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## Project Summary

**Title:** New Hampshire's Collective Vision for Quality Early Childhood Care and Education

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### Abstract

For many children and their families, New Hampshire is a great state in which to grow up and live. The Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count report for 2018 ranked NH first in the nation overall in key areas of child well-being. While we are proud of our state's ranking, the averages mask a very real and persistent problem in NH, the disparate access to opportunity and differential outcomes for children based on where they live and how much money their parents earn. While the overall poverty rates in NH are among the lowest in the nation, in Manchester, the state's largest urban center, 1300 children under age 6 live at or below 50% poverty level. In Coös County, the state's most rural and geographically remote region, 1 in 5 children live in poverty and over half of the population qualify for free or reduced lunch. Moreover, at present, less than half of the children who receive NH Child Care Scholarships Program funds are enrolled in facilities participating in the higher tiers of NH's quality rating and improvement system. NH also faces one of the worst opioid crises in the country, ranking third-highest in overdose death rates. The effects of the crisis are evident every day in our early childhood programs and services throughout the state. Concurrent with the rise in opioid use, there is a 21% increase in child abuse and neglect investigations. While some progress has been made, the state has a long way to go in creating a comprehensive, coordinated early childhood system.

The Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five provides the state the much-needed opportunity to better understand our current early childhood system and use those data to strengthen it, better address the needs of vulnerable young children and their families and help build a solid foundation to improve outcomes for our children, families, schools and communities. In particular funding will provide the opportunity to use data on child and family and systemic needs to inform a strategic plan to create a comprehensive coordinated early childhood care and education system to achieve our vision that all children and families in New Hampshire are healthy, learning and thriving now and in the future. This grant application describes the state's plan to: (1) achieve greater coordination of programs and services including braiding/blending of funding and a plan for strengthening data integration; (2) strengthen regional infrastructure better aligned with state governance; (3) improve parent leadership and engagement capacity; (4) increase provider and parent knowledge of the early childhood care and education system to facilitate access and smooth transitions among programs and services; (5) enhance infrastructure for early childhood care and education professional development; (6) improve the current system for evaluating and enhancing program quality; and (7) expand our statewide public awareness campaign on the importance of early childhood and launch a new campaign for parents on the "serve and return" interactions with their young children.

**(A) Objectives and Expected Outcomes**

If we want New Hampshire's future to be in good hands, we need to develop a next generation who can lead our communities and grow our economy. Research demonstrates that the best way to do this is to provide children with stable, responsive relationships and experiences in early childhood – conditions that literally build the architecture of children's brains. Ensuring we can achieve this throughout the state, for all children, requires a coordinated system of early childhood care and education.

For many children and their families, New Hampshire is a great state in which to grow up and live. We are proud that the Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count report for 2018 ranked NH first in the nation overall, second in both health and family and community, third in economic well-being, and fourth in education. Yet, Casey's indicators do not tell the full story in NH. Data shows that our youngest children are increasingly living in poverty. NH faces one of the worst opioid crises in the country, the effects of which are evident every day in our early childhood programs and services. There is no state-funded public preschool available for families, there are significant gaps in services, and we have a long way to go in creating a comprehensive, coordinated early childhood system, including the capacity to integrate early childhood data among state programs. The Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five funding will provide NH with the much-needed opportunity to strengthen our early childhood system, target the needs of vulnerable young children and their families and help build a solid foundation to improve outcomes for our children, families, schools, and communities.

To improve child outcomes and achieve our collective vision that all young children and their families are healthy, learning and thriving, New Hampshire proposes the following short-term outcomes: (1) early childhood governance has greater alignment including braiding/blending of funding and a plan for strengthening data integration; (2) the state's regional infrastructure is strengthened and is better aligned with state governance; (3) parent leadership and engagement capacity is increased; (4) providers' and parents' knowledge of the early childhood care and education system is increased to facilitate access and smooth transitions

among programs and services; (5) an infrastructure for early childhood care and education professional development is created through the alignment of existing systems and expansion where gaps exist; (6) an enhanced system for evaluating and enhancing program quality is developed; and (7) a statewide public awareness campaign is launched.

### **(B) Mixed Delivery System Description and Vision Statement**

**(B-1) Vision Statement.** New Hampshire (NH) envisions that *all children and families are healthy, learning and thriving now and in the future; families have access to the supports and services they need for optimal development, including a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable multi-tiered system providing targeted as well as universal services.*

Families are their children’s most important teachers and critical facilitators of child health and well-being. By supporting families in ways that help them to understand and positively encourage their children’s development, engage in supportive serve and return interactions, and avoid and mitigate toxic stress, we can ensure children are on course for success in school and in life. By building broad capacity among New Hampshire families for these same activities, we can put children on a healthy course for success in school and in life. Three fundamental elements are critical in fostering this vision include: (1) developmental screening early and often to identify concerns and timely linkages to appropriate, needed services; (2) a well-coordinated and robust mixed delivery system to meet child and family needs; and (3) a “no wrong door” approach to services in which any door a family enters is the right door to connect them programs and services to nurture their children’s health, development, and well-being.

Because 70% of children under 6 in NH have all available caregivers in the workforce, ensuring that settings, where children are cared for when they are not with their families, are of quality is foundational to child success and to the future prosperity of the state. Data show that when this happens, child outcomes are better, and the return on investment for our communities is high. Every program and service that touches children’s lives must be of quality and well-coordinated with each other and every child and family, regardless of background or geography. Finally, NH needs the capacity to effectively measure program quality and integrate early

childhood data within and across agencies to create accountability, ensure efficiency and monitor and improve child and family outcomes. While the state has numerous challenges highlighted below in achieving this vision, there are also many recent positive developments on which a comprehensive, coordinated system can be built. Moreover, through the activities of this grant, the state will be able to bring together a diverse set of key partners and stakeholders, including families and community-based organizations, to develop a strategic plan that facilitates collaboration and coordination among existing programs of early childhood care and education (see Table H.1. for a list key partners and stakeholders).

**(B-2) NH Mixed Delivery System.** NH’s parents and caregivers dedicate themselves to their children each and every day, serving as their most important teachers. These primary caregivers are supported by a mixed delivery system of health, early learning, and family support services. In NH, delivery systems for early childhood care and education, it includes a broad ecosystem of government, schools, and non-governmental organizations, including but not limited to public health departments, hospitals, and non-profit and faith-based organizations serving children and families. Equally as important are the families of young children themselves, who must be supported to give their children the best possible start. With regards to state governance, currently, early childhood programs are housed within numerous governmental divisions across the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Education (DOE). DHHS and DOE organizational charts are provided in the Appendices.

Professional development opportunities for NH’s early childhood workforce are largely siloed by department and funding stream at the state level, making it difficult to coordinate professional development requirements, opportunities, and evaluation. Limited coordination at the state level limits the ability of local educational agencies, schools and early childhood programs to ensure that the services they provide are equitable, cost-effective, and responsive to the diverse need of NH’s families.

**(B-3) Progress and Successes.** NH’s commitment to early childhood is reflected in Governor and First Lady Sununu’s inauguration of the Collective Vision for NH Early

Childhood Education series of meetings in August of 2017. The three gatherings to date have convened educators, civic organizations, elected officials, business leaders, and philanthropists from across the state to lay a foundation for addressing the diverse challenges facing our children by beginning to create a strategic course of action. The vision outlined in the state's plan reflects the spirit of the Governor and First Lady's collaborative vision to address the grand challenge of promoting early opportunity for families and children across NH. Governor Sununu's letter designating the University of New Hampshire as the state entity that will have responsibility for execution of this grant is provided in the Appendices, as is a letter of support from DHHS Commissioner Jeffery Meyers and DOE Commissioner Frank Edelblut.

**State Governance.** NH has begun to address governance of publicly funded early childhood programs to examine how they might be better coordinated to meet child and family needs. In the Spring and Summer of 2018, the governor appointed early childhood advisory council, Spark NH, led a process to evaluate early childhood governance across government programs. The group's initial report (to be completed in November 2018) will form the foundation of further work to be done in the strategic planning process as a part of this grant.

Initial efforts at reorganization, coordination, and integration have already begun at both DHHS and DOE, organized with a prevention focus. Deputy Commissioners from both departments are leading an early childhood integration team and both state agencies plan to continue their collaborative work to identify limitations in the current mixed delivery system and develop a unified systematic plan for improving growth and success among NH's children, strengthening the capacity of parents and primary caregivers to foster their children's health, development, and well-being, linking families to the full range of services they may need, enhancing the quality of current programs, and facilitating a stronger partnership between early childhood care and education and school systems.

**Early Childhood Advisory Council.** The Governor appointed early childhood advisory council for the state, Spark NH, has been engaging cross-sector early childhood stakeholders for eight years to promote a comprehensive, coordinated early childhood system across health, early

learning, and family support. Members of the Council, committees and task forces of Spark NH are drawn from across the state's public and private sectors and include professionals from health, early learning and family support from every level of the system, as well as, families. Spark NH has created a needs assessment and an interactive data tool to show the status of NH's young children and families and identify systemic gaps in the availability of services. In the policy realm, Spark NH created a Framework for Action with research-based early childhood policy priorities to support child and family wellness and success and a well-coordinated early childhood system. Stakeholder groups have developed recommendations for cross-sector early childhood professional competencies, developed a comprehensive early childhood professional development blueprint, and promoted a system-wide definition of quality early childhood programs and services for cross-sector use. They also created a cross-sector toolkit to highlight and facilitate collaboration in communities across the state. Additionally, using research-based public awareness tools, much progress has been made in helping leaders across the state to understand the importance of early childhood.

**State Initiatives.** There have been a number of positive developments in state and local initiatives and programs that will facilitate NH's success in achieving its vision. Recent work to better the quality of and access to early childhood programs makes the prospects for NH's children more hopeful, including: (1) creation and alignment of NH's Early Learning Standards and NH Kindergarten Readiness Indicators; (2) redesign of NH's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS); (3) support in the DHHS SFY20-21 budget for QRIS; (4) examination of the state's early childhood professional development system to identify opportunities for alignment between DHHS and DOE; (5) restoration in the SFY 18-19 biennium budget of previously reduced funds for the Child Care and Development Fund, Child Care Scholarship Program for employment-related child care, and quality initiatives; and (6) funding for full-day kindergarten for all families of NH with a mandate for play-based learning.

Additional state initiatives impacting NH's children and families include an enhanced focus on child abuse prevention, children's social-emotional and behavioral health, and

substance use treatment (particularly critical because NH has the second highest rate of opioid-related overdose deaths in the country). In recent years, NH became the 28th Pyramid Model State with the national Pyramid Model Consortium. A state leadership team is working to build a sustainable, state and local infrastructure for the implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of positive behavioral supports in early childhood programs throughout the state. The Pyramid Model state work, in collaboration with the DOE's federal iSocial (State Systematic Improvement and State Personnel Development Grant), focuses on the social-emotional development of young children in public schools and community early childhood programs. At the end of the DHHS MCH Section's 5-year Project LAUNCH grant this year, several key strategies to promote optimal child health are being sustained in both the target community (Manchester, NH) and at the state level. DHHS established a new Division of Behavioral Health, which includes the Children's Mental Health Bureau and has engaged in child welfare system transformation aimed at preventing child abuse through family support. The state is also leveraging state and federal Families First Prevention Act dollars to increase home visiting services, child care services, and parental assistance programs through the Division of Children, Youth and Families. Lastly, the recently awarded Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families (CCSPF) grant will pilot cross-agency collaboration to ensure that parents/guardians in two large NH communities (Lakes Region and Manchester) get the help they need to safely care for their children, including mental health and substance misuse treatment, home visiting and educational programs.

**Regional Initiatives.** At the regional and local level, as children enter kindergarten with more complex behavioral health issues, there is a growing understanding by local educational agencies (LEAs) of the need to look upstream and connect with early childhood care and education providers to ensure children's needs are met as early as possible. Many schools are creating formal connections with early learning providers in their districts, including coordinating professional development and transition easing activities. A number of LEAs have also begun to incorporate the use of the Pyramid Model leadership teams and practice-based



coaching in early learning settings both within school and in community settings. Further, many communities are working to increase developmental screening of children in partnership with the Watch Me Grow state developmental screening systems, as well as, providing early childhood care and education professionals first responders, early learning teachers, and police with trauma informed training.

**Philanthropic Support.** Several NH foundations are collaborating to strengthen the early childhood field. The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation has launched an initiative called New Hampshire Tomorrow committing to invest \$100 million over ten years in grants and scholarships to increase youth opportunity from cradle to career, including a focus on early childhood development as one of four targeted strategies. The New Hampshire Endowment for Health has also made a long-term commitment to early childhood development focused on supporting the early childhood field. The HNH Foundation (recently renamed the New Hampshire Children’s Health Foundation) has a long history of early childhood grant-making in the state. Several United Way organization have also made commitments across the state through support for local and regional early childhood care and education programs, as well as seeding a number of the NH regional early childhood coalitions.

**(B-4) Existing Legislation and Policies.** New Hampshire’s history of legislation and policies in the early childhood arena is an example of its strong commitment to children’s health, development, and learning. Table B.1 depicts key legislation in this area.

**Table B.1.** *Early childhood care and Education Legislation and Policies*

Legislation/Policy	Description of
1999. Credentialing of Personnel in Early Care and Education Program	Creation of the NH Early Childhood Professional Development System (RSA 170-E:50). Early Childhood Teachers – birth-grade 3 (Ed Admin Rules 507.18). Early Childhood Special Education Teachers – birth-grade 3 (Ed Admin Rules 507.39).
2005: Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System established	DHHS designed funds to provide quality incentives to programs that are “Licensed-Plus” and nationally accredited through the NH Child Care Licensing Unit
2006: Quality Early Learning Initiative (RSA 126-A:5 XV)	Raised the eligibility for child care subsidy from 190% of the federal poverty level to 250% of the FPL or parents whose

	children enroll in a licensed child care program.
2006: Fingerprinting added to background checks (RSA 170-E:7)	Pertains to all licensed child care programs and all license-exempt child care providers serving children receiving scholarships
2007: Early Intervention Insurance Coverage (RSA 415:6-n, née SB93-FN)	Insurance coverage for the cost of early intervention services for children with a developmental disability or delay birth-36 months.
2009: Child Care Scholarship (He-C 6910.17)	Changed to require reimbursement rate to child care providers. He-C 6910.08 established 40 days of childcare scholarship coverage for parents who lose employment.
2010: Unique Pupil Identification (SB 503)	Required early childhood programs and postsecondary institutions to submit a report to DOE on pupil indicators for integration into state data warehouse
2012: Child Care Scholarship Rules revised (He-C 6910.08e)	Simplified process for applying for child care scholarship.
2013: Early Learning Standards	Establishment of birth through age 5 developmental standards aligned with the NH Kindergarten Readiness Indicators and National Kindergarten Common Core Standards
2016: Statewide longitudinal system	Establishment of a committee to study a statewide longitudinal data system and any other DOE maintained databases that contain student-level data
2017: Updated Child Care Licensing Rules	He-C 4002 increased quality required of early learning and development programs in 2008 and in 2017
2017: Family Resource Centers of Quality (HB 538)	Directed the wellness and primary prevention council to establish a system of family resource centers of quality to provide parent education and supports for children.
2017: Full-Day Kindergarten (SB 191-FN)	Established program to provide grants to students to attend full-day kindergarten. Projected that close to \$11 million in additional aid will be provided for the 2018-2019 school year.
2017: Kindergarten Focus and Components (HB 1499); 2018 Substantive Educational Content of an Adequate Education law (RSA193-E:2-a)	An act relative to the focus and components of NH kindergarten to be child-directed experiences based upon early childhood best teaching practices and play-based learning, recognizing the potentially negative effects of too-early, too-structured learning environments on child development.
2018: Work requirement for the Child Care Scholarship Program (SB 570)	Directed DHHS to waive the CCDF CCSP employment requirement for parents receiving mental health or substance use services.
2018: License-Exempt Child Care Providers (He-C 6914, various 6916, 6917)	Establishment of health and safety training requirements and monitoring of license-exempt facilities, and family and friend child care providers receiving CCDF CCSP funds.

**(B-5) Mixed Delivery System Barriers.** Despite the many positive developments, NH faces a number of challenges to achieving our vision. Currently, like many states, NH primarily uses federal funding streams to structure early childhood programs. This can cause

discontinuous, uncoordinated delivery of programs and creates a complex maze for families to navigate. As a result, child and family access to needed programs may be compromised. Early childhood programs are often isolated from one another; administration is handled separately; data are collected separately and kept and reported in different ways and for different purposes. As a result, program administrators may not have information about other programs that families might benefit from, may not know whether families might be eligible for other services or indeed whether families are receiving other services. This may cause duplication and inefficiency and makes it difficult to get a full picture of service gaps. The impact of the current structure on families is that they often are not aware of, cannot apply for, or do not receive services that might benefit their young children. The impact on young children is often an inability to identify and address developmental and health issues early in life – which increases the risk of future problems in learning and health.

Kids Count data show that 21% of NH children under 6 are at moderate to high risk of developmental, behavioral or social delays. Home investments in children's learning may be limited: 11 percent of NH children under 6 are read to fewer than 3 days a week. Recent estimates showed that 26% of NH children live in households with a high housing cost burden (more than 30% of income devoted to housing costs), 17% live in households that are food insecure, and 23% have experienced 2 or more adverse childhood experiences. These risk factors may result in lower levels of school readiness, diminished educational outcomes and success in school and beyond. Access to developmental screening using a validated tool is also extremely limited in NH. Only 35% of New Hampshire parents of children 9-35 months reported that they completed a developmental screening tool of their child in the past year. The Watch Me Grow state developmental screening system lacks the capacity to capture data on children birth through age 5 who have received developmental screening outside of the system.

Lastly, the availability of family support programs varies in the state depending on geography. Many services are delivered through family resource centers. While there are 11 DCYF-contracted family resource centers (FRCs) in the state, as well as additional FRCs

throughout the state supported by other sources, most are not well funded and there are many communities where families cannot easily access parent or other supportive services.

**(C) B-5 Needs Assessment**

As NH has expanded its investment in early childhood systems, the key stakeholders have engaged in a variety of efforts to assess the needs of children and families in the state during the period from birth to kindergarten entry. In the past year alone, with public and private funding, the RAND Corporation conducted a study regarding opportunities for investing in evidence-based early childhood programs in the state of NH. The study documented the ongoing need for early childhood investments in NH, particularly for at-risk children; reviewed the evidence base for three strategies for promoting child development from birth to kindergarten entry—early home visiting, high-quality child care, and high-quality preschool; and estimated the economic returns for NH under various scenarios for expanding investments in such programs. In a follow-up study, the RAND team has conducted a statewide landscape analysis by assembling qualitative and quantitative data to support the identification of communities for expanding investments in evidence-based home visiting (and/or high-quality preschool). The assembled indicators serve to demonstrate the underlying need for early childhood services, the extent of current investments, and the resulting gaps. The report on the findings was released in early 2018 and will provide a foundation for the planned needs assessment.

The needs assessment to be undertaken as part of the proposed grant activities has the following two objectives: (1) assess the availability and quality of existing birth-to-five programs in NH, particularly programs serving the most vulnerable or underserved children and children in rural areas, including programs building parenting capacity of all NH families; and (2) on a pilot basis, determine the unduplicated number of children being served in existing programs and the unduplicated number of children awaiting services in existing programs. More specifically, there are 10 aims, A to J (see Table C.1) associated with the Needs Assessment. These aims will be achieved through a series of eight interrelated tasks, as outlined below. The proposed federal share for the completion of the needs assessment is \$867,931.

**Table C.1.** *Aims for the Needs Assessment and Associated Tasks*

<b>Aims for the Needs Assessment</b>	<b>Tasks</b>
A. Describe how the State defines key terms, including quality early childhood care and education, availability, vulnerable or underserved, and children in rural areas	1
B. Describe the populations of children who are vulnerable or underserved, and children in rural areas	2 – 4
C. Identify the current quality and availability of early childhood care and education, including for vulnerable or underserved children and children in rural areas	2 – 4
D. Identify, to the extent practicable, the unduplicated number of children being served in existing programs and the unduplicated number of children awaiting service in such programs	5
E. Identify gaps in data or research about the quality and availability of programming and supports for children birth through five, considering the needs of working families, as well as those who are seeking employment or in job training	6
F. Describe the State's plan to fill these gaps in data or research to support collaboration between programs and services and maximize parental choice	6
G. Describe the State's plan for developing and tracking measurable indicators of progress that align with the State's vision and desired outcomes	7
H. Describe the State's plan for addressing early childhood care and education facilities and facility-related concerns	8
I. Include an analysis of barriers to the funding and provision of high-quality early childhood support capacity among NH families for both care and education services, and identify opportunities for more efficient use of resources	2 – 4
J. Address transition supports and gaps that affect how families move children between early childhood care and education programs and school entry	2 – 4

**(C-1) Task 1: Define Key Terms.** NH has made progress toward defining quality within some of its early childhood care and education programs. For example, NH's Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS) has been re-designed and cross-sector early childhood professional competencies have been developed. The legislature has also created performance standards and a voluntary designation system for Family Resource Centers of Quality. Additionally, previous needs assessments have identified vulnerable and underserved populations, including children living in rural areas. As part of the Needs Assessment, these definitions will be further refined and operationalized for measurement as part of Task 2.

**(C-2) Task 2: Define the Key Indicators and Topics of Interest.** The needs assessment process will be led by an expert national consulting team with extensive experience in conducting large-scale compensative, needs-assessments related to early childhood care and education. The needs assessment consulting team will have prior experience working with NH

stakeholders and advanced knowledge of measurement and quantitative and qualitative statistics. The consulting team will work with the NH stakeholders to define a set of indicators to capture for the needs assessment and for the ongoing performance management system. The indicators will fall into the categories listed in Table C.2 (drawing on data sources discussed next with Task 3), ranging from capturing the size and location of the populations of interest to issues related to access barriers, delivery challenges, the workforce, resource efficiency, facilities, transition to kindergarten, and service coordination.

**Table C.2. Indicators/Topics for Needs Assessment and to Assess Progress**

<b>Indicators for the Needs Assessment</b>	<b>Tasks</b>
A. <i>Population.</i> Size and geographic location of children from birth to five, overall and for subgroups defined as vulnerable and in rural areas	a
B. <i>Funding and Participation.</i> Annual funding levels from all sources and service statistics (e.g., participation counts, by geography) for publicly funded early childhood care and education services and related early childhood supports	b
C. <i>Barriers.</i> Barriers to families’ knowledge of and access to the above services	c, d, e, f
D. <i>Delivery Challenges.</i> Challenges facing providers in delivering quality services (including workforce supports and retention), coordinating across funding streams (braiding and blending); barriers to the funding and provision of high-quality early childhood care and education services and supports	c, e, f
E. <i>Workforce.</i> Characteristics of the workforce, access to and engagement with professional development, and economic well-being	c, e, f
F. <i>Resource Efficiency.</i> Opportunities for more efficient use of resources	c, e, f
G. <i>Facilities.</i> Issues with facilities and facilities-related concerns	c, e, f
H. <i>Transitions.</i> Issues with transition supports and gaps that affect how children move between early childhood care and education programs and school entry	c, d, e, f
I. <i>Coordination.</i> Issues with service coordination	c, d, e, f

**(C-3) Task 3: Conduct the Information Gathering.** The measurement of the indicators and topics of interest will be based on multiple sources of information including the six data sources: (1) Population-based surveys and statistics, (2) Program administrative data on funding and program participation, (3) Key informant interviews with state and local leaders; (4) Survey of families and family focus groups; (5) Survey of early childhood care and education providers and staff, and (6) survey of local education agencies (LEA) leaders. The population-based data from surveys, vital statistics, and other sources will build upon the set of indicators already assembled by the needs assessment consulting team. These data measure the size of the

vulnerable populations of interest and how they are distributed across the state. In addition, administrative data for the publicly funded programs that comprise the NH birth-to-five system will be used to catalog current funding levels and (potentially duplicated) counts of program participation. The needs assessment consulting team will also conduct a series of semi-structured interviews with key informants at the state and local level, with a particular interest in how leaders in the public sector (e.g., agency directors and assistant directors, legislators, education leaders) and private sector (e.g., program providers and leaders in business and philanthropy) view the current system, its challenges, and future opportunities.

Other data collection activities will include family focus groups and a survey of families, survey of early childhood care and education providers and their classroom staff, and a survey of LEA leaders (e.g., district superintendents, school principals, special education administrators). As outlined in section E below, the state will utilize existing early childhood care and education and family support networks (e.g., Head Start, regional early childhood coalitions, NH Family Voices, Parent Information Center) to support data collection efforts (section E) and parent consultants, with UNH providing the capacity for completion of online surveys. For each of these primary data collection efforts, the needs assessment consulting team will lead the development of the survey instruments or data collection protocols, drawing on extensive experience designing surveys of families with young children, early childhood program providers, and the early childhood education workforce.

The state will leverage existing and on-going data collection efforts to inform the needs assessment process. To ensure that there is no duplication of efforts, a review of existing data collections at regional levels will be conducted at the onset of the needs assessment planning and overlap in metrics of interest will be identified. For example, currently, the Endowment for Health is supporting an early childhood equity study that will conduct focus groups with racial, ethnic and linguistic minority families with young children to understand the root causes of racial inequities in NH and to co-create programmatic and policy solutions. Additionally, in 2019 DHHS, in partnership with the NH Charitable Foundation and Endowment for Health, will

commission an early childhood education workforce study to enhance understanding of the workforce and challenges facing it to develop policies and programs that address issues such as compensation, turnover, and access to training and education.

**(C-4) Task 4: Data Analysis.** The needs assessment consulting team will lead the analysis of the data and information collection in C-3 using qualitative and quantitative methods. Where data can be geocoded, such as the population-based indicators and location of early childhood programs providers, the results be illustrated using maps and other visual tools for identifying service needs and gaps. Preliminary findings will be shared with the system stakeholders to aid with interpretation of the data and the implications for the needs assessment, the strategic plan, and ongoing performance monitoring.

**(C-5) Task 5: Conduct Pilot Program Count.** As part of the needs assessment, the needs assessment consulting team will lead the effort to generate estimates of the unduplicated count of families and children receiving services and those awaiting services. Two strategies will be employed. First, based on the series of retrospective questions in the family survey regarding service utilization and unmet service needs during the early childhood years, the needs assessment consulting team will estimate the rate of program participation and the rate of unmet need for various types of early childhood services. By leveraging the states regional early childhood coalitions to organize and complete data collection (surveys and focus groups), the state will be able to identify the availability of early childhood care and education for families across our economically and geographically diverse regions, including understanding how need varies for our most vulnerable children and families. Second, for a set of communities within the state, the needs assessment consulting team will work with the DHHS, DOE, Spark NH, and the University of New Hampshire (UNH) to identify the most feasible approach for using existing administrative data to generate an unduplicated count of service utilization. The initial focus will be on participation in Early Head Start and Head Start, CCDF subsidized child care, MIECHV home visiting services, and IDEA early intervention and preschool special education services (Part B & C).



**(C-6) Task 6: Identify Data Gaps and Solutions.** Prior tasks will provide the foundation for identifying key information and specific indicators that are needed for advancing the early childhood system, but which are not currently available and not readily obtained. In each case, options for filling the data gaps will be identified (including making better use of relatively low-cost administrative data) and assessed for their feasibility and cost. The needs assessment consulting team, in collaboration with other partners, will prioritize the list of indicators and establish goals and a timetable for future data collection. Consistent with the following tasks, priority will be given to indicators that are vital for tracking the progress of the system toward the larger state goals. These data goals will be incorporated into the strategic plan, along with the identified set of measurement indicators discussed in the next section.

**(C-7) Task 7: Identify Measurable Indicators to Track Progress.** Both readily available indicators and those that are harder to obtain can be part of the measurable indicators identified for tracking future progress. This list is expected to include measures of the need for services among low-income and other vulnerable families, the availability of and access to existing services, the quality and reach of the available services, and indicators associated with outputs and outcomes of the B-5 system (e.g., kindergarten readiness and academic achievement in the elementary grades).

**(C-8) Task 8: Address Facilities Issues.** As a final critical focus of the needs assessment, the consulting team will engage stakeholders with the evidence regarding facilities successes and concerns across programs serving children and families (e.g., Head Start/Early Head Start, child care, family resource centers), as well as options to address the identified issues. Considerations will include the need for facilities upgrades in support of quality improvements, facilities expansion if programs are projected to expand; and options for financing investments in upgraded or expanded facilities, drawing on recommendations from the National Academies of Sciences.

The findings from needs assessment will be documented in a report published by DOE. The needs assessment report will address the 10 aims listed in Table C.1, reporting on the

concepts and indicators measured, the methods for information gathering, the key findings, the information gaps and strategies for filling those gaps, and the indicators for tracking progress against the state's vision. The findings in the report will provide the basis for the strategic plan and the development of ongoing indicators for progress monitoring.

**(C-9) Early Childhood Data System.** Presently, NH has an enterprise data warehouse, however, the majority of NH early childhood data resides in program-based operational databases including Division of Vital Records Administration; DHHS Programs that provide direct services to families and children birth to age five; and DOE data systems (the Special Education Information System and the Longitudinal Data System). DHHS program data silos function primarily to satisfy federal reporting requirements making information uncoordinated and difficult to analyze in a way that informs statewide early childhood policies and investments. Further, it is difficult for DHHS and individual programs to identify groups of families and/or children who are receiving or are eligible for services from more than one DHHS program. This makes improving service management, delivery and returns on investment difficult. With few the exception, DHHS data systems are not currently integrated or sharing data across sectors or longitudinally. While Head Start/Early Head Start grantees report data directly to the federal administration and is all too often overlooked in the state's early childhood data systems. Integration of this data will provide NH to a more robust understanding of the supply and demand for early childhood services in the state. Lastly, the connections between DHHS and DOE are limited to notification of Part C children potentially eligible for Preschool Special Education services and children eligible for the free and reduced lunch program.

Under the direction of the University of New Hampshire's Research Computing Center (RCC), and with guidance from the Governor's early childhood council data committee, the state will convene representatives overseeing the various DHHS and DOE data systems to evaluate the extant data system on a monthly basis, including identify current barriers to creating an integrated longitudinal data system (e.g., issues of privacy, assignment of unique identifier, identification of available and needed data inputs). This assessment is being conducted to

determine how these disparate infrastructures may be accessed, and data extracted, for a model of accountability and continuous quality improvement. The evaluation will also include a proof of concept test to determine the practicality of various solutions devised by the team. Following an assessment of the siloed systems, the team will select five to six likely database managers willing to provide data access at the system level for use in developing and testing a data exchange system. Data integration will seek to occur across systems using available identification numbers, as well other identifying information (names, addresses, and birth dates). As feasibility is demonstrated for one or more pilot communities, the methodology will be refined and modified to capture a wider array of communities throughout the state, with the goal of a fully integrated data system capturing early childhood program participation from birth to school entry and provide cross-program early childhood data. The evaluation of the current system will occur between January and June. Concurrently, to improve instruction, practices, service, and policies, the needs assessment will also seek to understand the status of how LEAs evaluate the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.

**(D) B-5 Strategic Plan**

Upon completion of our needs assessment process, the work of creating a strategic action plan to achieve NH's vision for a comprehensive, coordinated, sustainable early childhood system will begin. The planning process will be led by an expert national consultant with experience in strategic planning, who will facilitate a core leadership team (see section H for more detail on the core team) that includes staff from the DHHS, DOE, the Governor's early childhood advisory council Spark NH, a representative of the governor's office, and the grant's lead agency, UNH. Spark NH led a strategic planning process in 2012-2013 to create a comprehensive strategic plan for early childhood on which this planning process will build. This strategic planning process will seek to develop a state-wide plan to build infrastructure and ensure fidelity and sustainability of implementation processes that support program quality and effective practices that positively impact child and family outcomes. The strategic plan will include a wide variety of issues and topics as suggested throughout this application. Given the

state's momentum for early childhood integration within DHHS and DOE, the planning process will include exploring the possibility of piloting state-funded kindergarten in one or two high need communities as part of implementation, as well as generating recommendations for a universal Kindergarten Entry Assessment, giving NH the capacity to document for the first time children's skills and knowledge upon kindergarten entry. The proposed federal share for the completion of the strategic plan is \$249,587.

**(D-1) Strategic Plan Task Force.** A broad stakeholder group (strategic plan task force) will be engaged by the core leadership team, and drawing upon Spark NH's extensive existing infrastructure, which includes the governor-appointed council, four committees and several task forces focused on improving the early childhood system across health, early learning and family support from across the state. The results of the needs assessment will be analyzed and based on this analysis, new members will be added. The task force will ensure cross-sector representation, including private and public members. The leadership team will ensure that the membership for the task force represents critical stakeholders—state, local and regional, including early childhood administration, professional development, practitioners, service providers, and family organizations. Additionally, representatives from the state's 11 regional early childhood (EC) coalitions will participate in the task force. This core group will ensure the necessary feedback loops in designing and managing the regional and state work.

**(D-2) Regional Strategic Planning Infrastructure.** As described above, NH has a network of regional EC coalitions that represent diverse geographic areas as well as serve diverse populations. Early EC regional coalitions located in Manchester, Laconia, Rochester, Somersworth, the Monadnock region, Coös County, Nashua, Tilton, Concord, and Claremont, and Carrol County representing 8 of the 10 NH's counties, including some of the highest need areas in the state. They will meet regularly over the grant's planning year and help to inform and advise the strategic planning process at the state level. Representatives of these groups will participate in the strategic planning task force at the state level. Additionally, representatives of

these groups will work on plans to develop regional infrastructure to support the early childhood system in the final strategic plan.

**(D-3) Family Engagement in Planning Process.** NH has a strong existing family engagement infrastructure which will serve as the foundation for family engagement in the strategic planning process. Through our regional EC coalitions, opportunities for families to inform the plan and give feedback as it is formed will be created (see section C and E for more information on family engagement plan). This work will have been begun as a part of the needs assessment and will build on existing infrastructure of such organizations as statewide Head Start Parent Advisory Council, NH Children’s Trust, NH Family Voices, Parent Information Center, the Interagency Coordinating Council (Part C), parent groups in family resource centers, and others. Additionally, parents/caregivers will be recruited from various organizations and engaged as paid consultants to the project to inform each stage and activity area and ensure a strong family voice throughout the planning year.

**(D-4) Strategic Planning Approach.** The final strategic plan will address key functional areas of the B-5 early childhood state system, including governance, communication and family support, policy, quality early childhood programs and services, funding, workforce/professional development and an early childhood data system that are needed to reach the purpose of the grant. It is anticipated that the needs assessment will include a need for NH to include activities to improve children’s transition from early childhood care and education programs into elementary schools. The plan will recommend partnerships, collaboration, and coordination opportunities to be used to achieve these goals and will ensure that more children are able to access quality programs and services.

Initial work for the strategic plan task force will be completed by the end of the grant’s third quarter to ensure that all existing plans and goals, federal state and local statutory requirements addressing early childhood programs and services, including efforts to better coordinate resources, have been reviewed and aligned, thus ensuring that the new strategic plan builds explicitly on existing efforts. Connections will be made to other recent related plans and

restructuring at the state and regional levels. For example, the state will ensure that the strategic plan aligns with the state's child welfare transformation efforts, the new hub and spoke model in opioid treatment, the children's mental health system of care work, NH's family resource centers, Head Start, and others to explicitly identify early childhood intervention as a strategy for prevention, as well as to identify opportunities for family support systems.

The leadership team will review the needs assessment, including data on parent needs and identified opportunities for, and barriers to, collaboration and coordination among existing programs. The leadership team will use these data to define the processes and protocols for the strategic planning process. The leadership team will create initial recommendations that will be brought to the broader strategic planning task force and to the regional EC coalitions for further feedback, including opportunities for public feedback facilitated by the coalitions. Guided by this work, the strategic planning task force will then develop desired outcomes for all aspects of the early childhood system, including the state administration level, the professional development level, the local/regional administrative level, the practitioner/services provider level and the child and family to better serve children and families and increase participation by children in existing programs and services, particularly in our target populations. These outcomes will then be brought to regional coalitions for additional feedback.

Next, the strategic planning task force will break into smaller groups to further define the plan related to functional areas of the early childhood system. Insights from Spark NH committees will inform the process including the policy committee to address public awareness and policy topics, workforce and professional development committee to address workforce and professional development.

Work of the smaller planning groups will include policy alignment, finance mechanisms, addressing gaps and access substantively and geographically, coordination of programs and services including ease of access and transitions, quality improvement and equity. Facilitators and barriers to achieving desired outcomes will be explicitly addressed and recommend partnership opportunities among Head Start providers, local education agencies, state and local

governments, and private entities (including faith and community-based) will be provided to improve coordination program quality and delivery of services. Detailed activities will be developed to reach outcomes with timelines, benchmarks, and data sources for evaluating progress. The planning groups will meet monthly in late spring and summer (April through July). The leadership team will meet every two weeks between meetings to guide plan development and ensure attention to and alignment of all levels of the system, child age groups and system functional areas, including measurement and accountability. Ultimately, NH recognizes that the early childhood system should not be fragmented. We know that families and children live in a community, cross-systems, and agencies. And we know that when systems work together, time and resources are leveraged, and we would expect improved outcomes.

**(D-5) Early Childhood Governance.** Governance work over the planning year will build on the foundational work that was done through Spark NH’s Governance Task Force, whose report will be complete in November 2018. As noted previously, DHHS and DOE have convened an early childhood integration team comprised of relevant government agency leaders to further develop infrastructure and protocols to ensure government programs collaborate, coordinate and align to improve child and family access, and outcomes at every level of the early childhood system. During the strategic planning process, the DHHS and DOE integration team will meet monthly starting in the first quarter of the project. As invited by the integration team members, including a representative of Spark NH and the state’s identified national planning expert, will attend the meetings to help with process, measurement, and alignment.

**(D-6) Data Integration.** Based upon the state’s evaluation of the existing data systems at DHHS and DOE (section C), the University of New Hampshire’s Research Computing Center (RCC), DHHS and DOE data system representatives, with insights from the Spark NH’s data committee, will develop a strategic plan for addressing the identified needs, including recommendations for better developing and integrating early childhood data to improve data for parent, program administrators and policymakers’ use. RCC will provide recommendations on how to meaningfully unite disparate pieces of information in a common digital habitat for use in

child development studies such as longitudinal analysis. It is expected that these activities will result in the ability to develop an implementation strategy for this crosswalk along with an estimated cost for a data exchange system. The plan will be drafted in July and August 2019.

**(D-7) Finalization Process.** Under the advisement of the needs assessment consultant and federal technical assistance, the leadership team will finalize the plan in August and distribute it in early September to the strategic plan task force, DHHS and DOE integration team, data systems team, and to regional stakeholders, including parent engagement groups, for approval. In late September the plan will be sent to the DHHS and DOE commissioners and Governor for approval. Upon approval, the plan will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families for final approval.

**(E) Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge**

The Governor's early childhood advisory council, Spark NH, has created a strong infrastructure for collaboration and coordination across the full range of early childhood care and education programs and services. The Council includes representation from health, mental health and wellness support programs from both DOE and DHHS, family organizations, and a representative from the statewide NH Head Start Parent Advisory Council. The NH Comprehensive Strategic Plan for Early Childhood, released in 2013, concluded that the state must ensure that *families are meaningfully engaged in their child's development, understand what constitutes quality services, and are able to access high-quality services and effective support from practitioners and [that] they feel valued by the state as evidenced by the inclusion of family leadership and voices in all levels of planning that anticipate their needs to thrive and be successful.* With recent state efforts focused on state-level system building and change, it has been difficult to meaningfully engage families. Proposed strategies and activities related to this grant will allow NH to build infrastructure at the local and regional level where meaningful family engagement can occur. The proposed federal share for the completion of the activities related to maximizing parental choice and knowledge is \$2,134,882.



**(E-1) Regional Infrastructure.** NH currently has 11 regional early childhood (EC) councils with varying capacity, membership, and limited philanthropic and federal funding, yet they share a common goal to strengthen the early childhood system and improve outcomes for children and families. Through a collaboration with Spark NH and funding from the Endowment for Health, the regional EC coalitions have formed a community of practice (COP) that meets monthly to share knowledge of best practice and aspire to create an infrastructure of collaboration between the state and local levels. Based on the findings of the state's needs assessment, the grant's core leadership team will identify regional EC coalitions ready to enhance their infrastructure and prioritize regions based on vulnerable populations identified in the project.

Building on the identified regional EC coalitions, NH will replicate the state-level mixed delivery system (see Section B) to enhance collaboration and coordination at the local/regional level. In NH, IDEA Part B is administered by the DOE through local educational agencies (LEAs). Some LEAs also provide publicly supported preschool utilizing district-level funding or through parent tuition. DHHS oversees the administration of Part C, MIECHV, and Title V programs which are administered through contract agencies, while regional district offices of DHHS interface with families regarding economic supports and child welfare. Local Community Action Programs administer Head Start, Early Head Start partnerships and an array of family strengthening programs (e.g., WIC, housing, private childcare). Currently, private childcare and non-profit agencies are most often not included in the coordinating efforts that take place among LEAs and few regions have coordinating capacity among the child care agencies. To enhance collaboration and coordination at the local level, the regional EC coalitions will enhance their capacity to engage currently underrepresented childhood care and education programs and services. Specifically, under the grant, each of the regional EC coalitions will identify membership missing from the mixed delivery system and extend invitations of participation. The selected regional EC coalitions, in collaboration with each other, will share their work to-date, evaluate their group's norms, find opportunities for alignment, build leadership capacity, and

identify resources to reduce barriers in participation. The work that emerges from these coalitions will serve as a model for future initiatives to scale up the regional infrastructure.

**(E-2) Family Engagement and Leadership.** Building on the enhanced regional infrastructure state-wide family support organizations, including but not limited to Parent Information Center, NH Family Voices, regional Family Resource Centers, and Head Start programs will partner to strengthen family engagement and leadership capacity across the mixed delivery system. Families in each of the regional EC coalition identified by the leadership team will be trained, supported, and coached to effectively engage families in their work. Such efforts will leverage nationally recognized training and materials that can be utilized in this family engagement work, such as *Parents Serving on Groups* curriculum or *My Voice Matters* to support families in serving on various state and local level groups. Moreover, offerings will also be aligned with current efforts at the DOE to better involve families and increase family voice in education. Namely, during 2018, NH DOE launched the New Hampshire Center for Authentic Family Voice to better engage families in the education of their children as part of a three-year project working with families, schools, and educators.

Training sessions would share tips, expectations, ground rules and other considerations for families taking on the role of “representing families” on local, regional and statewide committees and build knowledge and understanding for working collaboratively in partnership within educational and health and human services systems.

**(E-3) Family Engagement in Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan.** The needs assessment consulting team will work with staff from family support organizations and all regional EC coalitions (regardless of participation in family engagement and leadership training) to develop and field a family survey to understand a family member’s existing knowledge of the state’s mixed delivery system and their perceived gaps to support their children’s optimal development and transition to elementary school (section C). An important component of the survey design phase will include a short pilot with families to ensure appropriateness. Family support organizations and regional EC coalitions will collaborate to identify agency partners

within the geographic region to distribute the family survey, including assisting in the survey distribution plan to ensure maximum family participation (e.g., Head Start, Family Resource Centers, LEAs, and NH's resource and referral system networks) Data collection efforts will incorporate non-traditional venues to connect with families of young children, such as the YMCA, youth sports and arts programs, faith-based organizations, and other community engagement activities. The results will be compiled and analyzed as previously described in the needs assessment (section C).

At least one family focus group in each of the regions will be held drawing upon family survey respondents and intentional outreach to target populations of parents not represented in the survey or those from underserved populations. To reduce duplication of efforts, in regions with an established plan to elicit authentic family feedback, existing systems will be utilized. Focus groups will also explore family knowledge of the state's mixed delivery system, what vehicles would be most effective to enhance knowledge for them or other families, gaps they perceive in helping them support their children's optimal development, and an exploration of what strategies might address the gaps. In addition to receiving information from families, the focus groups will be used to distribute information to families about the array of existing services and supports in their region's early childhood care and education system. To encourage family participation and reduce the barriers, family members will be offered a stipend which they can use to cover child care and mileage to participate.

In addition, following the drafting of the strategic plan, a community-wide forum in each of the regions to learn about and provide input into a draft statewide strategic plan. All family survey respondents will be invited, and the meetings will be marketed by the entire early childhood system through the local networks, connecting the feedback provided to the named strategies in the plan. Such forums will allow for authentic family voice and two-way communication between the state and families.

**(E-4) Resource and Referral Tools.** To understand the strengths and limitations of the state's current resource and referral systems (NH 211™ and Child Care Aware NH), families

will be asked to provide feedback via focus groups. Participants will be identified using the attendance list from the regional forums, focus groups, and family survey respondents, as well as eliciting participation via local networks. To encourage family participation and reduce the barriers, family members will be offered a stipend which they can use to cover child care and mileage to participate. In addition, a distance option of reviewing the two web-based systems online and providing feedback will also be utilized. To making the web-based systems more user-friendly, participants will provide their preferences for receiving information and identifying needed resources. Feedback will be included in the strategic planning process. It is the state's vision that this technology will help families be empowered to promote their child's optimal development by having a free and user-friendly web-based resource to identify quality resources and services.

**(E-5) Evaluating Existing Family Strengthening Programs.** NH has implemented several parent education initiatives across the public health spectrum, but none have been scaled across NH to benefit all families. For example, Project LAUNCH in Manchester piloted *Positive Solutions for Families* with impressive evaluative results, especially in a racially diverse and high-need community. Positive Solutions for Families is an evidence-based series developed as part of the Pyramid Model framework to help parents and caregivers promote their young child's social and emotional development and to better understand young children's challenging behaviors and is being used in the other Pyramid Model work in the state. Other efforts have included the Strengthening Families Framework promoted by the NH Children's Trust and Family Support NH. For families with more intensive needs, Healthy Families America NH has statewide home visiting programs but serves a small segment of families that, based on risk factors, could benefit. In addition, current administrative rules relative to eligibility coupled with the early childhood workforce shortage has created inefficiencies in utilization. Using the feedback from families in the needs assessment process (section E-3) and implementation science, NH will select an array of evidence-based family strengthening and family education initiatives that can be selected and scaled by regional EC coalitions to promote and increase

involvement family members in the development of their children and the transition from the early childhood care and education system to kindergarten. This approach recognizes regional differences throughout NH while acknowledging that it is important for there to be consistency for families across NH. Specifically, after receiving an implementation science training, the strategic plan task force will utilize the Hexagon Tool to systematically evaluate the state's current family strengthening and parent education program, relative to seven broad factors: needs, fit, resource availability, evidence, capacity for expansion and sustainability, to select those most relevant to our context and most likely to be sustained. The University of New Hampshire's Institute on Disability has extensive expertise in implementation science and will lead the training and facilitate the process to assess new and existing interventions and select a continuum of evidence-based programs.

**(E-6) Evaluation of Developmental Screening System.** NH has an existing DHHS operated developmental screening system called *Watch Me Grow*. The system is locally based and included in the Family Resource Center infrastructure but has received inadequate funding to be expanded and implemented rigorously. With input from parents during the needs assessment process and informed by the DHHS Bureau of Special Medical Services, responsible for leading the state-level work on the developmental screening system, the strategic plan task force will evaluate the effectiveness of the current system and integrate recommendations in NH's strategic plan. Recommendations will be guided by DHHS's work to (1) promote the training of professionals to utilize the Ages and Stages screening tools, (2) review and identify gaps based on environmental scan and data analysis; (3) promote developmental screening, participation in Watch Me Grow, and use of the online ASQ screening tool; (4) educate the public through dissemination of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Learn the Signs Act Early materials and NH specific 'fact sheets; and (5) collaborate with the NH Pediatric Improvement Partnership on any efforts related to developmental screening.

**(E-7) Public Awareness and Serve and Return Parent Campaign.** To assist in the state's plan to effectively engage families, during the planning year, the Governor's early

childhood council will train community members and regional early childhood leaders on how to conduct their research-based public awareness presentation, *Children: The Bedrock of the Granite State* and conduct presentations across all regions of the state. The presentation aims to inform families and early childhood stakeholders about the importance of early experiences that affect lifelong learning, behavior, and health. Additionally, the state will promote parental serve and return interactions with their young children utilizing Vroom, an initiative of the Bezos Family Foundation. Vroom Science Materials provide a strength-based approach to help parents promote the optimal development of their child by supporting life skills that promote focus, self-control, problem-solving, and taking on challenges. Currently, Childcare Aware of NH is a national Vroom partner and Early Learning NH has been invited to apply for additional support to create a statewide infrastructure. The program based on the science of early learning will be embedded into ongoing work with families around NH, including public and private programs and DOE and DHHS through a media campaign. The systematic implementation of the public awareness efforts will be informed by the results of the needs assessment (section C) with priority on identified communities of highest vulnerability.

**(F) Sharing Best Practices among State’s Early Childhood Care and Education Providers**

NH has a diverse and growing community of professionals who work with or on behalf of children, youth, and families. The career ladder moves across DHHS and DOE and provides a myriad of pathways to employment. NH’s vision is to create a fully integrated cross-sector professional development (PD) system that, through pre-service and in-service training, supports all early childhood professionals across health, early learning, and family support to be well educated, highly skilled and culturally competent. Based on NAEYC recommendations, in 2014 Spark NH’s Workforce and Professional Development Committee completed a comprehensive PD blueprint for offering sustainable career pathways with quality lifelong learning opportunities and appropriate compensation for highly respected, satisfying careers. In addition, a set of Shared Professional Early Childhood Core Competencies was developed that reflects the core knowledge and skills that all individuals working with young children and their families should

possess. Along with the blueprint, these competencies will serve as a guide for the proposed plan to share best practices among early childhood care and education program providers with regards to preservice and in-service PD.

The Workforce and Professional Development Committee has extensive membership from health, early learning and family support, including representatives of home visiting, mental health, family support, child care, Head Start, Institutes of Higher Education, health care providers, and others. This cross-sector group will be used to ensure coordination among early care and education program providers in the state to reduce duplication of effort, leverage financial and other resources, and increase program quality. The committee will advise the work done during the grant period related to workforce and professional development. Further, the structure of regional early childhood coalitions will be used to engage cross-sector providers in a discussion of best practices, particularly to better coordinate efforts and cross train and work together to ease transitions for children and families. The proposed federal share for the completion of the activities related to share best practices among early childhood care and education providers is \$1,393,799.

**(F-1) Pre-Service Professional Development.** A fundamental means to increase program quality is to ensure that early childhood professionals have the training and credentials needed to effectively support children and families, including providing a system that can seamlessly move professionals through and across undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Currently, NH-DHHS facilitates alignment among the state's institutes of higher education (IHE) administering early childhood programs via the Early Childhood Higher Education Round Table, including programs accredited by DOE's Division of Program Support. To increase collaboration and coordination among the state's IHE, informed by the needs assessment and strategic plan (see sections C and D), the Early Childhood Round Table will seek to: (1) expand and improve the quality of practicum field sites and the cooperating teachers who supervise the practicum students, (2) examine the efficacy of apprenticeship programs, (3) identify mechanisms to allow professionals to obtain college credit for participation in-service PD, and (4) expand the number

of agreement among IHE to allow for seamless movement among degree programs. To ensure that a coordinated plan that benefits outcomes for the early childhood workforce, representative voices from the early childhood care and educational workforce will participate in this planning process along with a larger representation of stakeholders from DHHS, DOE, and state IHE.

**(F-2) In-Service Professional Development.** In addition to seeking means to improve the quality of pre-service training, during the planning year, the state will seek to enhance coordination of PD opportunities across-sectors (e.g., early childhood care, early intervention, public education) to ensure that early childhood professionals have ready access to best practice and quality training and coaching support.

**Alignment of Professional Development Systems.** An initial first step in ensuring seamless dissemination of best practices is progress towards the creation of a one-stop-shop for PD opportunities relevant to early childhood professionals across sectors. With stakeholder input from the DOE, DHHS, Spark NH's Workforce and Professional Development Committee, and other professional development stakeholders (e.g., Child Care Aware NH, NHAEYC, IHE, Head Start), PD alignment will be enhanced by: (1) developing a plan to coordinate/collaborate on and share cross-sector PD opportunities (e.g., training, TA, coaching, mentoring) and resources, (2) creating a common criteria (standards) leading to reciprocity of training where the identified standards are met, and (3) identifying opportunities and options for incentivizing cross-sector early childhood professionals to participate in the PD system. A task force for Spark NH's workforce and professional development committee will be formed to bring together a wide array of individuals from health and human service agencies, libraries, museums, and other public and private institutions to deepen understanding of early childhood development, early learning resources, and best practices in family engagement. To meet the PD alignment goals, focus groups of EC professionals will be convened to review current use and needs (see section C) and recommendations for improvements will be drafted by the expanded cross-sector task force. One activity would seek to create a plan for a single website that integrates the currently dispersed PD systems that provide information about PD opportunities, job opportunities, and



professional learning communities, and tracking of PD, licensing, and credentials, including DOE's Network, Spark NH's PORTAL, and Child Care Aware of NH's website.

**Quality Recognition and Improvement System.** Over the past year, NH has begun to redesign its voluntary Quality Recognition (née Rating) and Improvement System (QRIS) to improve quality and enhance center-based, family-based, and afterschool programs' knowledge and access to best practice. With feedback from the Governor's Office, DHHS, DOE, early childhood practitioners, and families, the QRIS is in the process of being streamlined to increase PD opportunities for early childhood professionals. The revised QRIS will transition from a system focused on meeting standards to a one that supports the early childhood workforce to engage in continuous quality improvement.

With this grant, NH will make substantial progress in the development of a revised QRIS, which will serve as a foundation for implementing PD and sharing best practice among early childhood care programs. Over the grant year, significant enhancements will be made to further differentiate quality and to reflect high expectations of program excellence. Additional levels will be established to provide a clear pathway of improving quality as well as an embedded plan to engage programs in a system of professional development and continuous improvement. The new QRIS will be streamlined to two ambitious yet achievable standards for which recognition levels will be established: 1) quality of the learning environment and 2) teacher qualification. Improvement of the QRIS, will also help build capacity of families throughout the state, many of whom depend on the early childhood programs. Refining the QRIS will help NH families become better consumers, driving the demand for quality early childhood services.

Programs seeking to participate in the higher reimbursement levels of revised QRIS system will receive onsite evaluation and tailored PD and coaching based on the Environment Rating Scales (ERS), including the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, Infant/ Toddler Environmental Rating Scale, Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale and School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale. The ERS is a valid and reliable tool to quantify the quality of the interactions occurring in a classroom between staff and children and among the children

themselves, as well as the interactions children have with the activities, space, and materials in the classroom environment. To ready centers to participate in the revised QRIS, reduce hesitation associated with program observation/evaluation, and increase extant programs awareness of aspects of quality learning environments, as part this activity the state will provide introductory overview training on the ERS to a minimum of 50 programs, with priority given to programs that serve vulnerable families and children as identified by the needs assessment. To have as broad an impact as possible on dissemination of best practices, participation in this training will not require a commitment to participate in the QRIS system.

**Continuous Improvement Coaching Model.** With a focus on continuous quality improvement, a vital aspect of NH's QRIS is individualized coaching to support teachers' and improve teacher-child interactions and instruction, both recognized as a successful means to impact program quality. The coaching model highlights the importance of supportive relationships allowing for open-communication, continuous observation, and feedback enabling individual goals to be set and achieved. Currently, NH does not have the infrastructure to provide the individualized support needed to further the desired coaching system. Thus, along with supporting a comprehensive evaluation (section B) of in-service PD needs, funding from the grant will be dedicated to enhancing the current capacity for coaching and embedded professional development.

As a trusted resource for referrals, technical assistance and professional development for early childhood providers, the grant will seek to enhance Child Care Aware of NH's capacity to disseminate best practices to enhance learning environments through training, phone or email consultation, and onsite coaching. Specifically, with support from other state entities providing in-service professional development, like DHHS, DOE, the NH Preschool Technical Assistance Network and the NH chapter of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NHAEYC), the University of New Hampshire (UNH), will oversee efforts to increase the quantity and quality of the coaching staff at Child Care Aware NH to provide embedded professional development. The grant will allow for the hiring and training of 10 coaches who

will participate in training on the ERS to enhance the skills of coaches to use the scales to help improve the quality of children’s programs and complete a credit-bearing practicum-course at UNH on developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood education.

With related efforts to support programs’ ability to effectively participate in the state’s QRIS system, coaches will also receive training on the Pyramid Model framework to improve social-emotional outcomes for children. NH identified the Pyramid Model as a key framework for the special education State Systemic Improvement Plan and the State Personnel Development Grant. Subsequently, NH became a Pyramid Model State in partnership with the Pyramid Model Consortium.

**Play-Based Kindergarten Coaching.** In the fiscal year 2019, the DOE distributed, for the first time, \$11 million in grants to municipalities for the purpose of funding full-day kindergarten programs. Developing this new state-funded program was the number one priority of Governor Sununu, as reflected in his remarks: *“The investments made today will give New Hampshire’s children a strong foundation for tomorrow’s future. I am proud to be the first governor to deliver a real full-day kindergarten program for communities across our state.”* This funding greatly increases the quality of public education in NH.

During the 2018 NH legislative session, the Substantive Educational Content of an Adequate Education law was amended to mandate the use of quality, child-directed experiences based upon early childhood best teaching practices and play-based learning to support comprehensive development (physical, social, cognitive, and language). With the support of UNH and NHAEYC the state has begun to provide limited training and guidance on best practice in hands-on, child-directed instruction; however, currently, UNH, DOE, and NHAEYC do not have the infrastructure to meet LEA’s interest and requests to provide targeted coaching and on play-based kindergarten. Under this grant, the state will seek to leverage the PD resources of B-5 early childhood care and education programs to enhance the quality of kindergarten classrooms in a manner that would create continuity of best practices across the transition to elementary school. To address this goal, the state will utilize the previously mentioned coaches from Child

Care Aware of NH to provide support to local educational agencies. As part of their field-based coursework at UNH, coaches will receive explicit instruction on best practice related to play-based learning. Moreover, leveraging models developed by the Coös Coalition for Young Children and Families, Manchester’s regional early childhood coalition, and the Hampton School District, that brings B-5 educators and kindergarten teachers together to share best practices and support successful transitions for children and families, the state will host two, day-long workshops over the course of the grant year to encourage collaboration among the B-5 and kindergarten workforce. It is our summative goal that such workshops will bring early childhood professionals together around the importance of play-based learning, which in turn could benefit parents’ awareness of developmentally appropriate practices, all while honoring the collective importance of all who support children’s development in the state’s mixed-delivery system.

#### **(G) Improving Overall Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education Services**

Upon completion of the state’s proposed comprehensive needs assessment, which will include inclusive and cross-sector evaluation of need (section C), and a collaborative approach to developing the strategic plan (section D), the state projects 3 months of time remaining in the planning year. With this foundation being established over the first nine months of the grant, NH will be positioned to begin a strategic implementation of initiatives to improve the overall quality of early childhood care and education programs using evidence-based practices.

The process to identify the communities and/or populations where quality improvement efforts will be systematically targeted will be informed directly by the state’s needs assessment and strategic planning processes. In particular, NH will seek to identify communities serving the states most vulnerable families, including but not limited to, the proportion of children at risk for disabilities and developmental delays, in the foster care system, or growing up in poverty, as well as, the degree to which a community is impacted by the opioid epidemic and has access to quality early childhood and family programs and resources. While NH will be informed by the outcomes of the needs assessment and strategic planning process, based on prior needs assessments and current understanding of the mixed delivery system, quality improvement

efforts will focus on (1) QRIS coaching, (2) play-based kindergarten coaching, and (3) building capacity for family resource centers of quality. The proposed federal share dedicated to the improvement of quality early childhood care and education services is \$310,866.

**(G-1) QRIS Coaching.** During the course of the planning grant, the DHHS's QRIS task force will be engaging in the revision of the state's recognition and improvement system, including building capacity for the state to engage in embedded professional development aligned with the standards set forth. During the third quarter of the grant, early childhood programs from communities identified through the state's need assessment will be recruited to receive targeted training and support for embedded professional development and coaching. Programs indicating a commitment to participate in the revised QRIS will be prioritized. Identified programs' teachers will receive a stipend for participation. Coaches will complete approximately 6 visits over the course of the year. It is projected that over the 3-month period, 75 teachers will receive embedded coaching. Coaching supports will be individualized to teacher and program needs, but could include: (1) administration of the Environmental Rating Scale (or assisting programs to complete a self-study) and providing tailored coaching based on findings; (2) assistance to support the social-emotional needs of students with the lens of trauma-informed care; or (3) training to utilize the state's early learning standards to inform lesson planning and individualizing instruction. Participating early childhood programs will receive funding to assist in covering costs for substitute teachers.

**(G-2) Play-Based Kindergarten Coaching.** The expansion of full-day kindergarten in the state and legislation mandating that kindergarten teachers utilize early childhood best teaching practices and play-based learning creates readiness conditions for quality improvement. During the final 3 months of the grant, embedded professional development will be provided to kindergarten teachers in schools serving high proportions of vulnerable children and families as defined by the needs assessment. Participating schools will receive funding to assist in covering costs for substitute teachers. In conjunction with administrators, coaches and teachers will identify specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time-bound goals to support

teachers' reflective practice to improve teacher-child interactions and instruction. The coaching model highlights the importance of supportive relationships allowing for open-communication in a system of continuous observation and feedback facilitating individual goals to be set and achieved. Over the course of the 3-months, coaches will complete approximately 4 visits per teacher and it is projected that 75 teachers will receive embedded coaching.

**(G-3) Family Resource Centers of Quality.** For decades NH has been home to an informal network of public and private family resource centers that offer quality services to strengthen children and their families. NH family resource centers serve as a critical support for families across the state. Recently they have been working to adopt performance standards and a voluntary designation system for programs serving children and their families entitled Family Resource Centers of Quality (FRC-Q). Because family resource centers have such an important role in NH, improving their quality is vital. As previously described (section B), the designation and certification training is based upon the national Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening and Support. The certification and re-certification training have already been developed and NH has trainer capacity. NH will utilize the final quarter of the grant period to offer a certification training, as well as re-certification training, making it available to all professionals working in family support programs serving children and families, with intentional prioritization of staff from Family Resource Centers seeking FRC-Q designation.

**(H) Organizational Capacity and Management.**

**(H-1) Key Partners and Stakeholders.** It is NH's vision that all families are afforded comprehensive and responsive supports needed so they are healthy, learning and thriving now and in the future. The success of this ambitious vision is contingent upon state and local collaboration among parents, child and family advocacy organizations, programs and services; state and local government, philanthropic foundations, college and university faculty in early childhood, public school administrators and educators. An outline of key partners and stakeholders and their contributions are provided in Table H.1.

**Table H.1. Key Partners and Stakeholders**

<b>Partners</b>	<b>Contribution of Plan Implementation and Sustainability</b>
Child Care Aware of NH	The state’s child care resource and referral agency will assist in the implementation of the grant and the sharing of best practices and professional development.
Early Learning NH	A non-profit organization committed to supporting early learning programs and the children and families they serve and raising awareness about the early years. Early learning NH will serve in an advisory role in the implementation of the grant.
Endowment for Health (EFH)	EFH has prioritized early childhood in their philanthropic strategic plan. The EFH will serve in an advisory role in grant activities and support initiatives related to the state’s needs assessment and strategic plan including work to understand racial inequities in the ECE system.
Family Support NH	A coalition of nonprofit family resource centers and family support programs to strengthen families that will assist with enhancing family engagement activities, including assisting with needs assessment and strategic plan, and the FRCQ quality improvement efforts.
Head Start	The HS directors’ association and parent association will serve in an advisory role in the grant helping to facilitate project and plan activities as specified in the scope of work.
Needs Assessment Consulting Team	The needs assessment process will be led by an expert national consulting team with extensive experience in conducting large-scale comprehensive, needs-assessments related to early childhood care and education. The needs assessment consultant will have prior experience working with NH stakeholders and advanced knowledge of measurement and quantitative and qualitative statistics.
NH Association for the Education of Young Children	The state’s NAEYC affiliate, NHAIEYC will serve in an advisory role in the implementation of the grant and the dissemination of best practices and professional development.
NH Charitable Foundation	A community foundation invested in proven focus areas to increase opportunity for NH’s kids, including the Early Childhood Education. NHCF will serve in an advisory role in grant activities and support initiatives related to the state’s strategic plan.
NH Department of Education	DOE provides educational leadership and services which promote equal educational opportunities and quality practices and programs. The DOE will participate in the execution of project and plan activities as specified in the scope of work.
NH Department of Health and Human Services	DHHS is responsible for the health, safety, and well-being of the citizens of NH. The DHHS will participate in the execution of project and plan activities as specified in the scope of work. The Bureau of Child Development and Head Start Collaboration, which includes CCDF and the Head Start Collaboration Office, will integrate the work of the bureau with the work of this project in all relevant areas, leveraging resources and dedicating staff time to project teams and committees.
NH Early Childhood IHE Round Table	An association of representatives from NH’s 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education, which will advise the project on professional

	development related work and other efforts, as applicable.
NH Family Voices	Family-to-family information and referral center staffed by parents that provides information, support, and training to navigate through systems, which will assist in designing/implementing/enhancing family leadership and engagement activities, including recruiting/hiring parent consultants and assist with the needs assessment and strategic plan development.
Parent Information Center of NH	A statewide family organization that strives to achieve positive outcomes for children and youth that will assist with enhancing family engagement activities, including assisting with needs assessment and strategic plan.
Preschool Technical Assistance Network	A grant-funded statewide technical assistance and support network will assist in the implementation of the grant and the sharing of best practices and professional development.
Regional Early Childhood Coalitions	NH’s Regional EC coalition work to promote optimal development for children birth through 5 in their communities. They comprise diverse stakeholders from health, early learning, and family support domains. Coalitions will engage and empower families to participate in the needs assessment, strategic plan, and family engagement activities proposed.
Spark NH	The Governor-appointed early childhood advisory council will serve in an advisory capacity to the grant and will provide leadership of the strategic planning and the public awareness campaign, coordinate improvement of family resource and referral tools and provide coordination and leadership to help facilitate the development of cross-sector and cross-departmental systems and programs.
Strategic Plan Consultant	The strategic plan consultant will be an expert national consultant with experience in strategic planning for states and large municipalities. They will advise and facilitate the process of using the needs assessment data and engaging stakeholders to produce a comprehensive strategic plan.
University of New Hampshire	UNH will serve as fiscal agent for the grant and ensure that the work plan of the grant is effectively carried out and provide fiscal oversight and ensure the project’s budget is managed effectively and efficiently. UNH will also participate in the execution of project and plan activities as specified in the scope of work.

**(H-2) Organizational Capacity to Manage Grant.** UNH was selected as the State’s lead agency of the PDG project for the planning year. In close collaboration with its state, regional, and local partners, UNH has the resources to successfully oversee the project. UNH is NH’s flagship public institution, and a federally recognized land-, sea-, and space-grant university, UNH has a strong organizational track record in federally sponsored programs and community partnerships. UNH, including project faculty and staff, has successfully managed and completed multiple federal grants collaborating with multiple state and local partners. Its undergraduate and graduate programs provide state-of-the-art training to prospective educators



and practicing professionals. NH will: (1) administer and serve as fiscal agent for the grant and ensure that the work plan of the grant is effectively carried out; (2) provide fiscal oversight and ensures project's budget is managed effectively and efficiently and supports project sustainability; and (3) ensure that memorandums of understanding and contracts are executed, including the scope of work for each, in accordance with the timelines set herein.

The oversight of grant management at UNH will be facilitated by the grant's primary investigators, Drs. Kimberly Nesbitt and Eun Kyeong Cho, and a to be hired full-time project manager, under the guidance of the leadership of DHHS and DOE and in consultation with the key partners outlined in Table H.1. Dr. Nesbitt is an assistant professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. Formerly an Institute of Education Sciences Postdoctoral Fellow, Dr. Nesbitt has been a collaborator on numerous large-scale federally funded grants engaging in multidisciplinary and cross-site collaborative research and is the Co-PI for UNH's Promotion of Early Childhood Coalition. She has extensive knowledge of early childhood educational pedagogy and serves on numerous early learning and childhood committees in NH. Dr. Cho, an Associate Professor in the Department of Education. Dr. Cho is a member of the Preschool Technical Assistance Network – Institute of Higher Education, IHE- Early Childhood Roundtable, and Workforce and Professional Development Committee of Spark NH. She is currently the PI of the New Hampshire Early and Elementary Mathematics Collaborative project funded by the National Center for Civic Innovation and Co-PI of the Early Childhood Special Education Assistive Technology project funded by the U.S. DOE. Formal decision-making rules and protocols will be used to assure that state and federal regulations are followed, that all project stakeholders have a forum within which to express their ideas and opinions, and that the project goals and activities are achieved on time and on budget.

A core leadership team, comprised of representatives overseeing the proposal's priority activities will meet monthly to track the progress of the grant activities. Members of the leadership team will include the UNH grant management team, deputy commissioners and/or representatives from DHHS and DOE, including staff from the Offices of Health Equity

respectively, the Governor’s office, representation from the Governor’s early childhood advisory council. The ideas and suggestions generated from the meetings will be collected and documented through its minutes and will be integrated, as appropriate, into future activities.

**(H-3) Plan for Oversight of Federal Award.** UNH is a campus of the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) which is a not-for-profit institution of higher education created in 1963 as a body politic and corporate under the laws of the State of New Hampshire. The campus manages in excess of \$109 million in annual federal grants expenditures annually. The University maintains fund accounting in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board standards. This project will utilize the financial management capabilities of the UNH-Sponsored Programs Administration (UNH-SPA), which organizes grants and contracts in separate accounts using the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) Financial system (Banner). The sub-award accounts will be maintained in accordance with the principles of “fund accounting”. UNH-SPA will monitor all expenditures and ensure compliance with federal guidelines and is audited by an external firm annually. In addition, Financial Research Administrators (FRA’s) at UNH-SPA provide accounting and financial compliance support for all UNH sponsored programs. The FRA’s provide secondary reviews of costs allocated to sponsored program funds for financial compliance with award terms and sponsor restrictions including allowable direct and indirect costs. FRA’s prepare and submit required financial reports to the sponsors. FRA’s are assigned responsibility for specific UNH departments. They support the establishment of a grant record, including approved budgets, in the USNH Financial system and communication of financial and grant information to the project director and partners. They close out awards and provide support during audits.

**(H-4) Alignment with Existing Initiatives.** Proposed grant activities build on and align with numerous initiatives at the federal, state and local levels. *At the federal level*, the Child Care Development Fund Reauthorization created the opportunity for increased quality and access. The needs assessment and strategic planning process will allow NH to consider strategies to maximize CCDF and consider braided and blending funding approaches. The reauthorization of

MIECHV supports NH's continued implementation of evidence-based home visiting. The recently completed NH MIECHV needs assessment and strategic plan (due early 2019) will align the broader needs assessment and strategic planning process proposed to allow NH to plan for expansion and sustainability. The recent Family First Prevention Act creates unprecedented flexibility for states to invest in evidence-based prevention programming. The needs assessment and strategic planning activities proposed will allow NH to develop its required prevention plan by October 2019 and align priorities with the mixed delivery system. Finally, NH was recently awarded an Administration for Children and Families Community Collaboration to Strengthen and Preserve Families grant to pilot strategies to reduce the number of unnecessary removals of children from their families. This work will inform the selection of evidence-based family strengthening strategies and inform our strategic planning process.

*At the state level,* proposed activities align with the NH DHHS' child welfare transformation efforts, which seeks to create a public health approach to addressing child protection. The needs assessment and strategic planning process will support the alignment of enhanced prevention strategies across the mixed delivery system. Additionally, historic disinvestment in services to prevent and treat mental health and substance use disorders has led to a "crisis" which is impacting NH's young children. NH is prioritizing new investments in these systems including development of a 10-year mental health plan expected to be released in December 2018. Addressing unmet parental mental health and substance use disorder needs will reduce the occurrence of adverse childhood experiences, supporting our long-term vision. As was previously described, NH recently established a funding mechanism to support full-day kindergarten, as well as legislation that supports early childhood best teaching practices and play-based learning. Our best practice and quality activities build on these recent kindergarten policy enhancements. NH has begun to redesign its Quality Recognition and Improvement System and grant activities will allow NH to make progress in the design. With funding primarily from federal and philanthropic sources, NH has made efforts to strengthen its network of family resource centers and to implement new quality standards. The needs assessment and

strategic planning process will create a roadmap for a more robust system of family resource centers of quality and will allow us to advance quality within this system.

Through infrastructure created by the state’s early childhood advisory council, most of the administrators of state early childhood programs and services already come together to align and coordinate their work. Administrators of IDEA Part B 619 and Part C, of CCDF child care scholarship, of Title V, of the Bureau of Children’s Behavioral Health, Medicaid, NH-DOE, and Head Start Collaboration, all sit on the Council along with representatives of philanthropy, Head Start Directors, representatives of early childhood provider and parent organizations, and advocates. In addition to the governor-appointed council, Spark NH also coordinates four committees that focus on data, workforce and professional development, policy, and evaluation to better coordinate the early childhood system to benefit young children and their families. These groups include private and public stakeholders from every level of the system. Additionally, through a grant from the Endowment for Health, Spark NH administers a community of practice for the 11 early childhood regional coalitions throughout the state. This infrastructure will be used to assure that grant’s activities are well aligned with all federal, state, regional and local early care and education initiatives that affect the implementation of a B-5 mixed delivery system.

*At the local level*, communities have struggled to better coordinate the early childhood system. Project activities will strengthen the network of the local mixed delivery system and enhance knowledge and capacity for parent engagement, as well as, align local and regional needs within a state-level plan. Regional infrastructure will be used to inform this work. Additionally, best practice and quality improvement activities will strengthen early childhood care and education programs.

### **(I) Project Timeline and Milestones**

Table I.1 provides an overview of grant activities, tasks, timeline, and milestone. Key of the listed responsible party abbreviations are provided at the end of the table.

<b>Table I.1. Grant Activities, Tasks, Timeline, and Milestones</b>						
<b>Project Tasks</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Timeline (Quarters)</b>				<b>Milestones</b>
		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>Activity 1. Needs Assessment (NA): 10 Aims (C-1)</b>						
1.1. Consulting contract	UNH					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed contract with a NA consulting team</li> </ul>
1.2. Gather stakeholders input	CT					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gathered input from families &amp; cross-sector stakeholders w/RECC (See Milestone for Activity 3 below)</li> </ul>
1.3 Conduct needs assessment (NA)	CT					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NA conducted</li> <li>• Needs identified (re: the 8 project tasks Table C.1.)</li> <li>• Parents/caregivers recruited as paid consultants</li> </ul>
1.4. Conduct early childhood (EC) data mapping	RCC					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly meetings of representatives overseeing DHHS &amp; DOE data systems to evaluate extant data system in NH</li> <li>• Select data system to provide data access at the system level</li> <li>• Tested data exchange system</li> <li>• Identified barriers in existing EC data systems (program-based operational databases)</li> </ul>
<b>Activity 2. Strategic Planning (SP)</b>						
2.1. Form a strategic planning task force (SPTF)	C, CLT, RECC					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract signed with national SP expert consultant</li> <li>• Monthly meetings of the core leadership team and consultant</li> <li>• RECC convened monthly over planning, including families &amp; cross-sector stakeholders representation, RECC representative joined SPTF</li> <li>• Parents/caregivers recruited as paid consultants</li> <li>• Stakeholder kick-off meeting (re: NA design &amp; input points)</li> <li>• Plans relating to EC system to build on in strategic plan gathered</li> </ul>
2.2. Define processes, protocols, & outcomes for SP process	C, CLT, & SPTF					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2nd stakeholder meeting to present NA &amp; to identify outcomes for SP</li> <li>• NA findings published by DOE report</li> <li>• Processes &amp; protocols for SP process defined with RECC feedback</li> <li>• Desired outcomes developed for each level of the state system</li> <li>• CLT meetings held every two weeks</li> <li>• Planning group meetings for each functional area (Policy, public awareness, workforce and PD, data, &amp; quality) held monthly</li> <li>• SP recommended partnerships, collaboration, and coordination</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for program evaluation (timelines, benchmarks, and data sources for evaluating progress) and technical assistant drafted</li> <li>• Ongoing indicators for progress monitoring drafted</li> </ul>
2.3. Draft SP and identifying metrics	C, CLT, & SPTF				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SP &amp; identifying metrics brought to RECC for final approval</li> <li>• Final SP draft submitted to DHHS, DOE commissioners, &amp; governor for final approval</li> <li>• Plan submitted to ACF</li> </ul>
2.4. Develop a SP for a statewide EC data integration	RCC & CLT				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RCC convened with DHHS and DOE data system representatives</li> <li>• Drafted recommendations for better developing and integrating early childhood data based on input from the GAAC data committee</li> <li>• Drafted recommendations on how to meaningfully unite disparate pieces of information in a common digital habitat</li> </ul>
<b>Activity 3. Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge</b>					
3.1. Strengthen network of RECC	GAAC, RECC				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff hired</li> <li>• Missing cross-sector/family membership identified and outreach began</li> <li>• Kick-off meeting hosted</li> <li>• MOU with RECC signed</li> </ul>
3.2. Actively seek out family voice in NA & SP	FSN, RECC, & CT				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey instruments finalized, and field survey conducted</li> <li>• Survey promoted through RECC</li> <li>• Focus groups held, and results included in NA</li> <li>• Communitywide meetings (re: SP hosted)</li> </ul>
3.3. Enhance Family Engagement (FE) Capacity	FSN				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FE expert hired</li> <li>• Parent leadership trainings designed/offered</li> <li>• Parents/caregivers recruited as paid consultants</li> <li>• Professional FE trainings designed/offered to RECC</li> <li>• Ongoing coaching provided</li> </ul>
3.4. Evaluate Family Strengthening and Education Programs	GAAC, DHHS & RECC				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inventoried existing family strengthening and education programs</li> <li>• Used implementation science and analysis of identified local needs to evaluate and select family strengthening and education programs</li> </ul>
3.5. Enhance EC online resource & referral system	GAAC, GUW, CCANH, CT				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 6 meetings convened with relevant R&amp;R entities, technology and marketing experts, DOE and DHHS to plan and design web/app</li> <li>• Parent focus groups/surveys conducted</li> <li>• Findings documented/shared with relevant entities</li> </ul>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinated efforts for building in resources to enhance and design promotional &amp; commercial materials began</li> <li>• RFP to web design entity to build/adapt web platform/app</li> </ul>
3.6. “Serve & Return” Parent and Public Awareness Campaign	GAAC, DOE, DHHS, RECC				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vroom/Mind in the Making trainings held for parents and professionals</li> <li>• Vroom and MITM materials produced and disseminated to at least 11 regions through the RECC and embedded in ongoing work of EC programs and services</li> <li>• At least 11 Spark NH Bedrock public awareness trainings held</li> <li>• Produced and aired strength-based “serve and return” commercials for parents/caregivers about the importance of early childhood development and how they are their child’s first teachers</li> </ul>
<b>Activity 4. Sharing Best Practices (BP)</b>					
4.1. Create a plan to share BP through preservice PD	UNH, DHHS ECHER				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Childhood Higher Education Roundtable (ECHER) convened</li> <li>• Expanded cross-sector committee formed (representatives from EC workforce, stakeholders from DHHS, DOE, and state IHE)</li> <li>• A plan for a unified competency-based PD system for the early childhood care and education workforce drafted</li> </ul>
4.2. Align PD systems towards a fully-integrated cross-sector PD system	UNH, GAAC				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus groups of EC professionals convened and current use/needs of PD systems reviewed</li> <li>• Expanded cross-sector committee draft alignment recommendations</li> <li>• Created plan for a single PD website</li> <li>• Developed a plan to coordinate cross-sector PD resources</li> <li>• Created common criteria leading to reciprocity of training</li> <li>• Identified options for incentivizing cross-sector EC professionals to participate in PD system</li> </ul>
4.3. Enhance the state’s capacity to share BP via revised Quality Recognition and Improvement System (QRIS)	UNH, DHHS QRIS task force				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtained feedback from cross-sector stakeholders</li> <li>• Plan to establish additional levels in QRIS and align with PD system</li> <li>• Planned for onsite evaluation/tailored PD/coaching/TA</li> <li>• Finalized the plan for revised QRIS</li> <li>• Coaches identified, &amp; received training</li> <li>• Provided Environmental Rating Scale training to at least 50 ECPs</li> <li>• Drafted a plan to create an infrastructure to offer individualized support along with center-based support</li> </ul>

4.4. Play-Based Kindergarten Coaching	UNH, CCANH				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEA support to for targeted coaching and on play-based kindergarten</li> <li>• Regional workshops held to bring together B-5 educators and Kindergarten teachers to share best practices</li> <li>• Statewide workshops for the B-5 and kindergarten workforce</li> </ul>
4.5. Capacity Grants to Strengthen/Align RECC	GAAC, RECC				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 11 EC coalitions worked together to determine how best to strengthen and align the regional EC infrastructure</li> <li>• Selected RECC to participate</li> <li>• Meetings held each month</li> <li>• Recommendation plan written and submitted</li> </ul>
<b>Activity 5. Improving Overall Quality of EC Services</b>					
5.1 Provide QRIS coaching	DHHS, UNH				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECPs in identified target communities recruited</li> <li>• 75 Teachers in ECPs received target training &amp; support</li> </ul>
5.2 Provide play-based Kindergarten coaching	UNH, DOE, LEAs				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAs in identified target communities recruited</li> <li>• Coaches and teachers identified specific, measurable, achievable, results-focused, and time-bound goals</li> <li>• Embedded PD provided to kindergarten teachers serving children in target communities</li> </ul>
5.3. Improve the statewide family resource quality	FRCQ				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certification training &amp; re-certification training to family resource centers (FRC) made available to those seeking FRCQ</li> <li>• The network of FRCs that have been designated as FRCQ expanded</li> </ul>
<b>Other Grant Required Activities</b>					
Spark NH PDG staffing	GAAC				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired 1 FTE PDG Coordinator and 1 FTE PDG Admin to oversee, with SP process; RECC work; “Serve &amp; Return” and public awareness campaigns; and “Welcome Parents” web/app work</li> </ul>
Hire project management staff	UNH, CLT				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hired FTE project manager for UNH, DOE, DHHS, and kindergarten entry manager.</li> </ul>
Contractual and service provider contracts	UNH, CLT				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire consultants and create contacts/MOU with contractual partners, including needs assessment strategic planning consultants.</li> </ul>
<p><b>C:</b> Consultant, <b>CCANH:</b> Child Care Aware of New Hampshire, <b>CSS:</b> Cross-Sector Stakeholders, <b>CT:</b> Consulting Team, <b>CLT:</b> Core Leadership Team (DOE, DHHS, UNH, GAAC); <b>GAAC:</b> Governor-appointed advisory council, <b>ECP:</b> EC Program, <b>FRCQ:</b> Family Resource Center of Quality, <b>FSN:</b> Family Support Networks (e.g., Head Start, NH Family Voices, Parent Information Center), <b>GUW:</b> Granite United Way, which runs 211 in NH, <b>NA:</b> Needs Assessment, <b>PC:</b> Parent Consultants, <b>PTAN:</b> Preschool Technical Assistance Network, <b>RCC:</b> Research Computing Center, <b>RECC:</b> Regional EC Coalitions, <b>SPTF:</b> Strategic Planning Task Force</p>					



**(J) Project Performance Evaluation Plan**

NH’s proposed methods and analytical strategies for the process and outcomes evaluation are feasible, comprehensive, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the project (Governance Structure and Activities 1-5), and will contribute to continuous quality improvement, both throughout the planning year and beyond. As reflected in Table J.1, the project will leverage resources from multiple sources (inputs), including the lead agency (UNH) project manager, public and private partners (DHHS, DOE and other members of the leadership team) and a contracted evaluation consultant (TBD) to: 1) implement and monitor the plan ongoing; and 2) ultimately refine and finalize the logic model, evaluation processes, indicators, data collection tools, timelines and data sources as appropriate based on the needs assessment and the strategic plan. The evaluation plan is supported by the project budget, which includes the evaluation consultant and related costs, as well as two parent consultants who will work with the team. It aligns with both the logic model (Figure K.1) and NH’s vision statement that *all children and families are healthy, learning and thriving now and in the future.*

The UNH project manager will recruit, hire and monitor the work of an evaluation consultant, convene the leadership team and support its evaluation-related work. The project manager will also work with NH Family Voices to recruit and support two parent consultants as members of the leadership team. The leadership team will engage in Results-Based Accountability, a data-driven, decision-making framework.

<b>Activity/Input</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Data Collection Tools</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>Governance Coordination</b>			
DHHS/DOE Early Childhood (EC) Integration Team, Leadership Team, Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Landscape of resources</li> <li>• Leveraged resources across state departments</li> <li>• Protocols developed and utilized for increased alignment/integration/collaboration</li> </ul>	Post-survey of DOE and DHHS staff (pre-survey results available in November 2018) Protocols to be developed	Post-survey: August 2019; Last quarter 2019

<b>Need Assessment (NA)</b>			
Parent Consultants, Family Support Network, Regional EC Coalitions, NA Consultant Team, Leadership Team	Needs assessment completed and represents stakeholder and family input	Project Records (qualitative data)	Quarter 1
<b>Strategic Plan (SP)</b>			
Spark NH; Parent Consultants; SP Consultant, Regional EC Coalitions, Leadership Team, Evaluator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic plan created and approved by stakeholders</li> <li>• Data system plan created and approved by stakeholders</li> </ul>	Project Records (qualitative data)	Quarter 3
<b>Regional Infrastructure</b>			
Spark NH, Regional EC Coalitions, Leadership Team, Evaluator, Parent Consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #/% of members of regional coalitions who are from different sectors</li> <li>• #/% of members of regional coalitions who represent families</li> <li>• Outcomes as defined in strategic plan</li> </ul>	Coalition Membership Lists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convening monthly</li> <li>• Quarter 3 – strategic plan</li> </ul>
<b>Parental Knowledge and Choice</b>			
Parent Consultants, Family Support Network, Spark NH, Regional EC Coalitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of families engaged in needs assessment and strategic planning processes</li> </ul>	Project Records	As completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of parents receiving leadership training</li> <li>• % of parents reporting enhanced leadership skills</li> <li>• # of parents participating in Vroom</li> <li>• # of parents participating in the regional EC coalitions</li> </ul>	Attendance Lists Post-Training Survey Vroom app metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As trainings are held</li> <li>• Quarterly</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of EC professionals receiving leadership training</li> <li>• % of EC professionals reporting enhanced leadership skills</li> </ul>	Attendance Lists Post-Training Survey	As trainings are held
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of professionals attending WMG presentation</li> </ul>	Attendance Lists Post-Training Survey	After presentations
	Plan for improved parent education developed		Quarter 3
<b>Program Quality</b>			
Evaluator, Leadership Team, Coaches, UNH	<b>QRIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of coaches identified and trained</li> </ul>	Project Records Attendance Lists Post-Training Survey	As trainings are held

Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of ECPs receiving training on environmental rating scales</li> <li>• % of training attendees who report increased knowledge</li> </ul>		
	<p><b>Kindergarten Coaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # workshops held</li> <li>• # of people participating in workshops</li> <li>• % of participants who report increased understanding</li> </ul>	Project Records Attendance Lists Post-Workshop Survey	As workshops are held

**(J-1) Short and Long-Term Outcomes.** NH has defined short- and long-term outcomes aimed at ultimately creating a comprehensive, coordinated, and sustainable multi-tiered system providing targeted as well as universal services that provide stable transitions across early childhood programs, as listed in Figure K.1. New Hampshire Logic Model. The system would be informed by ongoing parental engagement and supported by public investment in early childhood initiatives. Through a culture of continuous improvement, the state seeks to build quality of the early childhood workforce through quality professional development to increase families’ access to quality EC programs and resources.

**(J-2) Target Population and Communities.** To reach these end goals, the state identified direct outputs of the grant’s priority activities. The direct output and corresponding evaluation metrics outlined in Table J.1 will serve as the basis for the state’s accountability plan. Of foundational importance to the state’s plan is the completion of a comprehensive needs assessment informed by cross-sector stakeholder and family input. See section C for the comprehensive description of the methodology and analysis plan for the needs assessment, including existing data systems and new sources of data being developed. The needs assessment will study the population of children birth to five, overall and for subgroups defined as vulnerable and in rural areas and examine their unduplicated participation in the state’s mixed delivery system. This information will serve as a foundation for the state’s strategic plan (section D), including identifying communities to systematically target for implementation of early childhood care and education and coordinated services, including implementation of activities to

improve parental knowledge and choice (section E), sharing of best practices (section F), and direct efforts to improve program quality (section G) as overseen by the leadership team.

**(J-3) Mixed Delivery System Barriers and Challenges.** Another critical component of the state’s needs assessment and the subsequent strategic plan is to identify barriers to the family’s knowledge of and access to state resources. Moreover, the state will assess current challenges facing early childhood care and education providers and the workforce, with a lens to identify opportunities for more effective use of resources, improvement of facilities, and enhance transitions and service coordination. Data collected will be reviewed by the leadership team and allow for continuous evaluation of progress toward the grant’s short- and long-term outcomes and to develop a strategic plan to guide decision making and make adjustments (section D). This process will also guide the state’s utilization of the needs assessment data and strategic plan to make refinements to the logic model, identify and finalize indicators and metrics necessary to examine the program cost and program implementation reporting and evaluate the state’s progress toward short- and long-term goals. To help assure progress within the one-year time frame and allow for refinement of the logic model and timeline, the leadership team will on a monthly basis evaluate progress on the direct outputs of the priority activities outlined in the state’s logic model (section K). To assist in a systematic, data-driven process to inform continuous learning and improvement efforts, the state has identified specific evaluation metrics (see Table J.1) to quantify the direct outputs.

**(J-4) Development of New Data System and Sources.** An essential direct output of the project focuses on the evaluation of the state’s existing data systems related to early childhood care and education to determine how the state’s disparate infrastructures may be accessed, and data extracted, for use in analyses that measure a child’s advancement through various life stages (see section C details of existing system) and the development of a plan and proof of concept to create the capacity to integrate early childhood data. Through the needs assessment process, the state will seek to identify new sources of data to complement existing systems that will provide a more comprehensive understanding of children’s and families’ use of existing programs and

resources, improve access to and transitions between services, and allow for integration of program data and child longitudinal outcome data needed to inform continuous quality improvement and accountability. Through the development of an integrated data systems strategic plan, recommendations for better developing and integrating early childhood data to improve data for parents, program administrators and policymakers use will be derived.

**(J-5) Finalizing and Utilizing Strategic Plan.** In early August, the leadership team will begin writing the final plan and in early September the plan will be distributed to the strategic plan task force, DHHS and DOE integration team, data systems team, and to regional stakeholders, including parental engagement groups, for final approval. In late September the plan will go to the DHHS and DOE commissioners and Governor for final approval. In addition to the guidance provided by the state’s national expert in developing early childhood care and education strategic plans, the state will work with federal technical assistance providers as the strategic plan is developed to ensure the creation of a plan with specific, measurable, achievable, result-focused, and time-bound recommendations. Upon approval, the plan will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Children and Families for final approval. The approved plan will not only guide the state’s efforts to improve the quality of early childhood care and education programs within the timeframe of the grant, it will serve as the foundation for creating a sustainable mixed delivery system that effectively supports the state’s vision that all children and families are healthy, learning and thriving now and in the future.

**(J-6) Evaluation Metrics.** Metrics for this project are included in Table J.1. During the process of refining the evaluation plan based on the needs assessment and strategic plan, the leadership; team, project evaluator, project manager and parent consultants will identify key evaluation questions to be answered relative to Activities 3-4, and 5 as applicable, such as parent self-report on their use of Vroom strategies, regional coalitions’ self-report on the effectiveness of public awareness tools to increase parent engagement and knowledge of the importance of early childhood development, and early childhood programs’ “buy in” to the revised QRIS.

## **(K) Logic Model**

As depicted in the second column of the logic model (Figure K.1), the state has identified four priorities to address over the course of the planning year: (1) coordination of state governance and corresponding mixed delivery system; (2) advancement of regional infrastructure and coordination between regional and state governance; (3) expansion of families knowledge about effective parenting practices as well as access to and choice about programs to support their families; and (4) enhancement of the current quality of early childhood care and education programs. As described in turn in the following section, to make systematic progress toward these priorities, NH proposes to leverage extant inputs and resources (Figure 1, column 1) to target the five core activities of the grant proposal (column 2) to yield direct outputs of the 1-year planning grant (column 3), which will in turn create a foundation for the state to meet our short-and long-term outcomes (column 4) that are essential to meeting our vision that all NH children and families are healthy, learning, and thriving by ensuring that schools, families, children are kindergarten ready.

**(K-1) Governance Coordination.** It is the aspiration of the state to create a governance structure at the state and regional levels that seamlessly meet the needs of children birth through grade 3 and their families by coordinating programs and services by reducing silos and enhancing efficiency. To reach this aim, with the support of the grant, the state will complete the essential first step of completing a comprehensive evaluation of extant early childhood care and education resources as funded and administered at the federal, state, regional, and local level (see Section C for detailed description of needs assessment process).

To fully articulate and understand the needs of the state’s children and families, as well as the early childhood care and education workforce and programs, a plan has been developed to identify the unduplicated number of children being served by existing programs and the

**Figure K.1.** New Hampshire’s Logic Model

<b>VISION: All children and families of New Hampshire are healthy, learning, and thriving.</b>			
<b>INPUTS</b>	<b>PRIORITY ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>DIRECT OUTPUTS</b>	<b>OUTCOMES &amp; IMPACT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NH Families</li> <li>Early care &amp; education providers</li> <li>Parent leadership &amp; family support organizations</li> <li>Local education agencies</li> <li>Regional early childhood (EC) coalitions</li> <li>Professional development infrastructure</li> <li>211 &amp; referral agencies</li> <li>UNH &amp; Higher Education</li> <li>Needs assessment &amp; strategic plan consultants</li> <li>Philanthropic community</li> <li>DHHS</li> <li>DOE</li> <li>Governor's EC Council</li> </ul>	<p><b>Governance Coordination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop comprehensive landscape of EC resources and needs [Activity1]</li> <li>Create strategic plan to enhance state department coordination [Act.2]</li> <li>Assess EC data system and develop coordinated strategic plan [Act.1,2]</li> </ul> <p><b>Regional Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create opportunities for community agencies &amp; state coordination via regional EC coalitions [Act.1,2,3,4]</li> <li>Develop regional EC coalitions expertise to engage families [Act.3,5]</li> <li>Coordinate developmental screening and care infrastructure [Act.2,3]</li> </ul> <p><b>Parental Knowledge &amp; Choice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage families in needs assessment and strategic planning [Act.1,2]</li> <li>Develop plan for parental outreach and parental leadership training [Act.2,3]</li> <li>Enhance current resource &amp; referral system for families [Act.2,3]</li> </ul> <p><b>Program Quality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinate EC preservice training to create workforce pipeline [Act.4]</li> <li>Revise QRIS and increase program and public awareness [Act.4]</li> <li>Enhance capacity to provide quality targeted in-situ coaching [Act.4,5]</li> <li>Develop method to evaluate program and resource effectiveness [Act.1,2]</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs assessment with cross-sector stakeholders and family input</li> <li>Strategic plan to enhance state’s mixed-delivery system</li> <li>Plan to create a longitudinal integrated data system</li> <li>Cross-sector representation on regional EC coalitions, including family representation</li> <li>Coordination of regional resources strengthen mixed delivery system</li> <li>Public awareness campaign to elevate the significance of families and early childhood care and education</li> <li>Parental leadership training and informational campaign to increase access and evaluate quality of EC resources</li> <li>Evaluation of extant online service directory platforms for families and EC professionals and development of coordination plan</li> <li>Coordination plan EC workforce pipeline and preservice training</li> <li>Revised QRIS, including information campaign and training on Environmental Rating Scale</li> <li>Capacity to provide evidence-based coaching</li> </ul>	<p><b>Short-Term</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coordinated cross-sector EC governance</li> <li>Regional EC infrastructure aligned to state governance</li> <li>Ongoing parental engagement and increase public investment in EC initiatives</li> <li>Cross-sector professional development infrastructure and workforce pipeline</li> <li>Program participation in revised QRIS and coaching</li> </ul> <p><b>Long-Term</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culture of continuous quality improvement</li> <li>Stable transitions across EC programs, including the transition to kindergarten</li> <li>Increased access to quality EC programs and resources</li> <li>Increased child screening and connection to early services</li> <li>Better outcomes for children, families, schools, and communities</li> </ul>

unduplicated number of children awaiting service in such programs. With this information the state can begin to systematically identify possible sources of duplication of efforts, as well as detect limitations in current resources, resulting in the capacity to develop a strategic plan (section D) to increase coordination and efficiency between the DHHS and DOE all while maximizing parental choice (an intended outcome of the efforts of this grant).

Effective coordination of governance also requires that the state has the capacity to share and track longitudinal program, family, and child data between and across governmental divisions. Presently, the majority of NH early childhood data resides in program-based operational databases with little integration of data across programs or longitudinally (section C). With the support of this grant, the state aims to convene representatives overseeing these disparate data systems to evaluate, plan, and conduct a proof of concept test for a cross-sector integrated early learning data system). Moreover, to improve instruction, practices, service, and policies, the needs assessment will also seek to understand the status of how LEAs evaluate the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry and develop a plan to identify measurable indicators of progress that align with the state vision that school readiness not only means that children are meeting the state's indicators of kindergarten readiness (which align with state's early learning and kindergarten standards), but that families and schools are prepared to support children's learning and development.

**(K-2) Regional Infrastructure.** The second priority activity identified by the state is to connect the state-level coordination and planning structure seamlessly to local or regional early childhood development efforts to ensure the effective dissemination of programs and resources to the families and children. Namely, over the course of the grant, NH seeks to create opportunities for family serving agencies to organize and coordinate via the enhancement of extant regional EC coalitions. The focus to build capacity at the regional level is of priority because leadership at the local level is distinctively qualified to understand, communicate, and connect to the unique needs of the children and families in the communities they serve, including understanding community level barrier to access and possible solutions. However, currently in



there is great variability in the capacity of the state's 11 regional EC coalitions to facilitate alignment of community programs and resources, maximize parental leadership, coordinate the sharing of best practices, and support children and family's successful transitions among programs, services, and schools. With support from the grant, the state will be able to increase the diversity of voices represented on the coalitions, including enhancing representation from such sectors as health, early care and education, family support, LEA, and business. In addition, the state sees need to increase family participation in regional governance. As such, regional EC coalitions, will receive training from NH's family support organizations to identify mechanisms to increase family engagement and leadership (section E and G). Such enhanced representation will allow NH to complete a needs assessment that is effectively capture the comprehensive needs of our state as the coalitions will facilitate the data collections efforts at the local level (section C). Moreover, through the cross-sector regional EC coalitions, the state's strategic plan will be informed by regional insights (section D).

A vital focus on developing regional infrastructure is identifying mechanisms for coordination of regional resources to provide developmental screenings and early care and educational support services, including increasing family knowledge and choice (section E) and improving program quality (section G). Namely, using the feedback from the needs assessment process and best practices in implementation science, NH will identify an array of evidence-based family strengthening and family education initiatives that can be selected and scaled by regional EC coalitions to promote and increase involvement family members in the development of their children and the transition from the early childhood care and education system to kindergarten. This approach recognizes regional differences throughout NH while acknowledging that it is important for there to be consistency for families across NH.

**(K-3) Parental Knowledge and Choice.** NH's aspires to create a culture where families are supported to be meaningfully engaged in their child's development, understand what constitutes quality services, can access high-quality services and effective supports, and feel valued by the state as evidenced by the inclusion of family leadership and voices in all levels of

planning that anticipate their needs to thrive and be successful. As outlined in the project description, to progress toward this aspiration under the grant the state will first seek to engage families in both the needs assessment and strategic planning process. Namely, utilizing NH's family support organizations and regional EC coalitions, the state will conduct family surveys and focus groups to understand a family member's existing knowledge of the state's mixed delivery system and their perceived gaps to support their children's optimal development and transition to elementary school. Following the drafting of the strategic plan, community-wide forums will be hosted to inform families and early childhood stakeholders about the plan and facilitate family input into a draft strategic plan.

To help support families to have a greater voice in the advocacy of their children, the state also proposes to provide professional family engagement training for early childhood care and educational programs, as well as, parental leadership training for families across the state. To ensure programs and families have access to these opportunities, the state's family support organizations and regional EC coalitions will collaborate to advertise and recruit programs and families (section E).

Lastly, to reduce barriers to limiting family's knowledge of and choice regarding programs and resources facilitated by the state's mixed delivery system, over the course the grant year the status and effectiveness of the state's existing child care resource and referral systems, will be evaluated by families and early childhood stakeholders. Feedback on the current system will be included in the strategic planning process. In addition, the state will engage in a public awareness campaign to elevate the significance of families and early childhood care and education on the well-being of children, families, and the state. Coupled with explicit information about the resources available to families disseminated on a state and regional level, NH aims to make progress in ensuring increased family access to quality early childhood programs and resources.

**(K-4) Program Quality.** The state's last priority activity to be carried out under the grant year is to build an infrastructure to enhance the quality of existing early childhood care and

education workforce and programs. To reach our goals of a culture of continuous quality improvement and providing families access to quality early childhood care and education programs, it is a priority activity to enhance coordination preservice training among the state's institutes of higher education to create a workforce pipeline across 2-year, 4-year, and graduate programs (section F). Current barriers and strategies to overcome current limitations will be informed by the state's needs assessment (section C) and strategic planning (section D).

The state plan also recognizes the need to support in-service early childhood care and education professions. An initial step to enhancing in-service professional development (PD) is to evaluate the status and coordination of existing PD opportunities (section C) and develop a plan to share cross-sector PD opportunities and resources. An objective of the planning year to continue the state's efforts to revise NH's QRIS, including the use of observational assessments of classroom quality for program rating and facilitate continuous quality improvement. To further support public and program buy-in to the system, in the planning year, NH will provide training to the early childcare providers on the Environmental Rating Scale and engage in a public awareness campaign about the QRIS and the importance of quality. Additionally, of focus for the state is the need to provide individualized coaching to support teachers' and improve teacher-child interactions and instruction, both recognized as a successful means to impact program quality. Currently, NH does not have the infrastructure to provide the individualized supports needed, thus funding from the grant will be dedicated to enhancing the current coaching and training capacity. providing targeted, in-person coaching founded in evidence-based best practice (sections F and G) Such coaching capacity will be enable the state to provide support to early childhood care and education providers to participate in NH's revised QRIS system (currently in revision over the course of the planning year) and to help kindergarten teachers engage in developmentally appropriate play-based learning.

#### **(M) Project Sustainability Plan**

NH has carefully crafted its plan to ensure sustainability both at the state systems level and the project level by building capacity, leveraging and expanding existing efforts and

resources. Projects are launched or expanded with a one-time infusion of resources and built-in sustainability strategies. At the state level, this one-time infusion of funds will enable NH to build state systems that will be sustained with existing resources after the grant period ends. Overall, projects were created to build infrastructure, strengthen collaboration and coordination, improve overall quality, and build the capacity of early childhood care and education programs across the state's mixed delivery system. Moreover, as outlined below, the state will leverage a variety of sources to support the sustainability of the system and activities described in the proposal.

**(M-1) Public Investment.** Through various state and public entities, NH has intentionally worked to build public awareness and support from key constituencies including business leaders, policymakers and government officials. Using evidence-based communication research, NH has developed a suite of tools to effectively translate the science of early childhood development in ways that improve public understanding and support for the policy. To date, the Governor's council, Spark NH, and partners in the regional early childhood (EC) coalitions have presented this evidence-based communication messaging to NH residents including law enforcement, chambers of commerce and business leaders, policymakers, school, and governmental officials. This approach has proven to be highly successful with the public, as well as our target audiences. The 2017 Granite State Poll, a statewide, scientific survey of public opinion relative to policy issues, conducted by the University of New Hampshire's Survey Center found that 74% of respondents believe the early childhood care and education (e.g., child care, preschool, Head Start) system has a lot of impact on the long-term success of children in school and in life and that more than three-quarters of respondents indicated that it was very or somewhat important to invest additional public dollars on: identification of developmental problems (89%); affordable health care for children (88%); child care and preschool (87%); children's emotional behavior care (84%); and voluntary home visiting family support (80%).

**(M-2) Legislation.** Significant policy advancements with regards to early childhood have coincided with public awareness efforts. In 2017 and 2018, the NH Legislature significantly

increased funding for the early childhood care and education system, including increased funding for full-day kindergarten statewide, increasing funding for the child care scholarship program by \$10 million, and passing additional legislation that increases access to quality child care for parents with mental health and substance use disorders. Moreover, investment in home visiting, family resource centers of quality, and high quality early learning for NH's children and families have been established as key priorities among advocates and remain priorities for the upcoming legislative session. The activities and strategies to be undertaken in this grant, including the needs assessment and strategic plan, will help ensure continuation of the state's current momentum toward ensuring that all NH children and families are healthy, learning, and thriving by ensuring coordination among early childhood governance, programs, resources, and schools, driven by family need.

**(M-3) Workforce Investment.** A number of projects included in the plan address capacity-building within both the pre-service and professional development sectors of workforce development. All NH Institutions of Higher Education preparing the early childhood care and education workforce will work to align their programs and curricula to the standards, which will be sustained after the project funds have expired. Our plan to create an integrated professional development web presence will help create a sustainability capacity for current and future professionals' growth within the early childhood field.

The federal Family First Prevention Act (FFPA) will allow the state unprecedented flexibility to fund prevention programming including administrative funds to invest in training and workforce development. The strategic planning process will allow NH to develop a coherent plan across NH's early childhood care and education programs and to maximize the use FFPA and NH Medicaid to sustain professional development proposed in the Preschool Development Grant.

**(M-4) Professional Development.** Funding will allow us to ensure that the standard and quality of care is consistent across early childhood care and education programs in the state. Early childhood and kindergarten teachers will be provided with the coaching and shared best

practices they need to better their quality in ways that benefit children’s physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. These resources will provide early childhood care and education workforce across the state with reliable information that will be valuable and relevant after the conclusion of the grant period. For example, the state will be able to leverage the cultivated experience of both the coaches, and teachers trained by the coaches after the grant term ends to create a state-wide process to strengthen hands-on and active learning in both kindergarten and B-5 classrooms, creating continuity in experiences across the transition to elementary school. Continuation of embedded coaching for local educational agencies and schools will be accomplished using Title 1 and II funds. Moreover, through this support, early childhood programs will develop readiness for engagement in the Pyramid Model and QRIS in the coming years. Because of the integration with ongoing initiatives (e.g., ESSA, Pyramid Model, QRIS), these coaches will be able to continue to support programs under these initiatives. The results of this work will provide DOE, DHHS, and other partners with reliable information that will inform the development of a coordinated, statewide PD system across all sectors.

**(M-5) Early Childhood Council.** Spark NH, the Governor’s early childhood council, maintains a strong infrastructure including a committee structure which includes data, workforce and professional development, and policy. The activities and strategies outlined in the grant proposal, including the needs assessment and strategic plan, align with this committee structure allowing findings to be easily incorporated into the ongoing work of Spark NH.

With ongoing committed funding from the Endowment for Health, Spark NH convenes the regional early childhood coalitions monthly in a community of practice for shared learning and knowledge exchange among the regional coalitions and with Spark NH. Funding has been committed to supporting a national consultant to research other state models for financing regional coalitions and select a NH model that will be incorporated into the policy agenda. Additionally, the existing community of practice will serve as a vehicle to maintain capacity in family engagement statewide.

**(N) Project Budget and Budget Justification - REVISED**

**Table N.1.** Revised Line-Item Budget by Activity

<b>Cost Category</b>	<b>Cost Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Federal Share</b>	<b>Non-Federal Share</b>
<b>Activity 1 - Needs Assessment</b>				
Other	PDG	Parent consultants	\$1,250	
Service Provider	PDG	Cross-sector stakeholders needs assessment meeting facilitation/costs	\$25,000	
Service Provider	PDG	Mapping of early childhood data systems	\$227,780	
Personnel	PDG	Kindergarten entry assessment and transition staff salary	\$52,500	
Fringe	PDG	Kindergarten entry hire @ NICRA 42.3%	\$22,208	
Contractual	PDG	National needs assessment consulting team	\$357,000	
Other	PDG	Needs assessment participate/informant support	\$25,000	
	Match	Matching non-federal support (see Table N.2)		\$306,228
	PDG	Direct Costs (MTDC \$352,488)	\$710,738	
Indirect	PDG	50.5% indirect based on federal agreement	\$178,006	
<b>Total Cost Activity 1</b>			<b>\$888,744</b>	<b>\$306,228</b>
<b>Activity 2 – Strategic Plan</b>				
Other	PDG	Parent consultants	\$1,250	
Service Provider	PDG	Cross-sector stakeholders strategic planning meeting facilitation/costs	\$25,000	
Service Provider	PDG	NH early childhood expert contracts to help drafting plan	\$9,000	
Service Provider	PDG	Implementation science training	\$6,750	
Service Provider	PDG	National expert to lead strategic planning process	\$75,000	
Contractual	PDG	Staffing to oversee strategic planning process	\$49,369	

	Match	Matching non-federal support (see Table N.2)		\$78,500
	PDG	Direct Costs (MTDC \$140,750)	\$166,369	
Indirect	PDG	50.5% indirect based on federal agreement	\$71,079	
<b>Total Cost Activity 2</b>			<b>\$237,448</b>	<b>\$78,500</b>
<b>Activity 3 – Parent Knowledge and Choice</b>				
Other	PDG	Parent consultants	\$8,000	
Contractual	PDG	Parent leadership and engagement pilot workshops	\$159,193	
Contractual	PDG	Capacity grants to design/pilot parent leadership in regional coalition	\$500,000	
Service Provider	PDG	Design web site and mobile application resource for families	\$100,000	
Service Provider	PDG	Parent leadership and web design meeting facilitation and costs	\$25,000	
Contractual	PDG	Public Awareness campaigns for (NH Bedrock and Vroom)	\$250,000	
Service Provider	PDG	Positive Solutions for Families training for coaches and families	\$50,000	
Service Provider	PDG	QRIS communication plan development technical assistance	\$25,000	
Contractual	PDG	Staffing to oversee parent leadership and public awareness work	\$49,369	
	Match	Matching non-federal support (see Table N.2)		\$451,401
	PDG	Direct Costs (MTDC \$250,000)	\$1,116,562	
Indirect	PDG	50.5% indirect based on federal agreement	\$126,250	
<b>Total Cost Activity 3</b>			<b>\$1,292,812</b>	<b>\$451,401</b>
<b>Activity 4 – Sharing Best Practice</b>				
Other	PDG	Parent consultants	\$1,250	
Service Provider	PDG	Professional development infrastructure coordination committee	\$50,000	
Contractual	PDG	Capacity grants to strengthen and align regional EC infrastructure	\$200,000	
Service Provider	PDG	Pyramid Model and iSocial readiness training	\$50,000	



Service Provider	PDG	On-site practicum classrooms for summer training	\$10,000	
Contractual	PDG	Hiring and training of professional development coaches	\$200,000	
Contractual	PDG	Staffing to oversee regional EC infrastructure work	\$41,140	
Service Provider	PDG	Environmental Rating Scale training	\$50,000	
	Match	Matching non-federal support (see Table N.2)		\$256,003
	PDG	Direct Costs (MTDC \$185,000)	\$602,390	
Indirect	PDG	50.5% indirect based on federal agreement	\$93,425	
<b>Total Cost Activity 4</b>			<b>\$695,815</b>	<b>\$256,003</b>
<b>Activity 5 – Improving Quality</b>				
Other	PDG	Parent consultants	\$720	
Contractual	PDG	Early Childhood Program QRIS coaching and LEA play-based coaching	\$150,000	
Service Provider	PDG	Certification of family resource centers of quality	\$6,500	
Service Provider	PDG	Stipends to compensate for coaching	\$29,900	
	Match			\$71,754
	PDG	Direct Costs (MTDC \$36,400)	\$187,120	
Indirect	PDG	50.5% indirect based on federal agreement	\$18,382	
<b>Total Cost Activity 5</b>			<b>\$205,502</b>	<b>\$71,754</b>
<b>Other Grant Required Activities</b>				
Personnel	PDG	Grant Project Manager salary	\$61,250	
Fringe	PDG	Grant Project Manager fringe @ NICRA 42.3%	\$25,908	
Personnel	PDG	Principal Investigator and Co-PI salary (academic year)	\$20,981	
Fringe	PDG	Principal Investigator and Co-PI fringe @ NICRA 42.3%	\$8,875	
Personnel	PDG	Principal Investigator and Co-PI salary (summer)	\$18,649	

Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five – New Hampshire  
 Revised Budget

January 18, 2019

Fringe	PDG	Faculty summer fringe @ NICRA rate 8.4%	\$1,567	
Personnel	PDG	Department of Education (DOE) grant contracted staff salary	\$52,500	
Fringe	PDG	DOE grant contracted staff fringe @ NICRA 42.3%	\$22,208	
Personnel	PDG	Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) grant contracted staff salary	\$52,500	
Fringe	PDG	DHHS grant contracted staff fringe @ NICRA 42.3%	\$22,208	
Materials/Supplies	PDG	Printing, mailing, and computers	\$10,273	
Service Provider	PDG	External program performance evaluation	\$35,720	
Travel	PDG	In-state travel for meetings, focus groups, survey distribution	\$10,000	
Travel	PDG	Required grantee travel	\$5,028	
	PDG	Direct Costs	\$347,665	
Indirect	PDG	50.5% indirect based on federal agreement	\$175,571	
<b>Total Cost Other Grant Required Activities</b>			<b>\$523,237</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Grant Budget</b>			<b>\$3,843,557</b>	<b>\$1,163,885</b>
<b>Total Percent Non-Federal Cost Share Match</b>				<b>30.28%</b>

**Table N.2.** Revised budget justification based on Budget Information Standard Form (SF-424A)

<b>Personnel</b>	<b>Total Requested Funds = \$258,379</b>
<p><b>Kimberly Nesbitt., Project Investigator (.13 FTE).</b> Dr. Nesbitt will serve as Principal Investigator and will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the proposed project, including serving on the grant’s core leadership team and overseeing the training of the proposed coaches to be hired as part of grant. This application is requesting \$9,893 to support Ms. Nesbitt’s time during the Academic year and \$8,793 during the summer.</p>	
<p><b>Eun Kyeong Cho., Co-Project Investigator (.13 FTE).</b> Dr. Cho will assist Dr. Nesbitt in the overall responsibility for the implementation of the proposed project. She will be specifically responsible for overseeing efforts to align profession development systems. This application is requesting \$11,087 to support Ms. Cho’s time during the Academic year and \$9,856 during the summer.</p>	
<p><b>TBN, Project Manager (.88 FTE).</b> The project manager will be responsible for implementing and managing the grant activities and ensuring coordination with the grants subcontractors and service providers will report to the Project Investigator. \$61,250 is requested to support the position. <i>This is a reduction from the original budget to account for the later start date of the project.</i></p>	
<p><b>TBN, Department of Education Manager (.88 FTE).</b> The DOE project managers will be responsible for coordinating and managing grant activities for tasks that directly align with the programs and services overseen by DOE. The position will serve as the liaison between the UNH project team and the DOE. \$52,500 is requested to support the position. <i>This is a reduction from the original budget to account for the later start date of the project.</i></p>	
<p><b>TBN, Department of Health and Human Services Manager (.88 FTE).</b> The DHHS project managers will be responsible for managing grant activities for tasks that directly align with the programs and services overseen by DOE. \$52,500 is requested to support the position. <i>This is a reduction from the original budget to account for the later start date of the project.</i></p>	
<p><b>TBN, Kindergarten Entry Manager (.88 FTE).</b> The planning process will include exploring the possibility of piloting state-funded prekindergarten in one or two high need communities, as well as generating recommendations for a universal Kindergarten Entry Assessment The kindergarten entry manager will verse this process, with \$52,500 to support the position. <i>This is a reduction from the original budget to account for the later start date of the project.</i></p>	
<p><b>Fringe Benefits</b></p> <p>The University’s fringe benefit rates are federally approved. The rates applicable to this application are 42.3% for full fringe benefits and 8.4% for partial fringe benefits. The “partial fringe” rate applies to non-student hourly wages, faculty summer salaries and other exceptions to contract pay, and FICA-eligible graduate student pay (i.e. summer stipends). The “full fringe” rate applies to all other benefits-eligible wages. <i>Fringe benefits costs are reduced because the later start date and reduced award reduced total personnel costs.</i></p>	<b>Total Requested Funds = \$102,972</b>
<p><b>Travel</b></p> <p>Projected expenses include mileage reimbursement for in and out of state travel needed to accomplish project goals, including attending grant management meetings to send four staff members to the required 3-day Grantee Meeting in DC. Mileage is reimbursed at the current federal rate. <i>This amount was increase by \$2,000 provide mileage needed to account conduct needs assessment.</i></p>	<b>Total Requested Funds = \$15,028</b>

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<b>Other Direct Costs</b>	<b>Total Requested Funds = \$10,273</b>
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**Materials & Supplies.** *Though not accounted for in the original budget, to cover project materials and supplies needed for the day-to-day operations of the grant, the revised budget includes \$10,273 for materials and supplies.*

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<b>Contractual</b>	<b>Total Requested Funds = \$1,956,072</b>
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**Child Care Aware of NH.** The state’s child care resource and referral agency will serve in an advisory role in the implementation of the grant and the sharing of best practices and professional development, including hiring and assisting in the training of 5 coaches who will complete embedded professional development. This application is requesting \$350,000 to support the costs of CCA of NH. *The amount is a reduction from the prior budget in order to focus grant dollars on the state’s needs assessment and strategic plan as findings will inform the professional development needs of the state.*

**NH Family Voices and Parent Information Center of NH.** Family-to-family information and referral center and a statewide family organization, respectively, together they will assist in designing and implementing family leadership and engagement activities, including hiring parent consultants and assist with the needs assessment and strategic plan development. This application is requesting \$159,193 to support the costs of the work. *This cost remains unchanged.*

**Regional Early Childhood Coalition.** NH’s Regional EC coalition work to promote optimal development for children birth through 5 in their communities. Coalitions will engage and empower families to participate in the needs assessment, strategic plan, and family engagement activities proposed. They will also engage in extensive cross-sector systems building. This application is requesting \$700,000 to support the work of the coalitions. *This is a reduction from the original budget to reflect the shortened project timeline.*

**Spark NH.** Spark NH, the governor-appointed early childhood advisory council, will serve in an advisory capacity to the grant and will provide leadership of the strategic planning and the public awareness campaign, coordinate improvement of family resource and referral tools and provide coordination and leadership to help facilitate the development of cross-sector and cross-departmental systems and programs. To assist in the state’s plan to effectively engage families, the Governor’s early childhood council will train community members and regional early childhood leaders on how to conduct their research-based public awareness presentation and promote parental serve and return interactions with their young children utilizing Vroom. This application is requesting \$389,879 to support the costs of Spark NH. *Originally the costs the work to be completed by Spark NH were allocated across two line items (other direct costs and contractual), it has been allocated in this budget as a single contract. The budget to provide training to parents has also been reduced slightly to reflect the reduced timeline of the study.*

**TBN, Needs Assessment Consulting Team.** The needs assessment process will be led by an expert national consulting team with extensive experience in conducting large-scale compensative, needs-assessments related to early childhood care and education. The needs assessment consulting team will have prior experience working with NH stakeholders and advanced knowledge of measurement and quantitative and qualitative statistics. Based on these criteria, the lead agency will select the consultant in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. This application is requesting \$357,000 to support consulting team. *This cost remains unchanged.*

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<b>Service Providers</b>	<b>Total Requested Funds = \$800,650</b>
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**Early Childhood Higher Education Roundtable.** The roundtable is committee of representatives for NH institutes of higher education that provide preservice training in early childhood care and education. Over the course of the grant the roundtable will identify strategies to coordinate preservice training and make recommendations for the strategic plan. This application is requesting \$50,000 to support the work. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**Environmental Rating Scale.** To ready centers to participate in the revised QRIS, the state will provide introductory overview training on the ERS to a minimum of 50 programs and provide in-depth coaching, coder, and stakeholder training to be hired under the grant. This application is requesting \$50,000 to support the costs of the training. *The amount is a reduction from the prior budget in order to focus grant dollars on the state’s needs assessment and strategic plan as findings will inform the professional development needs of the state.*

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**Family Resource Centers of Quality.** Certification and re-certification training have already been developed and NH has trainer capacity and will be offer to professionals working in family support programs serving children and families. This application is requesting \$6,500 to support the costs of Family Resource Centers of Quality. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**Preschool Technical Assistance Network.** To expand current work in the DOE and DHHS to utilize the Pyramid Model and provide iSocial training, PTAN will complete trainings for local leaders in 4 regions of state as well as in-program training for approximately 10 programs. This application is requesting \$50,000 to support the costs of the work. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**Project Launch NH.** Positive Solutions for Families is an evidence-based series developed as part of the Pyramid Model framework to help parents and caregivers promote their young child's social and emotional development. A part of the grant Project Launch NH will arrange for facilitators to offer two 6-week training on the series, including providing stipends to support family attendance. This application is requesting \$50,000 to support the costs of the work. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**TBN, Child Care and Education Experts.** To guide and evaluate the efficacy of the needs assessment and strategic plan, the grant allocates \$9,000 to compensate experts in child care and education. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**TBN, QRIS Communication Team.** To assist in the development of a communication and dissemination of the state’s revised Quality Rating and Improvement System, the application is requesting \$25,000. The vendor will help develop marketing tools and materials to increase public awareness. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**TBN, External Evaluator.** To ensure and confirm progress is made in accordance to these expectations, the state will hire an external program evaluator. The evaluator will collaborate with the project core leadership team to ensure that progress on key milestone are met. This application is requesting \$35,720 to support the costs of the external project evaluator. *This cost remains unchanged.*

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**TBN, Meeting Facilitation Team.** To ensure transparency and accountability in all meetings held as part of the grant activities, all meeting with cross-sector stakeholder, including those that are open to the public, will be prepared, facilitated, and documented by a company external to the grant. This application is requesting \$75,000 to support the costs for meeting facilitation, including the costs to administer such meeting. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**TBN, Program Participation.** This application is requesting \$29,900 to support programs and schools’ participation in embedded professional development and needs assessment data collection.

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**TBN, Strategic Planning Consultant.** The state’s completion of the strategic plan will be overseen by a national expert in developing early childhood care and education strategic plans with experience working with NH stakeholders and successfully completing strategic plans for large municipalities and/or states. Based on these criteria, the lead agency will select the consultant in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open, and free competition. This application is requesting \$75,000 to support consulting team. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**TBN, Website Development.** The state seeks to understand the strengths and limitations of the state’s current resource and referral systems (NH 211™ and Child Care Aware NH) and design a free and user-friendly web-based resource to help families identify quality resources and services. This application is requesting \$100,000 to support the costs for the completion this work. *This is a reduction from the original budget as the work to be completed is focus on website development and not the development of an application tool.*

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**UNH Institute on Disability.** The IOD will provide the strategic planning task force implementation science training to help them learn to systematically evaluate the state’s current family strengthening and parent education program. This application is requesting \$6,750 to support the costs of UNH IOD. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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**UNH Research Computing Center.** The RCC will be responsible to convene DHHS and DOE data systems representatives to evaluate the extant data system on a monthly basis, including identify current barriers to creating an integrated longitudinal data system. They will develop a strategic plan for the state and conduct a proof-of-concept data test. This application is requesting \$227,780 to support the costs of UNH RCC. *This is a slight increase from the prior budget to provide additional staff time to support this aspect of the needs assessment.*

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**UNH Child Study and Development Center.** To facilitate the training of coaches, UNH’s laboratory school will provide summer workshops and in-situ training for coaches. The grant requests \$10,000 to cover the costs of using the facility. *This cost remains unchanged from original budget.*

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<b>Participant Support</b>	<b>Total Requested Funds = \$37,470</b>
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This application is requesting \$37,470 to support participants (drawn from teachers, programs, and schools’ participation) in embedded professional development and needs assessment data collection. *The proposed amount is slightly less than the original budget to account for the reduction in coaching support (Activity 5) due to the shortened project timeline.*

<b>Facilities &amp; Administrative</b>	<b>Total Requested Funds = \$662,713</b>
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This application is requesting \$662,713 to support the facilities and administrative charges associated with this project. The indirect cost rate calculated at 50.5% of direct costs based on the indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services. Certification

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of this agreement is provided in the Appendices. *This is a substantial reduction from the original budget (\$1,463,497).*

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**Non-Federal Cost Sharing.** With the support of the state (DOE), non-profit agencies (Early Learning NH), and statewide foundations (Endowment for Health and NH Charitable foundation), NH was able to identify \$1,163,885 to be accepted as part of the cost sharing, which represents a match of 30.28%. A summary of commitments is provided in Table N.3. The lead agency has confirmed that the funds allocated for grant match are from non-Federal sources and are not being claimed as matching sources for another Federal award. Signed letters of match for each source are on file with the grant’s lead agency.

**Table N.3.** Revised Non-Federal Cost Share Match

<b>Source</b>	<b>Organization Type</b>	<b>Amount</b>
NH Department of Education	State Agency	\$325,000
Early Learning NH	Nonprofit Agency	\$213,000
Endowment for Health	Statewide Foundation	\$188,560
NH Charitable Foundation	Statewide Foundation	\$437,325
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>\$1,163,885</b>



**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

**CHRISTOPHER T. SUNUNU**  
Governor

October 24, 2018

Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five  
Mr. Richard Gonzales  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families  
Office of Child Care  
330 C Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Gonzales:

As the father of three young children, I have joined nearly 1,000 New Hampshire citizens who have taken a pledge to help ensure that all of New Hampshire's children and their families are healthy, learning, and thriving now and in the future. I understand the critical nature of the early years on children's well-being and development, as well as the importance of public and private investments in young children and their families to build strong foundations for future growth.

Over the past two years, I have made early childhood care and education a top priority in New Hampshire. In 2017, I signed legislation to increase funding for full-day kindergarten (SB 191-FN), recognized the need for kindergarten to be based on child-directed experiences and play-based learning (HB 1499), and established family resource centers of quality to provide parent education and include supports for children birth to age 5 (HB 538). First Lady Valerie Sununu, a teacher by profession, and I convened "A Collective Vision for New Hampshire Early Childhood Education (ECE)," a four-part series of cross-sector gatherings over the past year, to help identify the challenges and opportunities for our children and families. I have supported reorganization efforts within and across the Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Education (DOE) departments toward increased collaboration and integration of our work on behalf of children and families. Lastly, my FY 20-21 Executive Budget Proposal will include an increase in general funds to support the development of our state's Quality Rating and Improvement System.

The University of New Hampshire (UNH), New Hampshire's flagship research institution, is my designee to serve as lead agency for New Hampshire's project. As such, UNH will work in close partnership with DHHS, DOE, the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council, and other key public and private agencies and organizations on all aspects of the project, as described in our proposal. UNH was selected as lead agency based on its demonstrated capacity to secure and implement grants, including fiscal, administrative and performance management, and to leverage resources. Staff is well respected among the ECE community and has the research and statistical expertise, knowledge and pedagogical experience to inform various aspects of the project, as well as expertise in serving diverse geographic areas and populations. UNH is also known historically for engaging diverse stakeholders at the local, regional, and state levels and partnering with state agencies to achieve a common vision, including most recently in organizing the above-referenced "Collective Vision" series on behalf of my office.



New Hampshire takes pride in our progress toward building a mixed delivery system of high quality early childhood care and education programs where all children thrive, families are engaged and schools and communities are prepared to offer children opportunities to reach their full potential. However, there is still much work to be done to achieve this vision, particularly in the face of challenges, such as the opioid crisis and its impact on children and families, lack of state funded preschool and significant shortage of infant/toddler teachers and programs.

The Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five will bring greatly needed resources to New Hampshire at a time when broad-based support for ECE has never been greater. This funding, when leveraged with public and private resources in our state, will enable New Hampshire to advance our early childhood care and education system in ways that would otherwise not be possible.

Sincerely,



Christopher T. Sununu  
Governor of New Hampshire



Frank Edelblut  
Commissioner

Christine M. Brennan  
Deputy Commissioner

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
101 Pleasant Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
TEL. (603) 271-3495  
FAX (603) 271-1953

November 5, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter of support for the Preschool Development Grant application on behalf of the New Hampshire Department of Education and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services.

This opportunity will allow us to better assess the needs of children and families in New Hampshire and work to bring all the partners in the early childhood system together to create a plan to address those needs in a way that best supports children and families.

If successfully funded, this work will allow us to:

- plan to build on existing best practices;
- deepen cross-sector relationships to give families better choices and better connected services to meet their needs;
- support school readiness;
- improve transitions for children and families;
- align and strengthen delivery of services;
- improve participation and program quality; and
- expand parental choice and knowledge

This work would enhance, strengthen and continue to build on our early childhood system in the support of our New Hampshire families; ensuring our children are healthy, learning, and thriving.

We look forward to this collaboration.

Best,

Handwritten signature of Frank Edelblut in blue ink.

Frank Edelblut  
Commissioner of Education

Handwritten signature of Jeffrey Meyers in blue ink.

Jeffrey Meyers  
Commissioner of Health & Human Services

**CURRENT**

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Program Specialist III**

**COMMISSIONER**

**Attorney III**

**Program Assistant I**

**Deputy Commissioner**

**Director of Communications**  
Program Specialist IV

**Office of the Deputy Commissioner**

**Office of Business Management**

**Division of Learner Support**

**Division of Educator And Analytic Resources**

**Division of Educator Support & Higher Education**

**Division of Workforce Innovation**

**Executive Project Manager**

**Division Director**

**Division Director**

**Division Director**

Bureau of Disability Determination Services

Accounting Services

Bureau of Career Development

Bureau of Educational Statistics

Administration & Veterans State Approvals & Career School Licensing

Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation

Fiscal Management

Bureau of Instructional Support

Bureau of Educational Opportunities

Administrative Support Colleges and Universities

Bureau of Youth Workforce

Human Resource Management

Bureau of Student Support

Bureau of School Facilities

Bureau of Credentialing

**GOVERNANCE UNIT**

Bureau of Student Wellness

Bureau of Federal Compliance

**Attorney IV**

Bureau of Adult Education



# NH Department of Health and Human Services

## DHHS Overview\*

Office of the  
Commissioner

- Administrative Business Supports
- Legal & Regulatory
  - Program Planning & Integrity
  - Quality Assurance & Improvement
  - Health Equity
  - Finance

### Population Health

#### Division of Public Health

- Population Health & Community Services
- Infectious Disease Control
- Public Health Protection
- Laboratory Services
- Public Health Statistics and Information
- Public Health Systems, Policy & Performance
- State Epidemiologist

#### Division of Medicaid Services

- Clinical Operations
- Medicaid Policy
- Dental Services
- Health Care Reform
- Managed Care

### DHHS 24/7 Facilities

- **New Hampshire Hospital**
- **Glenclyff Home for the Elderly**
- **Sununu Youth Services Center**
- **Designated Receiving Facility**

September 2018

\* Overview represents DHHS program areas, functions and business entities, not necessarily reporting structures.

### Human Services & Behavioral Health

#### Division of Economic & Housing Stability

- Family Assistance
- Employment Supports
- Housing Supports
- Child Support Services
- Child Development & Head Start Collaboration

#### Division for Behavioral Health

- Mental Health
- Drug & Alcohol Services
- Children's Mental Health

#### Division of Long Term Supports & Services

- Adult Protection Services
- Elderly & Adult Services
- Developmental Services
- Designated Receiving Facility
- Special Medical Services
- Community Based Military Programs

#### Division for Children, Youth & Families

- Field Services
- Family, Community & Program Support
- Organizational Learning & Quality Improvement
- Sununu Youth Services Center

### Operations

#### Bureau of Information Services

- Data Management
- Data Warehouse
- Information Security
- Medicaid Management Information System
- DHHS Systems Oversight
- Linkage to DoIT

#### Bureau of Human Resource Management

- Organizational Development & Training Services

#### Bureau of Facilities Maintenance & Office Services

- HHS Facilities & State Office
- Safety & Wellness
- Office Services
- Oversight – Institutional Services

#### Communications Bureau

#### Emergency Services Unit

#### Employee Assistance Program

## BUDGET: INDIRECT COST INFORMATION

To request reimbursement for indirect costs, please answer the following questions:

<p>Does the State have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government?</p> <p>YES     <input checked="" type="radio"/></p> <p>NO      <input type="radio"/></p> <p>If yes to question 1, please provide the following information:</p> <p>Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (mm/dd/yyyy):</p> <p>From: 291234239      To: 8152423;</p> <p>Approving Federal agency:    <input type="checkbox"/>ED    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>HHS    <input type="checkbox"/>Other</p> <p>(Please specify agency): _____</p>
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Directions for this form:

1. Indicate whether or not the State has an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement that was approved by the Federal government.
2. If "No" is checked, the Departments generally will authorize grantees to use a temporary rate of 10 percent of budgeted salaries and wages subject to the following limitations:
  - (a) The grantee must submit an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency within 90 days after the grant award notification is issued; and
  - (b) If after the 90-day period, the grantee has not submitted an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency, the grantee may not charge its grant for indirect costs until it has negotiated an indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant agency.

If "Yes" is checked, indicate the beginning and ending dates covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. In addition, indicate whether ED, HHS, or another Federal agency (Other) issued the approved agreement. If "Other" was checked, specify the name of the agency that issued the approved agreement.