successful activities have included live events, Early Childhood Road Shows, to share NYSB5-created family resources (p. 19) and NYSB5-supported opportunities (e.g., professional development, scholarships, career ladder support). Additionally, NYSB5 supported the distribution of *NYS Baby Bundles* to underserved communities. These bundles were provided to new parents (birth, adoption, foster) in a reusable tote bag, and included books, brochures, and helpful community resources for families with children birth through five years. Building on the positive feedback from the *Baby Bundles*, and to widen the impact and sustainability of this project, CCF

is creating an electronic *Baby Bundle* and working with DOH to have this link accompany the birth certificate. With extra support from the FPEC, the successes of this work will be augmented. As well, CCF will increase the amount of time the FCEL spends in the field, attending community-based events such as family festivals, kindergarten transition events, and library activities, to connect with families in person, and provide information about developmental health and how to connect to needed services (home visiting, early intervention, health, dental, mental health, social services, family support, etc.). The FCEL will also attend early childhood provider events, such as the NY Association for the Education of Young Children, NYS Head Start, and NYS Public Welfare Association conferences to support messaging about available resources.

Early Childhood Leadership Summits: Keeping with the NYSB5 intention of collective action and shared goals (SP, Activity 2), CCF will convene Early Childhood Leadership Summits for state policy makers, partners, lawmakers, MDS providers, and parents. The Summits, modeled after, and with technical assistance from, the Hunt Institute and others, as needed, will provide an opportunity for cross-sector discussions about effective state and local early childhood strategies, encourage relationship building across initiatives and programs, identify opportunities for collaboration, shared learning, and strategic planning. The Summits also will provide an opportunity to learn about how to allocate resources wisely, reduce duplication of efforts, and understand the significant return on investment from investing in upstream prevention. Other topics that will be covered include the latest early childhood research, creating authentic family engagement, sharing concerns from the ECE field, and innovative solutions to address long-standing challenges to ECE programs in the state's MDS. In short, the Summits are intended to provide in-person opportunities to cross-pollinate ideas and amplify multi-sector efforts to create a more equitable, inclusive, comprehensive, and sustainable early childhood system.

Developing Systems to Connect Parents and Caregivers of Children with Disabilities or Developmental Concerns to Helpful Resources. In 2024, CCF will launch the *Help Hub for Families*, an online tool for parents and other caregivers who rely on support from multiple child and family serving systems. This one-stop web resource for families and children of all ages was funded with American Rescue Plan Act funds and will be substantially enhanced with early childhood resources, with NYSB5 support, based on family and provider input. The Help Hub, built to be accessible for families, caregivers, and human services professionals provides digestible, helpful health, education, human service, and disability information via a user-friendly website. In addition, a collective effort by the child-serving state agencies will be made to raise awareness about the importance of developmental health and early identification of developmental delays and disabilities, understanding the developmental continuum, and the resources available to support young children and families when a child is not meeting developmental milestones. Concurrently, given shortages in early intervention service providers, particularly for children living in underserved and rural communities, the creation of developmental support groups for families will be explored and advanced. This work will leverage the *NYS Early Learning Guidelines*, which provide information about developmental milestones, (revised with prior NYSB5 funds), and the ECCS grant that has paved the way to use the CDC's LTSAE materials (recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics) to strengthen the understanding of development in all MDS programs, thereby enhancing program quality (for more on developmental screening, see Bonus 2).

Cross-Sector Efforts to Support Healthy Development, LTSAE Collaborative Campaign: Another way CCF intends to increase parent participation in the ECE system and connect families to needed services is through promotion of the CDC's LTSAE program to help identify children who may

need additional supports.⁴⁵ To reach a broad audience, CCF will rely on the NYS Cross-Systems' Deputy Commissioners' Workgroup that it convenes. This group includes representatives from the child-serving state agencies previously discussed in this application, as well as the Council on Developmental Disabilities, State Office for the Aging, Department of Labor, and the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. By leveraging this interdisciplinary workgroup, in a shared message from state agencies, parent knowledge to improve early identification of developmental delays and disabilities, including neurodivergence, will be promoted, helping families to identify and in turn connect with needed supports as early as possible. Additionally, the lessons learned from the ECCS initiative, which works in partnership with the LTSAE Ambassadors in NYS and Help Me Grow-NY, will be applied. These lessons include using quality improvement science to improve developmental screening, referral, and follow-up processes. The LTSAE campaign will include a rigorous evaluation component that will include feedback from families about the impact over time, change in behavior, and/or referral for services. To further understand developmental screening, the ECCS project is studying three populations (parents/caregivers, physicians, ECE providers). Researchers from the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities at the Westchester Institute for Human Development (in NY) are conducting 30 focus groups across the state to better understand the landscape of developmental screening and help shape policy and practice recommendations. CCF will integrate the results from these parent feedback and focus groups to inform campaign course corrections. The NYS LTSAE campaign will be available in multiple languages, in both electronic and print formats, and will be focused on underserved communities in NYS. To ensure children are receiving additional supports, if needed, the LTSAE campaign will link to the NYS DOH Early Intervention

⁴⁵ CDC. *Learn the Signs. Act Early*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019). <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>. Accessed July 8, 2024.

Program (IDEA, Part C), eiFamilies website, the Early Childhood School and Family and Community Engagement Centers, the NYS Parent Portal, Help Me Grow sites, and the CDC website and corresponding CDC's Milestone Tracker Application. Resources also will be distributed, guided by parent input, through a variety of physical distribution channels including health clinics, WIC offices, local departments of social services, family shelters, barber and beauty shops, libraries, bus shelter/subways, and early childhood programs.

Transition Toolkit 0-3. CCF will use NYSB5 funds to develop a 0-3 Transitions Toolkit for parents/caregivers. The Toolkit will be developed in partnership with the ECCS Project Director, FPEC, NYS DOH Bureau of Early Intervention (BEI), Early Intervention Coordinating Council, and the NYS Education Department's Office of Special Education. It will be a companion to the NYS DOH BEI *Transition Toolkit for Service Coordinators*, as well as the *Kindergarten Transition Toolkit* developed with NYSB5 funds. Resources will include information on the CDC LTSAE materials and Mobile App. Easy-to-read information about developmental milestones and activities to support development from age 0-3. In addition, families will be provided statewide developmental health resources and information on how to refer to EI (Part C of IDEA), if they have concerns. Resources will also include information on what to do while waiting for services or if a child does not qualify for EI or preschool special education services (Part B of IDEA) (such as participate in a developmental support group). The kit will acknowledge that development can look different, and seek to remove the stigma from seeking needed support. Once developed, the kits, like all materials, will be translated and widely shared.

Targeted Expansion of Two-Generation Programs to Meet Family Needs: Using a braided funding model, NYSB5, along with CCDBG and OMH funds, have supported the statewide implementation of the Pyramid Model (see Activity 5). CCF has led Pyramid Model

implementation in different early childhood settings (Head Start, preschool special education, child care, and prekindergarten). Last year, for the first time, CCF piloted delivering Positive Solutions for Families' workshops for parents in a new setting to reach an especially vulnerable population: youth who are parents and incarcerated in OCFS juvenile justice facilities. CCF will expand this pilot using NYSB5 funds braided with OMH funds (starting in 2025), and in partnership with OCFS, the Pyramid Model Policy Coordinator, and the NY Pyramid Model Statewide Leadership Team will recruit Pyramid Model facilitators in partnership with the NYS Parenting Education Partnership, to work with youth parents, including those in the child welfare system. These specialized facilitators will work in each of the 5 NYS Mentoring Regions of NYS to develop partnerships with the OCFS Division of Juvenile Justice and Opportunities for Youth (DJJOY) facilities, child welfare prevention providers, and parenting education programs. This opportunity delivers on the goal of building Pyramid Model statewide infrastructure and uses two-generation strategies to equip young parents most at risk with parenting skills to build positive relationships and better support their children.

Measuring Progress: With the overarching goal of maximizing family participation, particularly for those who are traditionally underserved or marginalized, four types of measures will be collected to track progress: 1) process measures (e.g., meeting attendance, frequency) to assess the degree to which activities are conducted with fidelity; 2) outcome measures (e.g., number of/distribution channels for resources, number of parents and caregivers participating in activities); 3) qualitative feedback (e.g., families providing feedback on whether they feel their participation is supported, valued, meaningful); and 4) cost measures (e.g., amount spent on outreach to families) to detail spending on activities and for parent compensation to establish relationships

between spending and impact. CCF will seek TA to make course corrections and help problem solve challenges that may arise during implementation.

ACTIVITY 4: Supporting the B-5 Workforce

Over the past 5 years, NYSB5 funds have supported a range of workforce supports, including: the expansion of the Aspire Workforce Registry to provide essential workforce data and support coordination of ECE professional development, trainings on Adverse Childhood Experiences, infant mental health, the *Core Body of Knowledge* and *Early Learning Guidelines*, as well as activities from the PDI Leadership Initiative and establishment of the statewide network of B5 Early Childhood Career Development Centers. Yet, NYS, like the rest of the nation, continues to face a child care workforce crisis. Low compensation, limited access to benefits, and high stress widely contribute to emotional distress and high turnover in the field. Taking a new and innovative approach, the next phase of NYSB5 funding will: 1) strengthen non-traditional career pathways to support economic mobility; 2) align professional development data systems; and 3) identify ways to consistently support staff wellness. Building on prior learning, this work will continue to be led by the NYSB5 Workforce Technical Assistance and Peer Learning Initiative Coordinator.

Strengthening Non-Traditional Career Pathways to Fortify the Field: Since 2020, NYSB5 funds supported scholarships for the child care workforce to attend professional development training. To support degree attainment, scholarships were paired with PDI B5 Early Childhood Career Center advisement, providing an enhanced scholarship opportunity for SUNY/CUNY students enrolled in early childhood or similar degree programs and working in the field. Students were eligible for \$4,000 per year (braided NYSB5 and CCDBG funds) to support their degree attainment and career growth. When first launched, the scholarship program was only open to center-based early care and learning providers. While eligibility was later extended to include licensed home-

based providers, as of 2024, 90% of awardees were from center based child care or Head Start.⁴⁶ Notably, NYS has 4,246 centers and 10,460 family and group family providers.⁴⁷

It's well researched that education is a key to economic mobility.⁴⁸ 2023 data on the child care workforce indicate that 18% have a high school diploma and 21% have attended some college.⁴⁹ To support the pursuit of specialization in the early childhood field and career advancement, NYSB5 funds will expand scholarship support, focusing on family and group family providers, so that ECE providers can receive prior learning assessments (PLA) and, when applicable, associated credits. According to CUNY, students who engage in PLAs, on average, have a 17% higher college completion rate, with completion rate being higher for students of color. In addition, credits can accelerate the degree completion by 9 months.⁵⁰ PLAs provide an incentive to the ECE workforce as an alternative pathway to college (enrollment, persistence, and completion).

Expanding Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP): NYS DOL (2024) data report child care as one of the top 10 most in demand jobs in NYS.⁵¹ The field has been plagued by staff shortages and turnover. As a statewide coalition of child care providers shared: “staffing shortages have had a significant impact on their time, both the constant need to hire, train, and onboard new staff...”⁵² Similarly, the (NYS) Empire State Campaign for Child Care reports that the state “cannot make more child care slots without addressing the staffing shortage”.⁵³

⁴⁶ Professional Development Institute SUNY/CUNY Scholarships (2024).

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/center.for.human.services.research/viz/ProfessionalDevelopmentInstitute/>

⁴⁷ NYS OCFS. *2023 DCCS Fact Sheet* (2024).

⁴⁸ Brookings Institute. *Review of Education and Economic Mobility* (2016).

⁴⁹ DOL, NYS. n.d. *2023 Childcare Report – NYS DOL Reports* (2023).

⁵⁰ *Credit for Prior Learning*. n.d. The City University of New York. Accessed July 8, 2024.

<https://www.cuny.edu/academics/academic-policy/credit-prior-learning>.

⁵¹ NYS DOL. *Jobs in Demand Today*. Accessed July 8, 2024. <https://dol.ny.gov/jobs-demand-today>.

⁵² Education Trust-NY. *New York Child Care Cost Model Results Memo* (2023).

⁵³ Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. *Staffing Shortages Due to Low Wages Are Driving the Child Care Crisis in New York* (2023).

Apprentices as a Solution: The apprenticeship training model provides opportunities for apprentices to count their successes step by step, shifting their sense of self efficacy around college coursework, providing a realistic path that helps them realize their potential and professional ECE options. The apprenticeship model doesn't just establish a pipeline for the child care workforce to respond to the current crisis, it takes advantage of multiple NYS and federal funding streams and promotes economic mobility. CCF is supporting the apprenticeship training model as a promising strategy to establish a pipeline for the early care and learning workforce. In recent years, several states including New York (e.g., Kentucky, Colorado, and California) have used a registered apprenticeship training model (RAP) to provide alternative pathways for the early care and learning workforce, a model creating a skilled workforce that dates back to the 1930s.⁵⁴ Notably, NYS has one of the largest apprenticeship programs in the United States, with over 17,500 registered apprentices, ~900 programs, with ~600 sponsors statewide.⁵⁵ Of these 900 programs, however, there are only four NYS Child Care Assistant Registered Apprenticeship programs: Capital District, Southern Tier, and Mid-Hudson areas (2). Recognizing the potential of the RAP, this past year with NYSB5 Planning Grant funds, CCF laid the groundwork for apprenticeship expansion. Partnerships with NYS and federal stakeholders were built to secure buy-in to prepare to expand the NYS RAP for Child Care Assistant. Through this effort, it was learned that apprenticeships for child care are both hard to find and fund, and the process of hiring apprentices can be burdensome on providers. Interested child care sites must sign up to sponsor an apprentice, complete a number of administrative steps, and provide guidance about related instruction. Because the current process is cumbersome, there are few apprenticeship sites and low probability

⁵⁴ Apprenticeship USA. *Our History*. Apprenticeship.gov. <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/about-us/our-history>.

⁵⁵ NYS DOL. *During New York State Apprenticeship Month, Governor Hochul Announces New Funding for Pre-Apprenticeship Programs* (2023).

of sustainable expansion. NYSB5 funds will be braided with other federal and state funds to increase the visibility of, and participation in, the NYS DOL Child Care RAP and to pilot a centralized “sponsor” or intermediary approach to support scaling, maintaining, and tracking the child care apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship Expansion Pilot: Led by the NYSB5 **Workforce Technical Assistance and Peer Learning Initiative Coordinator**, CCF will partner with two community colleges (Schenectady County and Mohawk Valley) to recruit a cohort of 8 child care sites (ideally 4 group family and 4 center-based) in the Capital District region. Notably, at Schenectady County Community College, with prior NYSB5 support, credit-bearing infant and toddler Child Development Associate coursework was created, providing the basis for the college to offer this training for the apprenticeship program. With this pilot, CCF will use a holistic approach that provides both individualized guidance and access to critical resources (e.g., free Internet, transit passes, child care, etc.). Apprentices will also receive free related instruction, leveraging other grant programs through NYS DOL, SUNY and CUNY Early Childhood Workforce Scholarships (described in this activity), and the OCFS Educational Incentive Program. Apprentices will have the choice to receive related instruction from the participating community colleges or SUNY Empire State College (a college that specializes in supporting non-traditional students). Apprentices may choose related instruction specific to special education coursework for a possible career track as early intervention therapists, infant mental health providers, program administrators, etc. The related instruction can support classroom management skill building to better support children receiving special education services, strategies to support inclusion, and ways to navigate the special

education referral process for the teachers.⁵⁶ In addition, to support their social and emotional wellbeing, along with the young children (up to age 5) in their care, apprentices will be required to complete Pyramid Model training.

This two-year pilot will be guided by a multi-sector Advisory Committee. Key representatives will be invited to participate from: NYS OCFS (Division of Child Care Services, Bureau of Contract Management, Bureau of Regional Operations), NYS DOL, NYS ECAC Workforce Committee, CCRRs, participating community colleges, SUNY Empire State College, CUNY PDI, NYS Early Childhood Career Centers, NY Association for the Education of Young Children, Civil Service Employees Association, Family Child Care Network, NYS United Teachers, and local Workforce Development Boards. CCF will work with NYS DOL (the regulatory agency that supports the establishment of RA programs) and act as the pilot sponsor. To attract apprentices, CCF as the sponsor, will work with child care sites to understand how child care wages differ statewide and explore strategies for required apprenticeship wage structures through bonuses and/or stipends for apprentices and staff at child care sites. CCF will support the apprenticeship by facilitating stakeholder connections and outreach, ensuring program quality by helping employers with the administrative tasks, and serving as a link for related instruction.⁵⁷ Advisory Committee recommendations will inform customization of the apprenticeship-related instruction based upon the needs of the NYS child care workforce, and alignment with state licensing requirements and credentialing, such as the Child Development Associate credential. All apprentices will have the option to continue their education for an associate or bachelor's degree and to receive free prior

⁵⁶Shannon, Jacqueline, Michael Bergen, Sharon Beaumont-Bowman, Beth Elenko, and Karen McFadden (2024). Review of *New Research Network Study Recommends Pathways to Address Early Intervention Shortage - the Institute Blog* (*Earlychildhoodny.org*). *The Institute Blog* (blog). June 10, 2024. <https://earlychildhoodny.org/blog>.

⁵⁷ Accenture. *NYC Apprenticeship Landscape Report*. NYC Mayor's Office of Talent and Workforce Development (2023).

learning assessments to transfer apprenticeship experience into college credits and have the option of applying for the NYS Excelsior Scholarship to fund their education (though this would require being a full-time student). CCF will use insights from the apprenticeship expansion to explore ways to create and support professional development pathways for other early childhood professionals, such as early intervention therapists and infant mental health providers.

System Change and Sustainability: The RAP pilot is an opportunity to identify successes and challenges and to clear the way for another entity (e.g., Shared Services Alliance, CCCR, Early Childhood Career Center, etc.) to serve as the centralized “sponsor” or intermediary and lead the effort in the future. To ensure sustainability of the pilot, a *Braiding and Blending (B&B) Guide to Support Early Childhood Assistant Apprenticeships* will be created (paralleling other early childhood B&B guides CCF has created with NYSB5 funds). CCF will also explore the capacity of the Aspire Registry to include approved NYS DOL related instruction in the online course catalogue and add DOL required “Blue Book” elements that track apprenticeship training hours to decrease the administrative burden on apprentices and child care sites, as well as support systems coordination of professional development. As with any pilot program, the Apprenticeship Expansion will have an evaluation component. The evaluation will include process measures collected from participating child care sites, enrolled apprentices, and the Advisory Council. Cost measures of operating the pilot and outcome measures for child care sites and apprentices will be tracked. The evaluation will also include lessons learned and recommendations to coordinate with other efforts moving forward to support sustainability.

Aligning Professional Development and Data Systems: As part of the investment in quality improvement, it is necessary to better align systems within the ECE ecosystem to maximize investments. One challenge to improving and supporting the ECE workforce is the multiple

professional development and workforce data systems with which staff currently interact. To date, NYSB5 funds have been braided with state and local dollars to support the Aspire Registry expansion increase diversified enrollment (e.g., the inclusion of additional professions within the ECE system beyond teaching staff such as early interventionists, home visitors, parenting educators). To further support system coordination and simplify professional development and workforce data systems, funds will be used to increase alignment between two critical ECE systems. CCF will partner with the OCFS CCDF Administrator and CUNY PDI to integrate the Aspire Registry professional development and staff qualifications data with the OCFS child care data system. Currently, the OCFS data is pushed to Aspire but no Aspire data is captured in OCFS. The integration of these two systems will create a complete picture of child care providers' professional development and qualifications. NYS will also have a clearer, more comprehensive understanding of ECE strengths and gaps, so that professional development can be targeted to identified needs and redundancies reduced for child care programs and licensors.

Professional Development Enhancement for the Aspire Registry: The Registry will be enhanced to improve the overall user interface and experience by garnering feedback from the field related to user experiences. Understanding how users navigate the site will also help inform training tips, knowledge base resources, career ladder guidance, and career journey mapping. Currently, the Registry displays customized career ladder information for members. Augments might include reminders to complete OCFS required trainings, notifications of newly developed training and/or suggestions for relevant related instruction and expanded career pathways.

Identifying Ways to Consistently Support Staff Wellness: A number of studies have looked at factors contributing to ECE provider turnover.⁵⁸ Primary factors include low compensation, access

⁵⁸ Ibid at 27.

to benefits, and the stress associated with managing challenging behavior.⁵⁹ NYS used prior NYSB5 resources to identify promising practices ECE programs were using to support the mental health and well-being of staff. Some of the strategies shared included: promoting employee assistance programs for mental health counseling; making mental health and wellness consultants available full time for staff, children, and families; conducting frequent mental health check-ins; offering mental health trainings for staff and parents; providing mental health resources and referrals; promoting selfcare days; and offering staff flexibility for taking time off to focus on their mental health. With this grant, CCF will convene key stakeholders (including those who participated in the NA and SP updates) to share challenges, approaches, and opportunities. Under the guidance of an expert in systems change, CCF will use NYSB5 funding to convene an Early Childhood Workforce Wellness Project with key ECE stakeholders (including those who participated in the NA and SP updates) to explore the conditions in place (biases, culture, power dynamics) preventing the adoption and implementation of wellness principles in the field. This convening collaboration will provide the opportunity for current research to be discussed, and policymakers and other key stakeholders to have an open dialogue about the policies, practices, and resources impacting wellness. Using principles of collective impact and science of improvement, the collaboration will work toward the shared goal of a healthy workforce.

Measuring Progress: Progress measures will be customized to each of the activity 4 initiatives. The RAP Pilot will use an independent evaluator to identify implementation measures and regularly obtain feedback from the field to determine course corrections and means for improvement. The OCFS and Aspire data enhancements will measure progress by garnering feedback from the field initially and throughout the process to assess improvements to user

⁵⁹ *The Professional Well-Being of Early Educators in California - Center for the Study of Child Care Employment* (2024). Cscce.berkeley.edu. May 6, 2024.

experience and identify additional areas of need. The Early Childhood Workforce Wellness Project will identify shared goals and agree upon early performance indicators that demonstrate progress. Such indicators will be tracked to assess how well the collective is moving toward achieving its shared goals. (PPEP, p. 61, for further details on performance tracking.)

ACTIVITY 5: Support Program Quality Improvements

High-quality and sustainable early learning environments depend on a workforce that is fully supported, equitably compensated, and reflective of the communities they serve. With historic investments in early care and education (from a range of state and federal sources including NYSB5, CCDBG, CARES Act, Medicaid), NY has made significant strides to improve the infrastructure and ECE program quality. Now, NY will take the next steps toward strengthening and expanding the state's investment in providing professional development on developmentally appropriate and culturally-sensitive practices to improve program quality. The primary model that will be supported with this grant is the Pyramid Model, an evidenced-based framework for supporting the social and emotional development of young children, while providing more equitable and inclusive learning environments and addressing equity, disparity, and racial bias. Pyramid Model implementation will also support providers in using best practices to address trauma, support children's mental health needs, and better meet the needs of underserved children, including children with disabilities. Post-pandemic, the importance of equipping early childhood professionals with additional skills to support social and emotional development is even more vital.

Plan to Improve Quality of ECE Programs: QUALITYstarsNY (QSNY), NY's quality rating and improvement system, provides clear guidance on the components necessary to improve and sustain high quality programs across the MDS. In recent years, NY has invested in the expansion of QSNY, focusing on the State's most vulnerable communities, including tribal communities that choose to

participate. QSNY has been funded with a combination of federal (including NYSB5), state, and private funds, and now has a standing line in the NYS budget. In addition, QSNY serves as the non-federal match source for the NYSB5 grant. With QSNY funding now stable, NYSB5 resources can be shifted to fund quality improvement activities in another way: to expressly support equitable and culturally responsive practices and to help prevent and reduce suspensions, expulsions, and other exclusionary practices. To do so, the quality improvement activities proposed are to: 1) target expansion of the Pyramid Model across the MDS; and 2) promote awareness about the importance of developmental health and early connections to needed services and supports.

Implementing the Pyramid Model to Support High-Quality and Equitable Programs: The Pyramid Model is a framework that uses evidence-based practices in a tiered model of promotion, prevention, and intervention to promote young children’s social and emotional development, by providing training, coaching, and leadership team development at the program, community, and state levels. Pyramid Model implementing programs provide predictable environments, positive interactions, effective teaching and learning strategies for all children, and individualized intervention for those who need more support. Statewide coordination and focused expansion will be led by the new **Pyramid Model Policy Coordinator**.

Strategically Expand Capacity and Diversity of Pyramid Model Regional Coordinators, Implementation Coaches, and Trainers: NYS currently uses a braided funding model (NYSB5, CCDF, Head Start Collaboration, OMH) to support statewide implementation of the Pyramid Model in 110 programs, serving approximately 7,700 children and training over 7,500 teaching staff this past year. The current infrastructure relies almost entirely on consultants, most of whom work nights and weekends. These consultant (2.5 Regional Coordinators, 21 Implementation Coaches, and 94 trainers) do Pyramid Model work around their other jobs because they are not

able to leave their current jobs due to the lack of predictable Pyramid Model work. CCF has identified areas to strengthen statewide spread and sustainability. First, to provide consistency and security of regular employment without the stressors of independent contracting. CCF will use NYSB5 funds to support Regional Coordinators, Implementation Coaches, and trainers who will be offered half- or full-time work and a competitive salary and benefits package. According to the World Economic Forum, higher salaries and the provision of benefits attract a more diverse pool of applicants.⁶⁰ Second, a review of Pyramid Model demographic data found that over 75% of leadership coaches identify as white. To ensure Pyramid Model staff reflect NY's racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity, recruitment and hiring will be expanded and focused on reaching underrepresented groups. Focused job boards may be used to source candidates, such as Pride Careers and Hire Autism. The bolstering of the staff infrastructure and diversity will increase the state's capacity to support providers in implementing programs to respond to the need of underserved children and families across NYS. Specifically, hiring 5.5 FTE Regional Coordinators will allow for smaller areas to be covered by each Regional Coordinator and local relationships nurtured to more successfully promote the Pyramid Model; 8.0 FTE Implementation Coaches will enable their program coaching capacity to double, from 30 to 60 programs each, to support more implementing programs; and the increase in trainers to 14.0 FTE will allow more hours of Pyramid Model module training to be provided.

Positive Solutions for Families Workshop Series: The Pyramid Model Policy Coordinator will partner with Community Schools networks and local school districts to implement the Pyramid Model in prekindergarten programs and expand *Positive Solutions for Families* (POS) (a series of 7 parent workshops that help parents support their child's social and emotional development while

⁶⁰*Here's How to Tailor Employee Benefits to a Diverse Workforce.* World Economic Forum (2022). www.weforum.org. July 24, 2024

they set clear boundaries and build positive relationships). Sessions will be offered in accessible community locations, and parents who complete the POS series will be encouraged to apply to become paid workshop facilitators in their community. These newly trained *parent facilitators* will ensure more parent workshop trainers are from the community, speak the language, and understand the culture of the families served. This two-generation approach is helping to reach some of the state's most traumatized and vulnerable families.

Using Data for Continuous Quality Improvement: With the prior NYSB5 grants, NY created a data system to track and analyze Pyramid Model data at the child, classroom, center, program, regional, and state levels. This data system, the NYS Pyramid Model Implementation Data System (PIDS), was showcased at the National Training Institute Pyramid Model Conference in 2023 and 2024. PIDS is a success of past NYSB5 funding and is now a national data system managed by the Pyramid Model Consortium, with 20 states using and/or exploring its use. As of 2024, all Pyramid Model implementing sites in NY are participating in PIDS, which is now connected to the Aspire Workforce Registry. PIDS provides a direct link to improving quality to support children, families, teachers, and communities. Using PIDS data, child-specific plans can be created to better meet children's needs, especially children who present with challenging behaviors, and to identify classroom, program, and community trends to inform the provision of customized support and more targeted allocation of resources. PDGB5 funds will support developing an API with Aspire to collect teacher data to PIDS for improved analysis. In addition, Pyramid Model data helps identify disparities and respond to system inequities and biased and racist practices.

Conducting a NYS Pyramid Model Impact Study (Impact Study): The prior NYSB5 grant funded a *Pyramid Model Impact Study Plan*. The new grant will prioritize recommendations included in the plan to evaluate and then improve the effectiveness of NYS Pyramid Model implementation

and further improve the quality of care provided to young children and families in participating programs, with a focus on underserved children (children with disabilities or at risk for disabilities, children who have experienced trauma, and children of color who are more at risk of being suspended or expelled). The Pyramid Model Consortium, the national organization leading Pyramid Model, is eager to collaborate with CCF and other Pyramid Model implementing states to conduct the Impact Study. This Impact Study will be guided by the findings of the January 2024 NY Pyramid Model State Leadership Team’s Data Workgroup survey of Pyramid Model implementing programs, which identified barriers to data collection and statewide implementation. Results indicated that: training opportunities (virtual and in-person) are limited due to a lack of full-time trainers, especially in certain areas of the state; in-person training tends to be more effective; and programs struggle with data entry due to time constraints and staff turnover but can take action to improve data quality.

Table 2: Pyramid Model Impact Study Activities

Activity	Explanation of Need	Impact
1. Increase the number of PM trainers and coaches	More coaches and trainers who speak languages other than English and who live in the communities they serve are needed. Now, only 2 out of 20 coaches speak languages other than English.	An increase in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse PM trainers & coaches will result in a greater number of programs that can participate, reaching more vulnerable communities.
2. Improve data accuracy and availability	Need to work with the implementing programs to improve data input. PIDS data are not always complete. Need to assess for missing data; run descriptive statistics to check for problematic “distribution patterns” and “group membership” counts needed for advanced statistical testing; and identify “next steps” to correct for missing values and/or unusual distribution patterns.	PIDS Data will be more complete; demographic data about staff and children, helping to identify and address implicit and explicit biases and implement anti-racist practices.
3. Strengthen partnerships between Pyramid Model programs and families	The Pyramid Model State Leadership Team has scored low on the Benchmark of Quality (BOQ) for family engagement. PIDS has BOQ score data and program-level BOQs. Currently PIDS has no mechanism for collecting family feedback. There is no ongoing process for engaging parents in the continuous improvement of the model.	PIDS will be enhanced to include a family feedback component. Strengthening partnerships and engagement between families and ECE programs, outcomes for children, families, and programs will improve.

4. Eliminate suspension and expulsion of young children	Children 0-4 are 3 times more likely to be suspended or expelled than children in grades k-12 combined, Black children and children with disabilities are being disproportionately impacted/harmed by these practices. ⁶¹	Expulsions and suspensions will decrease as programs implement the Pyramid Model to fidelity.
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Parents will be included in the Impact Study and be invited to participate in a reflection of their experiences with Pyramid Model strategies.

Strategic Recruitment and Culturally Relevant Materials and Updated User Interface: To aid in the recruitment of Pyramid Model Coaches and new implementation sites, NY will improve outreach and update professional materials to include at home activities. Additionally, an updated Pyramid Model web resource that is accessible and easy-to-use will be designed and built, along with re-designed training materials, scripts, and books to include more diverse families and delivery in different formats (e.g., large print) and additional languages.

Aligning with Other State Efforts: As described above, by braiding funds, NY has implemented the Pyramid Model across the full MDS (child care, Head Start, prekindergarten, and special education programs). The Pyramid Model aligns and supports federal and NYS laws, regulations, standards, policies, and practices to support the social and emotional well-being of young children and to reduce and eventually eliminate suspensions and expulsions of young children.

Table 3: Pyramid Model Alignment with Federal and State Laws and Initiatives

Governor Child Care Availability Task Force	Recommendation to eliminate expulsions and suspensions in child care and prekindergarten. ¹⁵
NYSED Education Regulations	Disallowance for preschool student with a disability to be “suspended, expelled or otherwise removed by the provider from an approved preschool special education program or service because of the student’s behavior prior to the transfer of the student to another approved program recommended by the committee on preschool special education”. ¹⁶
NYS Board of Regents	Commitment to reduce and severely limit expulsion and suspension practices, with the goal of eliminating these practices in all early childhood settings. ¹⁷
Child Care and Development Block Grant	Recommendation to reduce expulsions and suspensions and promote children’s social and emotional and behavioral health and directs states to use a percentage of funds on activities to enhance the quality of child care programs. Among the list of allowable quality enhancement

⁶¹ National Black Child Development Institute. “Delivering on the Promise of Effective Early Childhood Education” (December 2018).

	activities are behavioral management strategies and training that promote positive social and emotional development and reduce challenging behaviors and expulsion practices. ²¹
Head Start Performance Standards	Prohibition to expel a child due to behavior and effectively limit suspensions by outlining steps that a program must take and document before considering a temporary suspension of a child while supports are put into place. ²²
Healthy Steps Expansion	An evidence-based intervention, providing integrated physical and mental health services for families with young children (birth to three) to support their social and emotional development in a pediatric healthcare setting. This is an OMH-led initiative to create 224 sites in underserved communities across NYS.

Further, the Pyramid Model complements the many professional development opportunities (funded with prior NYSB5 grants) available to teach early childhood professionals about biases, trauma-informed practices, and supporting children and families who have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). In short, by expanding and strengthening the implementation of the Pyramid Model, particularly in programs where children who have been systematically marginalized, program quality will be improved. With parents as partners, NY will continue to work toward its goals of eliminating the use of suspension and expulsions in early childhood. Pyramid Model practices will build on and reinforce initiatives that support critical and sustainable efforts to promote developmental understanding and benchmarking by parents and providers, including the new easy-to-use, free developmental screening tool (see Bonus 2), and helping to ensure that children receive early preventive services and well child visits (see Activity 3).

ACTIVITY 6: Subgrants to Enhance Quality and Expand Access to Programs and Services

Subgrant activities specific to **Option C**, improve the state’s early childhood integrated data system (ECIDS), and conduct a feasibility study of assigning a unique identifier at birth to work toward building an ECIDS, and **Option A**, strengthen and expand access to quality ECE care in rural areas, by adopting a collective impact approach to devise innovative, local solutions, and collaborate with the Early Head Start (EHS) Access Grant to explore creating more EHS Child Care Partnerships (EHSCCP). Both options focus on improving access to and quality of existing

programs. Together, both subgrant activities are less than 60 percent of the funds in the first and subsequent years (9%).

Option C. Integrating Data, Assigning a Unique Identifier at Birth: The development of a NYS ECIDS has been a long-standing NYS ECAC and early childhood system goal. Since 2018, and building on prior learnings, NYSB5 grants provided the opportunity for a NYS ECIDS feasibility study to be conducted. This study recommended the creation of unique identifiers (UID) for every young child at birth, as a concrete step toward creating an ECIDS. Currently, the NYS education system assigns a unique 10-digit number to each NY student (prekindergarten to 12th grade). The Student Identification System (NYSSIS) provides continuity and a single source of standardized individual student records for analysis at the local, regional, and state levels to improve student performance and to meet state and federal reporting and accountability requirements. Leveraging this NYSB5 opportunity, CCF will use a subcontractor to conduct a feasibility study to explore the assignment of NYSISS ID at birth (and later for children who move to NY after birth). All state agency stakeholders will be engaged around the mission, vision, and plan for this exploration. The study will examine state and federal privacy laws that may impact the state's work, create a plan to protect identifiable information; establish a data governance process; and consider how a UID assigned at birth fits within the vision of the state's ECIDS.

Application: While it is well known that there is a link between children's health, education, and social outcomes, data collected on children is not routinely shared across sectors. Assignment of a UID will allow professionals interacting with young children to share information to better and more efficiently meet their needs. This UID will follow children when they enroll in a public school, charter school, participating non-public school, Head Start, Early Head Start, licensed or

regulated child care program, home visiting program, or 4410 preschool special education program.

How Will this Help Children, Particularly those who are Underserved? Coordination of services is helpful for all children and families, but it is especially important for children with developmental delays or disabilities and for families who have broader family needs, such as nutrition, home visiting, parenting skills, or employment. The UID supports a system of care infrastructure, by enabling service providers to connect information and coordinate services to help reduce barriers and roadblocks to families accessing needed services. Additionally, a UID assigned at birth will enable long-standing policy questions to be studied, such as: which early childhood (birth through five years old) services are more effective, equitable, and responsive to the diverse needs of families; what combinations of early childhood programs and services do children receive before entering kindergarten; and generally how early childhood services and support impact child outcomes at kindergarten entry and subsequent grade levels?

Sustainability: This is a feasibility study and ways to sustain implementation of a UID will be included. Generally speaking, it is anticipated we will find that once a UID is put into use, it could be incorporated into the state's existing data infrastructure and largely be self-sustaining by the existing systems.

Option A. Expand Access to Quality Child Care and Support Services in Rural Areas: Focusing on five rural areas, CCF will use a collective impact approach to support Rural Child Care Innovation (RCCI) Networks; and expand access to Early Head Start (EHS), by building on current efforts to convert Head Start to EHS slots and forming additional EHSCCPs.

Increasing Supply, Access to Services, and Quality through Collective Impact: Collective impact is built on a network of community members, organizations, and institutions learning together,

aligning, and integrating actions to achieve population and systems-level change to build equitable systems. The most impactful collective impact initiatives hold parents at the center, and the most sustainable are responsive to parent and community needs.⁶² Accordingly, to increase the supply of quality rural child care programs, CCF will build on Staffed Family Child Care Networks that support child care businesses in rural areas with prior NYSB5 funds. Leveraging these efforts, CCF will identify a subcontractor, with experience working with child care providers and other stakeholders, to coordinate a statewide collective, the RCCI Network. Five rural communities will be selected to participate. CRRs will be the backbone organizations and equipped with collective impact expertise to establish and advance the RCCI Network, providing ongoing training to the community participants. The CRRs will use collective impact to center equity and support a sustainable and resilient collaboration.⁶³ Continuous communication with parents and community members will be key to the success of this initiative as a means of building trust and displaying commitment. Further, effective collective impact projects are customized to local contexts, so identifying local policy, practices, resources, power dynamics, relationships, and mental models will be essential. To support active family and provider engagement in the RCCI Networks, stipends will be provided. Other partners will be engaged in the RCCI Network such as local small businesses and self-employed individuals, local government representatives, economic development councils, workforce boards, Chambers of Commerce, Community Development Financial Institutions, major employers, school districts and universities, OCFS, QSNY, child care centers, family child care, Head Start (EHS, Migrant and Seasonal, AIAN), tribal representatives, and others as identified by the collective. The members of the local collective will inform and offer

⁶² Iprak. n.d. *Collective Impact Forum*. Collective Impact Forum. <https://collectiveimpactforum.org/>.

⁶³ Timmons-Gray, Tracy. n.d. *Supporting a Sustainable and Resilient Collaboration – Part 1*. Collective Impact Forum. Accessed July 8, 2024. <https://collectiveimpactforum.org/resource/supporting-a-sustainable-and-resilient-collaboration-part-1/>.

resources necessary to support needed change, whether that is exploring ways to increase capacity, providing care during non-traditional hours, serving children with disabilities, improving ECE quality, or partnering with Head Start. Other ideas that may be explored include the possibility of small centers operating in shared space, such as hospitals, nursing homes, and local business store fronts, to help alleviate financial and structural barriers these programs currently face (e.g., affording rent, heat, janitorial services, facility upgrades, etc.).

How Will this Approach Help Families? RCCI Networks are rooted in solutions that are responsive to family and community needs, thereby helping them. To assess the success of this activity, at the start of the collective impact project, working with the subcontractor, the CCRRs will co-create a plan for and implementation of evaluation measures; progress will be regularly assessed using the *Guide to Evaluating Collective Impact*. From a quantitative data point, the focus of the impact project is to increase the capacity (number of providers and slots) and quality of family and group family child care, and small center child care services in select underserved, rural communities.

Lasting Impact of this Rural Child Care Project: A concrete deliverable of this project that supports replication and sustainability will be the creation of a *Rural Child Care Blueprint to Success and Expansion* (Blueprint) that will identify new opportunities and resources to support community needs into the future. Each community's blueprint will be unique given its responsiveness to local community needs and strengths; however, these plans will also be shared to be used as a guide and adapted by other communities to develop innovative solutions to increase and support the supply of high-quality ECE programs in their communities. By creating an RCCI Network, or strong backbone organization, to effectively implement the core components of collective impact, success will be supported and sustained.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Increasing Access to EHS to Help Support Families who are Eligible: Another component of the RCCI Network project involves collaboration with the EHS Access Grant Consultant (funded through Zero to Three) to expand the number of EHSCCP sites with family child care providers and small centers in rural communities. EHSCCP strengthens the quality of programs and combines the strengths of child care in all modalities with EHS programs, providing comprehensive family-centered services in high-quality early learning environments. The model benefits families by providing full-day services year-round that are strongly grounded in the cultural, linguistic, and social needs of the families and their local communities that follow federal Head Start Performance Standards

How will this Approach Help Low-Income Children and Families? EHSCP expansion will focus on supporting services for infants and toddlers, an age when parents have the most difficulty locating services in NYS. The expansion will focus on reaching low-income families living in rural communities. Children enrolled in EHSCCP receive meals and a snack, free diapers and wipes, and families have access to a staff person to help connect to needed services, including early intervention services, health, mental health, and other supports. In addition, parents are involved in the shared governance of the program to support the delivery of quality comprehensive services.

Sustainability of EHSCCP: The rural expansion of EHSCCP will be part of the RCCI Network collective action project (described in this Activity). Adding to NY's current 17 EHSCCP, new partnerships will be cultivated by the **EHS Access Coordinator**, who will be hired in quarter 3 (after Zero to Three funding ends) to support long-term implementation. This new NYSB5 position will provide technical assistance to interested child care sites and work with community partners to identify and address challenges to implementation. Using a layered funding model, more

EHSCCPs, with enhanced comprehensive services for young children and families, will be possible.

Timeline for Conducting Subcontract Activities: As much of the groundwork to launch these activities has been laid with prior NYSB5 grants and other state agency initiatives underway, CCF anticipates quickly launching both projects. Activity steps and timeline are below.

Table 4: Activity Timeline for Subgrant Activities

Activity	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Yr2	Yr3
Select subcontractors for each of the three activities in accordance with state procurement requirements.	x					
Enter into contracts with each of the three subcontractors.	x	x				
Engage stakeholders		x	x	x	x	x
Implement projects			x	x	x	x
Evaluate impact of each activity to ensure that programs are high quality and supporting future high-quality programming			x	x	x	x
Identify and share lessons learned				x	x	x
Plan for project sustainability			x	x	x	x

Strengthening ECE Systems

Building on Previous NYSB5 Success: CCF is uniquely positioned to use a collective impact approach to further strengthen and align New York’s early childhood system. Capitalizing on the knowledge acquired since the implementation of the first NYSB5 grant in 2018, CCF will work closely with a growing number of state and local partners and families to improve the well-being of children and families, focusing on those who have been historically underserved. The approach to fortifying the state’s ECE system will be based on the application of three reinforcing frameworks. First, CCF uses the *Water of Systems Change*, a model premised on the belief that system change is about advancing equity by shifting conditions that hold problems in place, and that identifies six inter-related levers of change (policies, practices, resource flows, relationships and connections, power dynamics, and mental models).⁶⁵ The activities, such as strategic

⁶⁵ Kania, J. et al. *The Water of Systems Change*. FSG (2018).

expansion of the Pyramid Model and the RCCI Network, proposed in this application address these levers of change. Second, CCF applies a human-centered approach: to solve problems, the perspective of humans (families) must be considered.⁶⁶ NYSB5 activities keep families at the center, aiming to strengthen the system based on their needs. Third, CCF uses a targeted universalism approach.⁶⁷ Recognizing the diversity and inequities among different groups, while affirming the commonality and interdependence of all, the targeted updates to the NYSB5 needs assessment will be used to understand the conditions that elevate and impede communities and families and collectively develop strategic planning strategies unique to each group to strengthen our system. With this grant, CCF's approach has been refined based on lessons learned from NYSB5 and other early childhood initiatives to date. For instance, CCF has learned the state must actively support family participation, engagement, and knowledge about ECE programs, therefore Activities 1 and 2 will focus on outreach to families, who will be central to all other activities, too.

Leveraging Other Funding Sources: With NYSB5 funds, CCF created “*How to*” *Guides to Blending & Braiding Funds to Support Early Childhood Education Programs*, along with a corresponding training series. The *Guide* and trainings provide practical tools to support NYS child care providers, Head Start and Early Start grantees, school districts, special education programs, home visiting programs and non-profit organizations to undertake a planning process that leads to a blended or braided fiscal model. While sharing these tools with the ECE field, CCF also has applied to our own work. NYSB5, funds have been, and will continue to be, braided and blended with state, local and private funds. Some examples of projects supported with multiple funding streams that have leveraged NYSB5 funds are: Pyramid Model implementation expansion,

⁶⁶ Landry, Lauren. *What Is Human-Centered Design?* | *HBS Online*. Business Insights Blog. (December 15, 2020). <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/what-is-human-centered-design>.

⁶⁷ *Targeted Universalism* | *Othering & Belonging Institute*. n.d. [Belonging.berkeley.edu](https://belonging.berkeley.edu). <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism>.

Apprenticeship Expansion Pilot, and the expansion of the Aspire Registry. These and other blended and braided models are described throughout this grant proposal.

Supporting Families' Access to Public Programs: CCF's approach to strengthening ECE systems supports families accessing public programs in a myriad of ways. Based on feedback from families from prior NYSB5 awards, CCF has created a guide to birth through five resources for families and a NYS Parent Portal web resource to connect families to helpful resources and will continue to expand the early childhood resources on the Help Hub for Families (as described in Activity 3). In addition, CCF will rely on key messengers or community members who families trust and turn to for important information and services. For example, to spread the word about programs, the Family and Community Engagement Liaison will continue to strengthen connections to faith-based communities; local schools (including community schools); community-based organizations; libraries; health, mental health, and pediatric clinics; local departments of social services (responsible for temporary assistance, SNAP, and rental benefits); local businesses; and other trusted and relied upon individuals and agencies.

CCDF Collaboration: CCF is providing assurance that we have worked with the CCDF lead in developing this proposal. As detailed in this application, there are specific NYSB5 activities where we will work in partnership, including the creation of a professional development data sharing application and the braided funding of the Pyramid Model expansion. In addition, this grant application includes initiatives in activities 1 through 5 as well as bonus items that align with CCDF plan goals for improving quality and reaching under-served children and families. We have also identified other areas and plans to collaborate, including in the updates the SP and supporting efforts to connect underserved families to quality child care and other services. During the course

of this grant and beyond, communication will continue, and data will be shared, to ensure that NYSB5 funding helps to inform CCDF planning and that there is ongoing alignment.

Project Timeline and Milestones

The timeline and milestones to administer the NYSB5 Renewal grant are organized by quarter for year 1 and annually for years 2 and 3. Tasks are included for each activity, along with milestones and completion dates, when appropriate.

Table 5: Project Timeline and Milestones

Administrative	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Y2	Y3
Convene first quarterly NYSB5 meeting with ECE partners to socialize project and provide timeline of year.	x					
Onboard new team members and orient current team to new priorities.	x	x				
Identify family participation and engagement consultant (FPEC).	x	x				
Meet with CCDF lead to discuss collaboration plans.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Secure spending approval from NYS Division of Budget.	x	x				
Prepare procurement documents with OCFS Bureau of Contracts to identify vendors for subcontracts.	x	x				
Attend regularly scheduled TA meetings and federal webinars.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Submit quarterly program and finance reports.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Attend PDGB5 federal in-person meeting in Washington, D.C.			x	x	x	x
ACTIVITY 1: Needs Assessment (NA)						
Identify research organization to lead NA and secure contract.	x	x				
Conduct cross-sector scan to identify and review recent NAs.		x				
Work with FPEC to engage diverse communities and families. Provide stipends for family participation.		x				
Phase I listening session with early childhood system partners and families, barriers, and concerns.		x				
Determine NA methodology (e.g., survey, focus groups) and approach to reaching target audience(s).		x				
Begin NA research, develop surveys or focus group procedures, data gathering, data analysis, and data repository.		x				
Phase II communication session to share preliminary NA results with early childhood system partners and families, provide open comment period, and consider process or methodology shifts.			x			
Phase III results session to share findings, respond to questions and engage early childhood system partners and families on ideas for the strategic plan.			x			
NA completed, designed, and distributed electronically to early childhood system partners and families – NA complete.				x		
Update NA biannually beginning with identification of research organization and conduct cross-sector scan to identify recent NAs.					x	x
ACTIVITY 2: Strategic Plan (SP)						
Identify facilitator and secure contract to lead SP Summit. Facilitator will attend NA sessions.	x	x				
Drawing from NA Phase III, Summit planning will be informed by FPEC, ECAC, NA researchers, and families.		x	x			

Work with FPEC to engage diverse communities and families historically marginalized during the SP process. Provide stipends for family participation.		x	x			
Align SP Summit agenda with CCDF, Head Start, Title V, etc.			x			
Include strategies to improve transitions, support ECE access, workforce, respond to shifts in demographics, and modify activities to respond to SP.			x			
Develop valid, reliable measures to track progress of the SP			x			
SP completed, designed, and distributed electronically to early childhood system partners and families.				x		
Statewide Early Childhood Leadership Summit to share SP widely with field, answer questions, and socialize – SP complete.				x		
Monitor/measure implementation using CQI framework.				x	x	x
Update SP with NA update(s) or shift in state demographics, other data insights from relevant sources, and mid-course corrections per PPEP.					x	x
ACTIVITY 3: Maximize Family Participation and Engagement						
FPEC collaborates with family and community engagement liaison (FCEL) to identify communities and programs to provide resources and outreach.		x				
FPEC explores a statewide family engagement framework.		x				
FPEC presents at quarterly ECAC meeting and quarterly statewide NYSB5 meeting to guide the development of family engagement framework.		x				
FPEC creates statewide recommendations to increase family participation.			x			
FPEC provides guidance to ECE partners to implement family engagement framework and develop resource materials.			x			
FCEL plans year-long statewide outreach and education campaign.	x					
FCEL attends statewide and local conferences and community events.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Help Hub for Families: Identify vendor and secure contract to update web resource.		x				
Help Hub: Convene team of cross-sector ECE partners, including FPEC, to collect B – 5 resources to populate and design web resource.		x	x			
Help Hub: Soft launch with families to get feedback.			x	x	x	x
Help Hub: Develop marketing plan and usage tracking.				x	x	x
Help Hub 2.0 complete and released – complete.					x	
LTSAE Campaign: Plan with Cross-systems Deputy Commissioners’ Workgroup.	x	x				
LTSAE Campaign: Collaborate with ECCS, UCEDDs, Early Intervention Program.		x	x			
LTSAE Campaign: Create and approve creative aspects of campaign with guidance from families and launch campaign – campaign complete.				x	x	
0-3 Transition Toolkit: Using feedback from the NA, convene a team to develop a transition toolkit for families with children 0-3, partnering with families, Part C and Part B Coordinators from NYS DOH Bureau of Early Intervention and NYSED Office Special Education, respectively.			x			
0-3 Transition Toolkit: Identify resources to include in toolkit and identify materials for development.			x	x		
0-3 Transition Toolkit: Soft launch toolkit for families to get feedback.				x		
0-3 Transition Toolkit: Complete toolkit, plan dissemination with partners and families -toolkit complete				x	x	
DJJOY Training: Identify 10 new Pyramid Model facilitators for training.	x	x				
DJJOY Training: Meet with OCFS DJJOY to plan and implement training.	x	x	x	x	x	x
Measure progress in meeting identified family participation goals.			x	x	x	x
ACTIVITY 4: Supporting the Workforce						
Scholarships: Identify vendor and secure contract to distribute scholarships to the ECE field for prior learning assessments (PLAs).	x	x	x	x	x	x
Registered Apprenticeship Pilot (RAP) Pilot: Identify vendor and secure contract to evaluate pilot.	x	x				

RAP Pilot: Convene 1 st meeting of advisory team (held quarterly).	x	x	x	x	x	x
RAP Pilot: Develop and launch recruitment materials for the ECE field.	x	x				
RAP Pilot: Secure 4 ECE sites in 2 regions to participate in the pilot.		x				
RAP Pilot: Apprenticeship pilot applications open.			x	x	x	
Implement Wellness Project				x	x	
Data Integration: Meet with OCFS and NY Works for Children (CUNY PDI) to collectively identify vendor and to secure contract.	x	x	x			
Aspire Registry Enhancement: Meet with NY Works for Children (CUNY PDI) to begin project and identify vendor to secure contract.	x	x	x			
Aspire Registry Enhancement: Collect feedback from the field to develop enhancements.			x			
Data Integration: complete.					x	
Aspire Registry Enhancement complete.					x	
Adopting Mental Health Culture: Identify and convene ECE providers and families to explore conditions to support mental health culture in ECE.	x					
ACTIVITY 5: Support Program Quality Improvements						
Pyramid Model Expansion: Hire Pyramid Model Implementation Coaches who represent communities they serve to support strategic expansion.			x	x	x	x
Pyramid Model Expansion: Partner with Community Schools to implement Pyramid Model in prekindergarten programs.				x	x	x
Pyramid Model Expansion: Recruit parents who complete Positive Solutions for Families trainings to become parent facilitators in their districts.			x	x	x	x
Pyramid Model Data Improvement: Identify vendor and secure contract to improve collection of family demographics in PIDS.			x			
Pyramid Model Data Improvement: Identify vendor and secure contract to include family feedback mechanism to incorporate into PIDS.			x			
Pyramid Model Impact Study: Identify vendor and secure contract for study.						
ACTIVITY 6: Subgrants to Enhance Quality						
UID at Birth: Convene state agency stakeholders and families to examine the feasibility of assigning a UID at birth.	x					
UID at Birth: Identify vendor and secure contract for research organization to explore feasibility of assigning UID.	x	x				
Rural Child Care (RCCI) Networks: Identify vendor and secure contract to lead the implementation of collective impact rural child care project.	x	x				
RCCI Networks: Work with vendor to identify 5 rural communities to participate.		x				
RCCI Network: Conduct quarterly collective impact in-person meetings.		x	x	x	x	x
RCCI Network: Provide quarterly collective impact trainings with participating communities.		x	x	x	x	x
RCCI Network: Create Rural Child Care Blueprint to Success.						x
EHSCCP: In RCCI Network communities, identify interest in creating EHSCCP. Support HS to EHS conversion.		x	x	x	x	x
EHSCCP: Hire EHS Access Coordinator to support sustainability.			x			
BONUS OPTIONS:						
Workforce Pay: Convene ECE stakeholders including OCFS and NY Works for Children to revise the current Career Ladder.		x				
Policy Recommendations: Partner with ECE stakeholders and ECAC to use updated NA, revised Career Ladder, RAP Pilot feedback, and Head Start guidance to create policy recommendations.			x			
Policy Recommendations: complete.			x	x		
Virtual Chats: Conduct virtual chats with family child care providers to increase awareness of health care options.		x				
Telehealth Services: Partner with OCFS, DOH, NY Works for Children, CRRs, & unions.		x				

Developmental Screening Tool: Identify vendor and secure contract for research organization to explore development and build tool.		x				
Developmental Screening Tool: Partner with ECCS, LTSAE Ambassadors, UCEDDs, HMG-NY, FQHCs, DOH, families to inform tool development.			x			
Developmental Screening Tool: Explore, create, and test tool.			x	x	x	
Program Performance Evaluation Plan (PPEP)						
Identify vendor and secure contract to develop and implement PPEP.	x					
Identify metrics to evaluate each NYSB5 project.		x	x	x	x	
Create data repository and data tracking and visualization mechanism.			x			
Provide quarterly data reports and modify projects and metrics using CQI.			x	x	x	x
Provide annual PPEP evaluation.				x	x	x

Organizational Capacity

Team Experience and Expertise: CCF plays a unique role in state government. Pursuant to its authorizing legislation, CCF is responsible for coordinating the state’s human services, education, and health agencies. CCF embodies the spirit of collaboration, promoting creative cross-system approaches to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of interagency service delivery and consider new and emerging approaches to advance aligned policies and practices to improve the well-being of New York’s children and families, especially its most vulnerable. Given CCF’s cross-sector reach and direct connection to the Office of the Governor, the agency is well-positioned to influence state-level policies and practices in collaboration with other state agencies. Further, CCF’s successful assessment, planning, and implementation of prior NYSB5 grants demonstrate the organizational capacity to meet and exceed the goals of this grant. CCF also administers many other federal grants and projects that demonstrate the capacity to develop, implement, manage, and sustain complex cross-system changes and work collaboratively with partners. CCF is home to the NYS Head Start Collaboration Project, the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), the federal Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems: Prenatal-to-Three Health Integration Project, the NY Pyramid Model State Leadership Team, and the Kids’ Well-being Indicators Clearinghouse. In addition, CCF co-convenes the Strong Starts Court Initiative and participates in many cross-agency initiatives such as the NYS Parenting Education Partnership, Early Head Start

Access grant, NYS Oral Health Coalition, DOH’s Obesity Prevention in Child Care Partnership, Early Intervention Coordinating Council, NYS Impact Project: Quality Child Care, and Statewide Home Visiting Coalition. The NYSB5 Organizational Chart (File 2) illustrates the responsibilities and roles of NYSB5 staff and partners.

Organizational Capacity: The organizational capacity of CCF and partnering organizations, including relevant experience and expertise are detailed in Table 6.

Table 6: NYS NYSB5 CCF Team and Partner Organizational Capacity

CCF Staff	Relevant Experience	Responsibilities
Vanessa Threatte, MS.Ed. Executive Director	25+ years' experience in education, including leading statewide Cradle to Career collective impact initiative.	Leading CCF, providing NYSB5 vision, developing & communicating policy recommendations directly to the Governor’s Office. CPRAC & CCATF member.
Elana Marton, JD Deputy Director & Counsel	30+ years human services’ policy & legal experience & overseeing administration of federal grants.	Reviewing, analyzing, & drafting regulations & laws to improve interagency alignment. Administering & managing NYSB5 & other early childhood grants.
Patricia Persell, MS.Ed. Early Childhood Policy Director, NY Head Start Collaboration Director	30 + years of experience in early childhood & Head Start, including facilitating collaboration among diverse stakeholders.	Coordinating Head Start collaboration & ECAC activities with NYSB5 & developing, implementing, & managing early childhood team & projects. ECAC Co-Chair. CCF Executive Director CCATF designee.
Kristin Weller, MS NYSB5 Project Director	25+ years of experience in human services. Successfully managed NYSB5 grants since 2019 & ECCS grant.	Overall responsibility for administering, developing, implementing, managing, reporting & evaluating NYSB5 Grants.
Nancy Hampton, BS Family & Community Engagement Liaison	20+ years of experience in early intervention & special education. Led 40+ statewide kindergarten transition activities with prior NYSB5 grants.	Leading NYSB5 statewide outreach, sharing resources & kindergarten transition toolkit. for parents, school districts, & ECE providers.
Robert Gutierrez NYSB5/ECAC Coordinator & Project Assistant	Coordinates ECAC & its 5 committees. Worked as a prekindergarten teacher & in other positions teaching young children (aquatic instructor).	Supporting the work of the early childhood team at CCF & leading communications with NYSB5 partners.
Amanda Briell, BA NYSB5 Workforce TA/Peer Learning Coordinator	10+ years of experience in the early childhood field, working in direct services with infants & toddlers.	Leading & coordinating ECE workforce development activities for the MDS.
Stephanie Woodard, MBA Fiscal Policy Analyst	35+ years of experience in NY government, managing human services budgets & developing & evaluating fiscal policies.	Developing plans to expand & strengthen ECCE financing & sustain NYSB5 activities.
Yan Wu, PhD NY KIDS COUNT Director	20+ years of experience in policy & data analysis.	Collecting, analyzing, & mapping early childhood & population health data for NYSB5.

Ian Suleski, MS Pyramid Model Data Manager & Analyst	10 years of experience in data management & analysis, 4 years of experience managing the Pyramid Model Implementation Data System.	Analyzing Pyramid Model & NYSB5 performance evaluation data & developing sustainability plans for NYSB5 projects. Managing the Statewide Pyramid Model Implementation Data System.
Pamela Maxstadt, MS Increasing EHS Access Coordinator	19 years of experience as an Early Head Start & Head Start manager.	Leading Zero to Three grant (until June 2025) to increase access to EHS in NY. Providing Head Start to EHS conversion support for programs, & leading parent focus groups.
Ehasuyi Gomes, MPH ECCS & Developmental Health Coordinator	Public health professional with experience developing & implementing quality improvement projects & data analysis.	Leads the implementation of the ECCS project & supports statewide developmental health initiatives including a focus on infant & early childhood mental health.
Partners/Organizations	Name & Role	Responsibilities
NYS Governor's Office	Alyson Grant Tarek, MPA Assistant Secretary for Human Services & Mental Hygiene	Overseeing the Governor's human services & mental hygiene policy portfolio. Co-chair of the Governor's Child Poverty Reduction Advisory Council.
	Kim Hill, B.S. Chief Disability Officer	Facilitating services for people with disabilities, as well as improving diversity, equity, & inclusion for people with disabilities.
	Julissa Gutierrez, MPA Chief Diversity Officer	Designing & implementing statewide programs & initiatives to increase diversity
City University of New York, Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (CUNY)	Dona Anderson, MPA Executive Director	Focusing on workforce & career development, & leader of operations planning, implementation, budget, & human resources. Co-chair of the ECAC. CCATF member.
	Claudine Campanelli, Ed.D Senior Director B5 Career Centers	Leading the statewide B5 Career Centers & expanding ECE higher education initiatives.
	Leslie Capello, MA Senior Director QUALITYstarsNY	Leading the NYS QRIS in the 10 economic regions statewide.
	Olivia Lasala Senior Director, Aspire Registry NY Works for Children	Overseeing the NYS early childhood professional development system & the Workforce Registry (Aspire).
NYS Department of Health (DOH)	Kirsten Siegenthaler, Ph.D. Director, Division of Family Health Title V	Overseeing Maternal Child Health & IDEA Part C programs & making connections to NYSB5 activities.
	Raymond Pierce, BA Director, Bureau of Early Intervention	Overseeing statewide EI implementation & connecting with NYSB5 work. ECAC member.
	April Hamilton, Deputy Director, Division of Program Development & Management Office of Health Insurance Programs (Medicaid)	Identifying opportunities for Medicaid to better support young children & families in partnership with CCF.

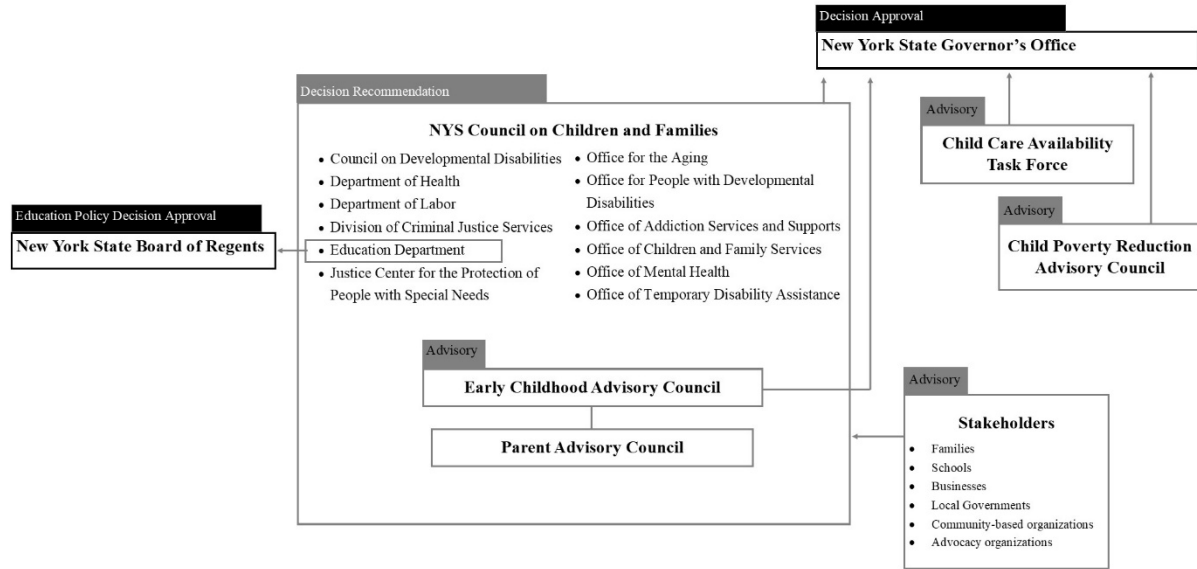
NYS Department of Labor (DOL)	Chris Pinheiro Director, Apprenticeship & Infrastructure, Division of Employment & Workforce Solutions	Provide regulatory oversight of apprenticeship programs & the development of new apprenticeship titles.
NYS Department of State, Office for New Americans (ONA)	Laura Gonzalez-Murphy, Ph.D. Executive Director	Supporting new American families in NY & partnering with CCF to further efforts. ECAC member.
	Cynthia Stewart, MS Director, Ramirez-June Initiative	Supporting new American individuals & families in NY who have intellectual & development disabilities.
NYS Education Department (SED)	Erik Sweet, M.Ed. Director, Office of Early Learning	Overseeing State-Administered prekindergarten programs. Coordinating prekindergarten w/ECE MDS. ECAC member.
	Suzanne Bolling, JD Supervisor, Office of Special Education, 619 Coordinator	Supporting transitions from EI to CPSE, IDEA Part B, Part B programs & services, & inclusion for children with disabilities. ECAC member.
	Jane Fronheiser, MS Coordinator, State McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act	Supporting students (prekindergarten -12 th grade) experiencing homelessness. ECAC member.
	Lauren Moore, MLIS Director, Division of Library Development	Leading library & museum development for the state. ECAC member.
NYS Office of Addiction Services & Supports (OASAS)	Patricia Zuber-Wilson, BA Associate Commissioner, Division of Prevention Services	Coordinating parenting programs with NYSB5 activities. EICC member.
NYS Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS)	Nora Yates, MA, MS Deputy Commissioner, Division of Child Care Services, CCDF Administrator	Providing OCFS support of NYSB5 activities & coordinating efforts with CCF & grant partners to improve child care & 2-generation approaches to serving families. ECAC & CCATF member.
	Gail Geohagen-Pratt, BS Deputy Commissioner, Division of Child Welfare & Community Services	Strengthening & connecting child welfare to other services for families with young children.
	Tim Bromirski Director, Bureau of Youth Academics & Scholarship Division of Juvenile Justice & Opportunities for Youth	Providing leadership to facilitate opportunities for teaching positive parenting practices to young parents who are incarcerated in OCFS (JJ) facilities.
NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH)	Bonnie Catlin, LCSW Director for Strategic Clinical Solutions, Office of Prevention & Health Initiatives	Overseeing mental health & trauma-informed care for families & children & connecting to NYSB5 activities. ECAC & EICC member.
NYS Office of Temporary & Disability Assistance (OTDA)	Valerie Figueroa, MPA Deputy Commissioner Employment & Income Support	Distributing early childhood resources to local departments of social services.

State University of New York (SUNY)	Lauren Lankau Director of Apprenticeship & Healthcare, SCCC Franca Armstrong Executive Director, Apprenticeship Programs, MVCC Salvatore Alougia Assistant Director of Recruitment, ESU	Providing support for the Registered Apprenticeship Program.
Pyramid Model Consortium	Robert Corso, PhD Executive Director	Providing national technical assistance on Pyramid Implementation to support social – emotional development & reduce suspensions/expulsions of young children.

Decision-Making: The CCF Executive Director is responsible for leading CCF, defining vision for PDGB5 and making policy and programmatic recommendations directly to the Governor’s Office. The **NYSB5 Project Director** reports directly to the executive director and is advised by a cross-sector team of ECE experts/partners (as described in this application).

Meaningful Governance and Stakeholder Engagement: The CCF Executive Director and CCF early childhood team work closely with the CCDF Administrator; IDEA Part C and Part B, section 619 coordinators; MIECHV, other public benefits programs (TANF, SNAP, WIC, Medicaid), State-administered prekindergarten; and many other leaders in the early childhood field. Of note, as well, the CCF Executive Director is a member of CPRAC, and the NYS Head Start Collaboration Director leads the CCF early childhood team, is the co-chair of the ECAC, and participates (as a designee) on the CCATF.

Figure 1. NYSB5 Decision-Making Diagram



Stakeholder Involvement: NYSB5 partners have participated in system-building activities in the past NYSB5 grants and along with more family representatives and other new partners will support and advise NYSB5 Renewal Grant activities. NYSB5 stakeholder meetings have since expanded to include presentations on other early childhood initiatives led by CCF (ECCS, Head Start, etc.) and the group has grown exponentially to a distribution of close to 300 people, with regular attendance by a majority of members. Stakeholders from across the birth through five system participated and have been invited to present on state and local initiatives: health, mental health, early intervention, ECE, preschool special education, prekindergarten to grade 3, home visiting, social services, higher education, labor, parent advocacy, and teacher preparation. Frontline workers and parents are represented, too, including an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Director, a migrant and seasonal Head Start program director, and the director of the Office of New Americans. Both CCF and the ECAC have committed to addressing social justice and racial equity, as a process and a goal, by actively, critically, and continuously evaluating and making policy and

practice recommendations to disrupt and dismantle systemic inequities due to race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, legal status, and family structure.

Balance of Unobligated NYSB5 Funding: At the time of this application, the amount of unobligated funding for the NYSB5 Planning Grant is: \$437,445, which is less than 25% (or \$1 million) of the current \$4 million award. Plans for funds include holding a Statewide Kindergarten Transition Summit, to be accompanied by the creation and distribution of a Kindergarten Transition Toolkit, in partnership with NYSED, and the development of an insert to accompany birth certificates and provide information on an online *Baby Bundle* with resources for new parents.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds and Activities

Framework for Governance, Policies, Procedures, Risk Management Systems: CCF/OCFS complies with the federal regulations set forth in 45 CFR Part 75 for all U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' awards and all NYS OCFS and NYS Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) policies, regulations, and laws governing fiscal operations. (Note: CCF's fiscal and administrative operations are handled by OCFS.) The OCFS bureaus that administer these responsibilities include Audit and Quality Control (AQC), Bureau of Budget Management (BBM), Bureau of Financial Operations (BFO), and Bureau of Contract Management (BCM), and Special Counsel for Ethics, Risk and Compliance. The OSC is responsible for ensuring that taxpayer money is used effectively and efficiently. OCFS/CCF are responsible for grant implementation, overseeing NYSB5 grant program staff and activities, developing and monitoring spending approvals, submitting, and providing spending justifications, developing, and monitoring budgets in accordance with grant, state, and federal requirements. BBM provides budgetary services for federal funds and acts as the liaison to the NYS Division of the Budget (DOB). A part-time **Contract Manager** will support NYSB5 procurements. BFO directs and coordinates all financial operations for OCFS/CCF, which

includes the collection of all revenues, processing of vouchers, payment to vendors, encumbrance documents, journal transfers, and deposits to OSC. BFO responds to payment inquiries from vendors and serves as the agency's liaison with OSC on fiscal transactions, it also prepares and files all federal claims, reconciles federal grant awards, and maintains the agency's federal grant plans. The Cost Allocation Unit in BFO is responsible for the proper claiming of OCFS administrative costs. The OCFS Federal Reporting and Grants Management Unit prepares and files Federal Financial Reports and reconciles all federal grant awards, monitors the receipt of federal funds, tracks expenditures to ensure that sufficient funding is available, and monitors and reports on the non-federal match. In addition, this unit is responsible for identifying the sources of federal revenue, working with BBM and OSC to ensure monies are deposited appropriately and timely, and coordinating activities and providing required documentation for the Annual Single State Audit. BCM is responsible for coordinating contracting and purchasing activities, developing requests for proposals, contracts, contract approval, and tracking contract encumbrances/expenditures, voucher auditing, and payments. The OCFS/CCF staff (Table 7) communicate regularly and meet quarterly to ensure proper grant administration and oversight. See File 2 for additional details on fiscal control and accountability.

Table 7: Oversight of Federal Funds

Agency	Key Staff and Oversight Responsibilities	Standards
CCF	Kristin Weller, NYSB5 Project Director: Oversight of NYSB5 activities including spending approvals and justifications, budget monitoring and amendments.	Program Management, Contract Monitoring and Performance Reporting
CCF	Elana Marton, Deputy Director and Counsel: Ethics Officer; provides guidance on records requests/reviews.	Ethics and Compliance, Record Retention, and Access
CCF	Stephanie Woodard, Fiscal Policy Analyst: Review and submission of vendor invoices, contract development, and non-federal match reporting.	Fiscal Management, Procurement, and Contractor Monitoring
OCFS BCM	Michelle Scurry, Contract Management Specialist: Contract and procurement compliance.	Procurement
OCFS BCM	Kevin Sweet, Assistant Director: Purchasing compliance and claim review.	Purchasing
OCFS BBM	Victor McLeod, Budget Analyst: Program budget oversight and monitoring, spending approval from OSC.	Budget oversight

OCFS BFO	Mala Boolchandani, Director of Financial Administration: Submission of federal reporting and grants management.	Financial Monitoring and Reporting
OCFS AQC	Bonnie Hahn: Monitoring of grant implementation.	Monitoring and Reporting, Remedies for Noncompliance

Program Performance Evaluation Plan

The Program Performance Evaluation Plan (PPEP) will be developed once the NA and SP have been completed. The NYSB5 grants awarded to CCF over the past 5 years have included a PPEP component and will be referenced as a new plan is developed, too. The updated NA will inform the SP and the PPEP will evaluate key grant activities (including the SP) by developing qualitative and quantitative data points and outcome measures. In addition, a CQI framework will be used to apply process adjustments and shift metrics as needed. A research organization will be identified to work collaboratively with CCF to design an evaluation that outlines each of the grant activities, identifies data collection methods and tools, conducts data analysis, and reports findings. Evaluation design methods may include the development of plain language and translated community surveys, translated focus groups protocols, data sharing agreements, process measures, measures of impact, and cost measures/return on investment. As in previous NYSB5 PPEP iterations, a data collection, analysis, integration, and visualization tool will be used to identify NYSB5 activity data trends. The selected research organization will have experience working collaboratively with the stakeholder groups identified on p. 55 working with diverse communities and analyzing data using an equity framework. Key to collecting abundant and clean data will be the researchers track record of working with community-based organizations and demonstrated capacity for leveraging community assets to support local recruitment and participation. CCF and the selected research organization will work with federal TA providers. Biannual PPEP progress will be used to make course corrections for NYSB5 activities. Progress updates also will be shared

widely with a cross-sector audience as part of the CQI process and to underscore our collective action approach and commitment to achieving shared goals.

Project Sustainability Plan

New York will use NYSB5 Renewal funding strategically to ensure that the momentum and learning from maximizing family participation and engagement in the early childhood system, support for the workforce, and quality improvements developed and strengthened by this grant are sustained after funding ends. To ensure this occurs, the CCF Fiscal Policy Analyst will identify and foster grant resources being braided and maximized. Highlights of sustainable activities include:

- Targeted updates to the state’s NA to inform practices and ensure the availability of high-quality MDS services in all areas of New York, especially those currently underserved.
- An updated SP that will help guide the development of a stronger mixed delivery system.
- Increased parent voice and ongoing engagement to inform the state’s early childhood system.
- Inclusion of equity as a key driver, by removing barriers and bias and increasing access to high-quality ECE programs for traditionally underserved children.
- Expanded opportunities for early childhood workforce advancement and support for wellness.
- Increased awareness and enhanced access to early developmental health and community services for infants and toddlers.
- Strengthened social and emotional supports for young children and their caregivers and reduction/elimination of suspension and expulsion of young children. Creation of a recurring state budget appropriation to support Pyramid Model implementation across the MDS.

- More coordination between data systems to better track children and programs to inform policy decisions and improve child outcomes.
- Augmented and sustained impact of NYSB5 and other cross-sector initiatives, by braiding and blending funds and using a collective impact approach to create a comprehensive and aligned early childhood system to support young children and families most efficiently and effectively.

In sum, with the strategic use of this award as set forth in this application, the NYS Council on Children and Families is confident that expanded access to high-quality, equitable, comprehensive early childhood programs and services will be available to support underserved children and their families, ensuring that all young children in NYS are prepared to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

Line-Item Budget and Narrative

The NYSB5 Renewal Grant budget request for the first budget period, 9/30/24 - 9/29/25 is \$11,000,000. Section One includes object class categories personnel, fringe, equipment, supplies, contracts, other and travel. The travel includes required travel costs for four individuals to attend a three-day meeting in Washington, DC. Section Two provides budget details for the planned grant activities organized by activity type and includes details specific to necessity and reasonableness. Also included is the amount to support technical assistance and the performance evaluation plan. CCF is using an Indirect de minimis rate of .0729. The approved non-Federal 30% match is included and will be available to meet the annual cost-sharing requirement for each of the three grant years. The match is current state funding that supports QUALITYstarsNY, the state's tiered quality rating and improvement system (see File 2).

Bonus Option 1: Increase Workforce Pay and Benefits.

History of inequities: From February 2020 through July 2022, nationally, nearly 90,000 providers left the child care industry⁶⁸ and despite an increased emphasis on professionalizing the field, there has not been an emphasis on raising workforce compensation.⁶⁹ Child Trends’ research into the history of inequitable compensation of the workforce illuminates the systemic racism and oppression that have undermined the field and impeded equity.⁷⁰ Research conducted by Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations (ILR) Co-Lab (2024) found that people are not willing to work in child care for minimum wage and that low wages contribute to the lack of esteem for the field and public perception is incongruent with the actual contribution of the field.⁷¹ The gender and pay gaps are stark with most child care educators being women (94%) and disproportionately women of color (40%), who are paid such low wages that 12% live below the federal poverty level. Chronic low pay and high turnover undermine the state’s ability to recruit a linguistically, culturally, ethnically diverse workforce and provide high-quality early childhood programming. To mitigate the flight of educators from the field, and recruit professionals, CCF will work with statewide partners to develop: 1) an expanded career ladder with accompanying policy recommendations to implement equitable and fair pay scales; and 2) opportunities to facilitate access to health benefits for family child care providers.

Expanded Career Ladder: NY Works for Children, the state’s integrated professional development system for the early childhood and school-age workforce, has a Career Ladder that is based on formal education, with career progression based on experience and credentials.⁷² The current

⁶⁸ LoveJoy, Anna. *Top 5 Actions Governors Can Take to Address the Child Care Shortage*. Center for American Progress (February 23, 2023).

⁶⁹ *Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education*” at *NAP.edu*. n.d. *Nap.nationalacademies.org*. Accessed July 8, 2024. <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/read/24984/chapter/5#88>.

⁷⁰ *Mary Pauper: A Historical Exploration of Early Care and Education Compensation, Policy, and Solutions* (2022).
⁷¹ *Ibid* at 39.

⁷² *Career Ladder | New York Works for Children*. n.d. www.nyworksforchildren.org. Accessed July 8, 2024.
<https://www.nyworksforchildren.org/professional-growth/career-ladder>.

Career Ladder helps many ECE providers plan their professional goals, including those ECE providers working in licensed family child care, center-based care, prekindergarten, early childhood special education programs, Head Start, and Early Intervention. With NYSB5 support, the plan is to create an expanded career ladder that includes the continuum of ECE occupations and provides enhanced opportunities to recognize experience and competencies, so that the ECE Career Ladder recognizes unique professional training, experiential, and educational accomplishments.

Evaluating Success: The modification of the Career Ladder will be the product of stakeholder input and subject matter experts that include parents and providers. Success will be assessed by the adoption of a new and expanded Career Ladder and qualitative process measures to be tracked. Promotion of the ladder will be accomplished by wide distribution and discussion with the ECE field, including with higher education, the Aspire Registry, and Early Childhood Career Centers.

Equitable Compensation: Another concrete step NYS will take to support the quality and sustainability of the ECE workforce is the development of policy recommendations to support equitable compensation. These recommendation will be well-grounded in: the revised and inclusive ECE Career Ladder; data from the NYSB5 funded 2024 Pay Parity report; the most recent Head Start Notice of Proposed Rule Making that speaks to implementation of salary scales comparable to similar positions in local public schools; and MIT’s living wage calculator that shows the living wage for an adult with one child is \$41.02 per hour compared to the NYS ECE average hourly wage of \$15.82.⁷³ In addition, the NYS RAP expansion pilot will develop salary scales for participating sites and incorporate timely feedback from the field (p. 28). Findings will

⁷³ *Child Care in NYS*. NYS DOL (2023). Accessed July 8, 2024. <https://dol.ny.gov/child-care-new-york-State>. HHS-2024-ACF-ECD-TP-0055 NYS Council on Children and Families PDGB5 Renewal Grant

support the development of policy recommendations to achieve a livable wage for the ECE workforce and pay parity within early childhood education.

Evaluating Success: While the ultimate goal is to have equal and fair pay for equal work in the early childhood field, the first step in achieving this goal will be to have a plan to present to policymakers. In outyears, success will be measured by a more stable early childhood workforce that is equitably and adequately compensated. Achieving ECE policy change will occur in partnership with CCF's state agency partners (OCFS, NYSED) as well as the Early Care and Learning Council, CRRs, NY Works for Children, and NY Association for the Education of Young Children, and families.

Increasing Access to Benefits: A recent survey of the ECE workforce in NY found that only one-third have health insurance provided by their employers.⁷⁴ To increase awareness of health insurance options within the DOH Health Care Marketplace for family child care providers, CCF in partnership with DOH, ECE unions and CRRs, will coordinate virtual health care chats. Outreach will be extended to all 10,000 family child care providers. An ancillary but not insignificant anticipated outcome of these virtual chats will be the creation of a peer support network. Furthermore, to support the health and well-being of ECE professionals, CCF will connect with ECE providers as indicated in the NA to explore their interest and need for free, short-term telehealth and mental health services and pilot approaches to fill gaps in current coverage.

Evaluating Success: The increasing access to benefits project will be evaluated for impact by using a brief survey to get feedback on whether the virtual chats increased awareness about health care

⁷⁴ CCF. *Pay Parity Study*. Early Childhood Professional Development Institute, CUNY (2023).
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options and impacted their intention to remain in the field. Similarly, a brief survey will be used to gather feedback on the impact of the peer support network created by the virtual chats.

Bonus Option 2: Supporting Social-Emotional Development and Mental Health

Developing Systems to Ensure Early Childhood Screening for Social, Emotional, and Developmental Needs and Connections to Providers: In 2022, the NYS Medicaid program instituted separate billing (\$15.60) for developmental screening during a child’s first three years. While the reimbursement for the service remains low, it represented a step towards acknowledging its importance. Further, the 2024 Medicaid Quality Measure DEV-CH (developmental screening in the first three years of life) requires providers to perform developmental screenings for children using a validated tool.⁷⁵ CCF hears regularly from the field about the variability in screening practices and the screens used (with Ages and Stages Questionnaire being popular, but many using the free Survey of Well-being of Young Children). Specifically, some programs, including Head Start and home visiting, require screening and developmental screenings are regularly conducted by pediatricians. In addition, Help Me Grow (now in five regions of NYS) conducts screenings. More recently, NYS OMH has made significant investments in the Healthy Steps program that promotes and supports healthy development. Despite these efforts, NYS ranks last in the country with respect to parents reporting their children receiving a developmental screen.⁷⁶

To support an increase in reported screening rates, NYSB5 funds will be used to build a free online, accessible, culturally relevant, reliable, and valid developmental screening tool. The tool will be built with parents and caregivers in front of mind and be accessible to non-clinical service

⁷⁵ Perfect, Pixel. n.d. *Developmental Screening | Medicaid Quality Improvement Projects*. Medicaid.afmc.org. Accessed July 8, 2024. <https://medicaid.afmc.org/medicaid-quality-improvement/developmental-screening>.

⁷⁶ NSCH 2022: *NPM 6: Percent of Children Who Received a Developmental Screening Using a Parent-Completed Screening Tool in the Past Year, All States (2022)*. www.childhealthdata.org. Accessed July 8, 2024. <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/allStates?q=10011>.

providers to support high quality early care and learning environments and align with CCDF recommendations that all young children be developmentally screened. The development of the tool also provides the opportunity to collaborate and leverage the expertise of ECCS stakeholders (e.g., *LTSAE* Ambassadors, University Centers for Excellence and Developmental Disabilities, and Help Me Grow-NY), and focus group feedback from parents, the early care and learning community, and physicians. In addition to validating the tool with children and families from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds, and the disabled community, the tool will be reviewed by the ECAC Equity Review Board, established in 2022, to ensure equity is factored into all early childhood practices. It will also complement and support the NYS DOH Prevention Agenda, which recognizes that the health of women, infants, children, and their families are fundamental to population health.

Measuring Success: Progress will be measured by qualitative process measures related to the development of the tool. As the tool is developed, the reliability and validity will be rigorously researched using an equity lens. Subsequent increases in reliability and validity will be tracked as quantitative measures. After launch, CCF will measure unique administration of the tool, assess an increase in referrals to EI, and conduct a brief efficacy survey with parents/providers to inform the project and improvements in early identification. Results of the evaluation of the tool will be shared with NYSB5 partners, other policymakers, and educators.

In sum, this NYSB5 grant provides the opportunity to leverage and scale lessons learned from prior NYSB5 grants and other early childhood initiatives to make focused investments in the early childhood workforce and to fortify the state's mixed delivery system to prepare all young children, especially those who have been systemically underserved, to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

