Georgia's Program Performance Evaluation Plan

December 8, 2020 (Working Copy)

Table of Contents

Introduction

The state of Georgia (GA) received a Preschool Development Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Initial Grant Award in January 2019[1] led by Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). The PDG B-5 Initial Grant was used to conduct a statewide early child care and education (ECCE) needs assessment; develop a statewide strategic plan to strengthen the state's ECCE system; create resources to inform families about available programs and services; develop opportunities for early childhood educators to share best practices; and create supports for GA's dual language learners and their families.

States that received the PDG B-5 Initial Grant were eligible to apply for a three-year Renewal Grant. GA submitted an application in October 2019 and was awarded a PDG B-5 Renewal Grant in January 2020. One of the Initial Grant requirements was to develop a plan for a program performance evaluation (PPE) to be used in subsequent years of the PDG B-5. In this document, DECAL and Child Trends present the PPE plan for GA's PDG B-5 Renewal Grant. The PPE plan is organized to align with guidance on developing performance evaluation plans provided by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to PDG B-5 grantees.[2]

This PPE plan will serve as a mechanism to support the state in monitoring and evaluating its PDG B-5 Renewal Grant activities. The PPE plan outlines how the state will measure performance for each of the grant's activities, assess progress, identify issues that may arise, and make modifications as needed to support continuous quality improvement (CQI). The intended audience for the PPE plan includes a diverse group of stakeholders from GA's mixed-delivery system including the Cross Agency Council (CAC; the leadership group for GA's PDG B-5 with representatives from all relevant child and family-serving agencies), GA's Children's Cabinet (state early childhood advisory council), DECAL staff, staff in partner agencies, and child advocacy partners affiliated with the PDG B-5 activities.

There are three main goals of GA's PPE:

1. Monitor and assess progress towards GA's PDG B-5 goals and objectives;

2. Provide information that can be incorporated into the state's CQI efforts; and

3. Improve understanding of issues related to access, quality, and transitions within GA's existing mixed-delivery system.

To learn about progress towards these goals, the PPE will address three overarching evaluation questions for each PDG B-5 project/activity:

1. To what extent is the project/activity implemented as planned, including reaching intended focal populations (i.e., children living in poverty, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, children with disabilities, and children who live in rural areas)?

2. To what extent is the project/activity achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks (i.e., outputs and key action plan steps)?

3. To what extent is the project/activity achieving anticipated long-term outcomes (i.e., outcomes expected at or near the end of the three-year grant period)?

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[1] PDG B-5 Initial Grants were intended to last only one year. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they were extended for a second year, through 2020.

[2] Administration for Children and Families Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Program Performance Evaluation Initial Guidance

Prior to implementation of the PPE plan, DECAL will review these four goals and three evaluation questions, as well as this document's proposed approach, to ensure they still align with GA's PDG B-5 goals, objectives, and intended outcomes. The PPE plan should be iterative and evolve to keep pace with the maturation of GA's PDG B-5 activities and information needs of key stakeholders.

Overview

The PPE plan describes DECAL's overall approach to evaluating GA's PDG B-5 Grant. It includes detailed information for evaluating a subset of eight PDG B-5 projects that are at a stage of development where it is possible to identify indicators and data sources. This PPE plan is referred to as a working copy because it is intended to be iterative and updated as projects evolve. The need for a flexible, iterative approach is especially important in the current environment, where the COVID-19 pandemic continues to substantially impact the lives of families, ECCE providers, and other early childhood stakeholders. DECAL will continue to review proposed projects and determine changes that are needed in light of the pandemic. As PDG B-5 projects are further developed, this working copy of the PPE plan will be updated.

GA's PDG B-5 Renewal Grant includes six activities, with 20 associated projects (see Table 1) that align with their Strategic Plan goals:

- **Goal 1:** Establish a data and research agenda that enhances informed decision making in support of the effective and efficient delivery of early childhood programs and services in Georgia, especially in children in underserved and vulnerable populations;

- **Goal 2:** Foster authentic family engagement to strengthen family voice and engage families in their children's care and education;

- **Goal 3:** Increase access to high quality programs to meet the unique developmental and familial needs of each and every child in Georgia, especially in underserved and vulnerable populations;

- **Goal 4:** Recruit, retain, and diversify a professional early learning workforce that supports high-quality early childhood program and services in Georgia; and

- **Goal 5:** Ensure alignment, integration, and coordination within Georgia's mixed-delivery system to better meet the needs of each and every child, especially within underserved and vulnerable populations.

GA's PDG Renewal Grant includes 20 projects that align with six broad activities. Two of the 20 projects are the GA Statewide Birth-5 Needs Assessment and the Strategic Plan, both of which were initiated as part of the PDG B-5 Initial Grant and will be updated as part of the Renewal Grant. Three of the projects focus on researching key issues, such as how families access early childhood education services or innovative efforts to strengthen and diversify the early childhood workforce. Examples include an evaluation of the DECAL Scholars program and understanding how families access ECCE and connect to community services. Other projects build upon lessons learned from the Initial Grant with strategies to improve the mixed-delivery system.

Table 1 lists the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant activities and associated projects.

**Table 1.** PDG B-5 Renewal Grant activities

PDG B-5 Renewal Grant Activity	Project(s)
Activity 1: B-5 Needs Assessment	Conduct Needs Assessment in planning year
	Conduct data collection and research on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on focal programs and focal B-5 populations including: • STABLE survey on child care programs • Focus groups with focal populations • Key informant interviews
Activity 1: B-5 Needs Assessment (continued)	Conduct research related to findings in the Needs Assessment including: • Landscape of infant early childhood mental services and credentials statewide (build on current analysis) • Study of access to and quality of home visiting services • Study of the economic impact of the early learning industry • Study of the cost of quality (cost modeling)
Activity 2: B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan	Develop Strategic Plan in Initial Grant year; monitor progress throughout the grant period
Activity 3: Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge	Expand Family Peer Ambassadors Program
	Implement Parent Cafés
	Create a Cross-Agency Family Council
	Update Developmental milestones website
	Develop family friendly licensing reports and child care program services reports
	Conduct a study to understand how families access early intervention services, navigate enrollment and transitions, and connect to needed resources
	Expand Two- Generation Innovation Grants to support PDG focal populations
Activity 4: Sharing Best Practices and Professional	Update workforce knowledge and competencies (WKCs) for administrators, technical assistance providers, and trainers

PDG B-5 Renewal Grant Activity	Project(s)
Development for the Early Childhood Workforce	Develop alternate pathways for bilingual professionals, high school students, and non-traditional students
	Evaluate and update the DECAL Scholars program
	Update Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) trainings and resources, including Planning Educational Activities for Children (PEACH)
	Develop a cadre of early learning coaches
	Expand Early Learning Leadership Collaborative grants focused on trauma-responsive care
Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality and Service Integration, Expanding Access, and Developing New Programs	Revise the Quality Rated system, including implementing the Temporary Alternative Rating Option initiative
	Enhance Quality Rated technical assistance
	Develop and pilot a Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsement
	Pilot Family Child Care Learning Home Hubs
	Create community grants to better support children and families from focal populations
Activity 6: Monitoring, Evaluation, Data Use for Continuous Improvement, Meaningful Governance and Stakeholder Engagement	Implement Cross Agency Child Data System (CACDS) Strategic Plan to update and strengthen CACDS (improved data sets, increased data literacy at the state and community level, enhanced reporting features).

Timeline

Figure 1 illustrates key dates during the PDG B-5 grant period and the PPE.

Figure 1. PDG B-5 timeline
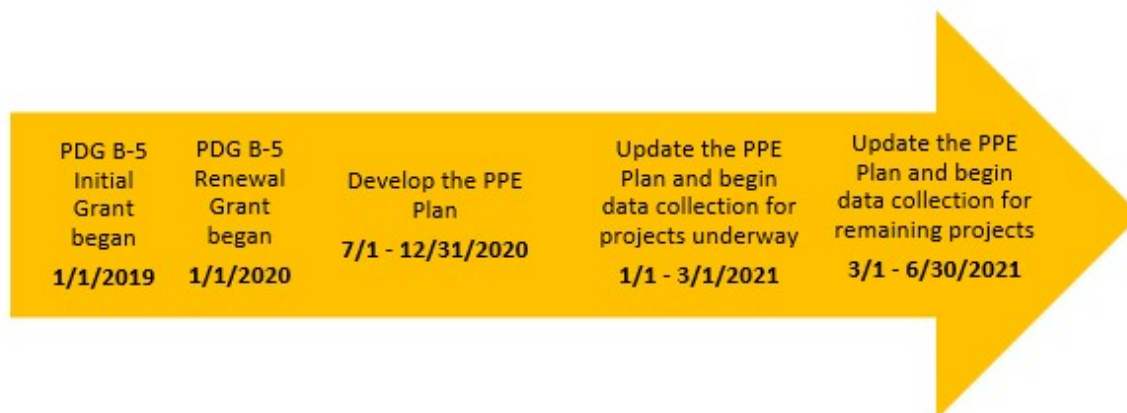
PPE plan development to date

Between July and December 2020, DECAL worked with Child Trends, a national research and evaluation organization, to develop this working copy of the PPE plan. During this time, DECAL collaborated with Child Trends to create the PPE goals and overarching approach. Child Trends and DECAL then identified eight projects that were underway and ready for more detailed PPE planning. To develop PPE plans for these eight projects, Child Trends met with lead project staff to gather input on the key learning questions that will guide their CQI efforts. Lead project staff also provided input on the indicators and data sources that will be used to address their key learning questions and assess progress towards the PDG B-5 goals. Child Trends used the information learned during these meetings to draft tables that summarize the indicators, data sources, and data collection partners for each of the eight projects. DECAL's PDG B-5 management team then contributed feedback on the tables, and Child Trends revised them to finalize this working copy of the PPE plan. The tables are presented in Appendix A.

Continued PPE plan implementation

Whereas some projects collected limited PPE information prior to the development the PPE plan, formal implementation of the PPE plan is projected to start in January 2021. Initial PPE plan implementation tasks include:

- Refining key learning questions, as needed;
- Refining indicators, as needed;
- Identifying existing data sources and planning for the development of new data sources;
- Developing timelines for data collection;
- Developing reporting tools, templates, etc.; and
- Formalizing processes for how PPE findings will be used by lead project staff and relevant partners (e.g., child care resource and referral [CCR&R] agencies) for CQI.

Table 2 summarizes the anticipated overarching timelines for PPE reporting tasks.

Table 2. Anticipated timeline for reporting tasks

Tasks	Estimated Timeline
Lead project staff submit project updates	Quarterly
External research and evaluation partners submit reports and participate in monitoring and CQI discussion with DECAL, as needed	Quarterly
DECAL submits *Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Renewal Grant Performance Progress Report*	Yearly

Throughout the course of the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant, DECAL will review the PPE plan and revise it, as needed, to align with updates to the Needs Assessment, Strategic Plan, and project plans and approaches.

PPE Resources

Staffing roles and responsibilities

DECAL's Research and Policy Analysis team will oversee PPE processes, ensure that the PPE aligns with other PDG B-5 Renewal Grant activities, and manage external PDG B-5 research contracts. A Research and Policy Analysis team member will be assigned to each project and will assist with implementation of the project's PPE tasks. The Cross-Agency Child Data System (CACDS) Research Committee will oversee the CACDS research agenda. Finally, PDG B-5 lead project staff will play a key role in implementing the PPE plan as collaborative partners in ensuring relevant data is collected to inform CQI, data collection procedures are feasible and reach PDG B-5 project participants, assisting with the interpretation of findings, and using findings to improve project approaches.

PPE partners

Several key external entities will partner with DECAL to support the implementation of the PPE plan. Lead researchers from Child Trends and the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia will help design evaluation strategies. As needed, they will collect data, analyze and submit findings, and participate in CQI, offering recommendations when applicable. DECAL will convene a diverse group of partners, including lead project staff and research partners, on an annual basis, where partners will share PPE findings.

Budget

A detailed budget outlining the specific costs for the PPE, including both the monitoring and evaluation efforts, will be developed in January 2021 when this work is anticipated to begin.
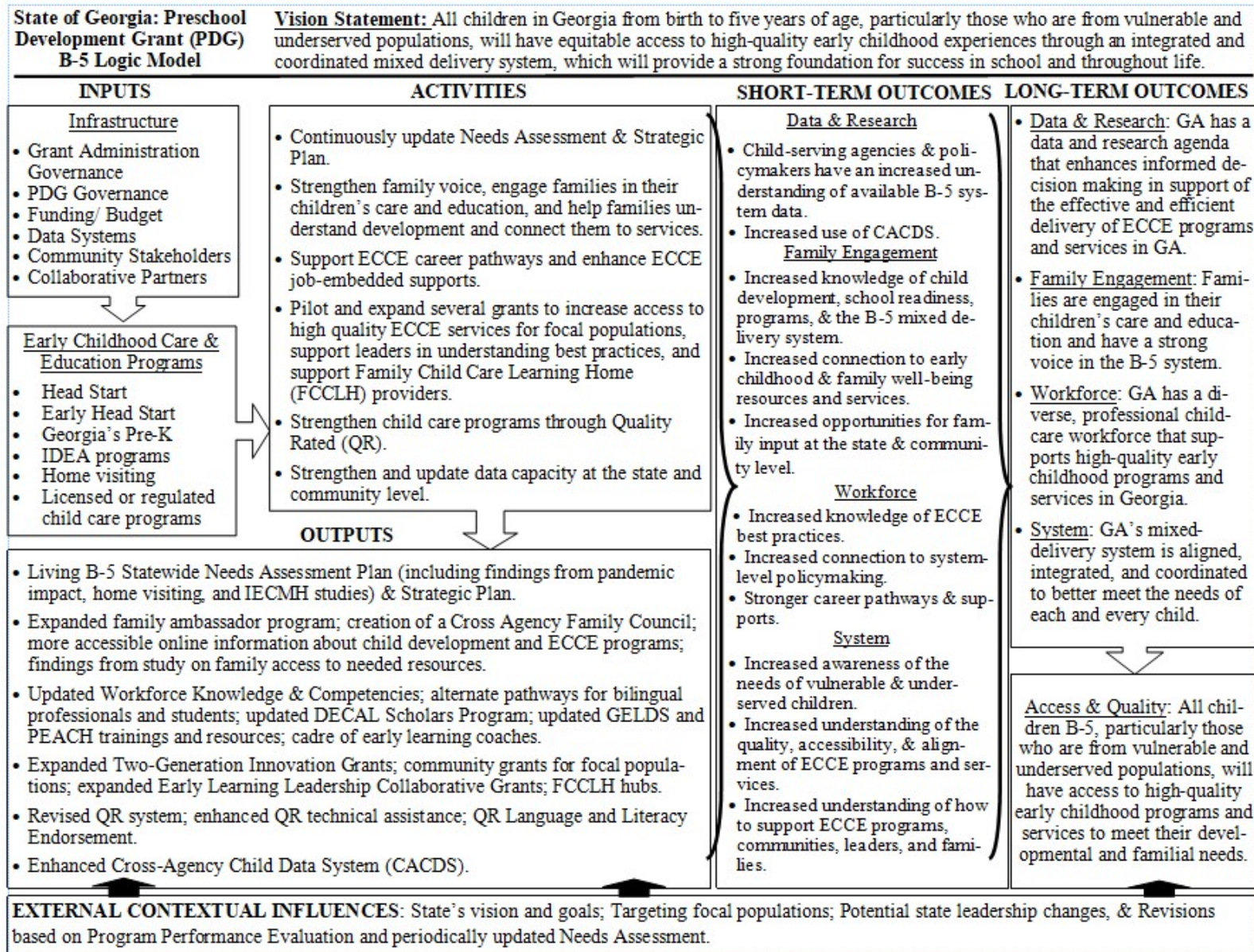
PPE Design

Alignment of the PPE with Strategic Plan and Needs Assessment

The GA PDG B-5 Grant logic model (Figure 2 below) illustrates the alignment of Needs Assessments findings, Strategic Plan goals, PDG B-5 activities, and associated short- and long-term outcomes.

Figure 2. GA PDG B-5 Grant logic model

State of Georgia: Preschool Development Grant (PDG) B-5 Logic Model	**Vision Statement:** All children in Georgia from birth to five years of age, particularly those who are from vulnerable and underserved populations, will have equitable access to high-quality early childhood experiences through an integrated and coordinated mixed delivery system, which will provide a strong foundation for success in school and throughout life.

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
Infrastructure • Grant Administration Governance • PDG Governance • Funding/ Budget • Data Systems • Community Stakeholders • Collaborative Partners **Early Childhood Care & Education Programs** • Head Start • Early Head Start • Georgia's Pre-K • IDEA programs • Home visiting • Licensed or regulated child care programs	• Continuously update Needs Assessment & Strategic Plan. • Strengthen family voice, engage families in their children's care and education, and help families understand development and connect them to services. • Support ECCE career pathways and enhance ECCE job-embedded supports. • Pilot and expand several grants to increase access to high quality ECCE services for focal populations, support leaders in understanding best practices, and support Family Child Care Learning Home (FCCLH) providers. • Strengthen child care programs through Quality Rated (QR). • Strengthen and update data capacity at the state and community level.	**Data & Research** • Child-serving agencies & policymakers have an increased understanding of available B-5 system data. • Increased use of CACDS. **Family Engagement** • Increased knowledge of child development, school readiness, programs, & the B-5 mixed delivery system. • Increased connection to early childhood & family well-being resources and services. • Increased opportunities for family input at the state & community level. **Workforce** • Increased knowledge of ECCE best practices. • Increased connection to system-level policymaking. • Stronger career pathways & supports. **System** • Increased awareness of the needs of vulnerable & underserved children. • Increased understanding of the quality, accessibility, & alignment of ECCE programs and services. • Increased understanding of how to support ECCE programs, communities, leaders, and families.	• **Data & Research:** GA has a data and research agenda that enhances informed decision making in support of the effective and efficient delivery of ECCE programs and services in GA. • **Family Engagement:** Families are engaged in their children's care and education and have a strong voice in the B-5 system. • **Workforce:** GA has a diverse, professional childcare workforce that supports high-quality early childhood programs and services in Georgia. • **System:** GA's mixed-delivery system is aligned, integrated, and coordinated to better meet the needs of each and every child. **Access & Quality:** All children B-5, particularly those who are from vulnerable and underserved populations, will have access to high-quality early childhood programs and services to meet their developmental and familial needs.

OUTPUTS

• Living B-5 Statewide Needs Assessment Plan (including findings from pandemic impact, home visiting, and IECMH studies) & Strategic Plan.

• Expanded family ambassador program; creation of a Cross Agency Family Council; more accessible online information about child development and ECCE programs; findings from study on family access to needed resources.

• Updated Workforce Knowledge & Competencies; alternate pathways for bilingual professionals and students; updated DECAL Scholars Program; updated GELDS and PEACH trainings and resources; cadre of early learning coaches.

• Expanded Two-Generation Innovation Grants; community grants for focal populations; expanded Early Learning Leadership Collaborative Grants; FCCLH hubs.

• Revised QR system; enhanced QR technical assistance; QR Language and Literacy Endorsement.

• Enhanced Cross-Agency Child Data System (CACDS).

EXTERNAL CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES: State's vision and goals; Targeting focal populations; Potential state leadership changes, & Revisions based on Program Performance Evaluation and periodically updated Needs Assessment.

PPE goals, objectives, and questions

The *Getting Ready for Program Performance Evaluation: Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five Tip Sheet* defines the purpose of the PDG B-5 PPE as:

> ...the ongoing self-examination of PDG B-5 mixed-delivery system (MDS) accomplishments, particularly toward pre-established goals found in the PDG B-5 grantee's strategic plan. PPE allows the PDG B-5 grantee to self-assess its efforts to coordinate and build the capacity of its PDG B-5 MDS and can result in findings that it can use to support continuous quality improvement. (p. 2)

The goals and objectives listed in Table 4 describe how GA's plan addresses the overarching purpose for the PDG B-5 PPE.

Table 4. PPE goals and objectives

PPE Goal	PPE Objectives
Monitor and assess progress towards GA's PDG B-5 goals and objectives.	Regularly track the project progress towards meeting PDG B-5 Strategic Plan goals.
Provide information that can be incorporated into the state's continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts.	Gather stakeholders' key learning questions. Identify indicators and data sources that address the key learning questions.
Improve understanding of issues related to access, quality, and transitions within GA's existing mixed-delivery system.	Develop learning questions and associated data collection, analysis, and reporting strategies that add to the understanding of access, quality and transitions within GA's existing mixed-delivery system.

Indicators, data sources, and data collection partners

DECAL lead project staff and PDG B-5 management team members, along with Child Trends, established indicators, data sources, and data collection partners for eight projects that are underway. This information is presented in Appendix A. Indicators, data sources, and data collection partners will be developed for the remaining PDG B-5 projects as they begin in 2021.

In addition to the data sources identified in Appendix A, GA has a wealth of data sources to inform progress towards Strategic Plan goals. For instance, CACDS includes early childhood data from Georgia's Pre-K, Head Start and Early Head Start grantees, Babies Can't Wait (IDEA Part C), Preschool Special Education (IDEA Part B, Section 619), the Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) subsidy program, Georgia Home Visiting, and other DECAL programs serving children and families in the state. Where relevant, GA can also draw from data collected from existing studies, such as the Quality Rated Validation Study and Study of Georgia's Pre-K Program.

Data analysis

The specific analysis approach for the PPE will be developed as data collection approaches are solidified in early 2021. In general, the PPE will use mixed methods to describe PDG B-5 activities and examine progress toward goals and objectives over time. These methods will likely include descriptive statistics about the extent to which projects reach focal populations. Methods may also include pre/post comparisons to evaluate changes in indicators measured through surveys, observational tools, and administrative data. The PPE will also include qualitative analyses for common themes that emerge in interviews, focus groups, and open-ended survey responses.

Data privacy and security

When accessing existing administrative data from state agencies or local organizations, or in collecting new data, DECAL and evaluation partners will adhere to any relevant data privacy and security requirements. For instance, administrative data may fall under various sets of regulations, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) at the federal level, in addition to state regulations or DECAL requirements. Where applicable, DECAL and its evaluation partners will work with agencies and organizations to set up data sharing agreements that will describe how data will be shared, where data will be stored, and how data will be reported and used. Such agreements will ensure that any administrative data used for the PPE will adhere to data privacy and security requirements, including ensuring that no personally identifiable information will be released publicly or to those who do not have permission to access it. DECAL and its evaluation partners will determine the specific data privacy and security requirements and regulations after data sources are finalized.

Using and Reporting PPE Findings

DECAL will develop a communication plan that outlines key audiences for the PPE and their associated informational needs. For example, lead project staff are a key evaluation audience, with a primary need for information that supports their CQI efforts. The Cross-Agency Council is another key evaluation audience. Council members will be interested in learning about findings that describe progress towards Strategic Plan goals and objectives. As a first step, DECAL will include information about the PPE and associated findings in the Cross-Agency Council PDG B-5 newsletter. PPE findings also may be used to inform the update to the Needs Assessment. Table 5 provides an overview of how findings for each of the PPE's main evaluation questions will be used.

Table 5. PPE Plan Evaluation Questions and Use of Findings

PPE Evaluation Question	Use of Findings
Evaluation Question 1: To what extent is the activity implemented as planned?	DECAL will use findings to monitor implementation fidelity and adjust project approaches as needed.

PPE Evaluation Question	Use of Findings
Evaluation Question 2: To what extent is the activity achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?	DECAL will use findings to learn about progress towards PDG B-5 grant goals and objectives, make improvements where needed, and inform improvements to the mixed-delivery system.
Evaluation Question 3: To what extent is the activity achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?	DECAL will use findings to learn about progress towards PDG B-5 grant goals and objectives, inform improvements to the mixed-delivery system, and learn how the PDG B-5 activities contributed to improved understanding of issues related to access, quality, and transitions within GA's existing mixed-delivery system.

Assumptions, Constraints, and Risks

There are several possible obstacles that may hinder the implementation of the PPE plan. First, the COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to pose multiple challenges. Projects may need to adjust their start dates and/or modify their implementation approaches. These challenges could affect PPE timelines and/or necessitate changing the evaluation approach to align with new project implementation plans. The COVID-19 pandemic may also cause challenges with data collection, such as the need to move from face-to-face to virtual focus groups and stakeholder interviews. These challenges can be addressed through allowing for flexibility with timelines, regularly updating the PPE plan to align with implementation approaches, and drawing upon the growing body of knowledge on best-practices for virtual data collection. There may be constraints relating to limited experience with certain data collection needs, such as learning about families' experiences accessing online licensing reports. This constraint can be addressed through engaging stakeholders to develop data collection approaches that are realistic and feasible and build on existing data sources.

Appendix A. Indicators, Data Sources, and Data Collection Partners for PDG B-5 Projects

The tables in this appendix show the alignment between activities, projects, and Strategic Plan goals. They also summarize information needed to implement the PPE plan and include key learning questions, which were developed to meet the unique information needs for each project's CQI process. The tables also include a series of three uniform evaluation questions that are used across all projects. The first evaluation question examines implementation fidelity. The second evaluation question examines progress towards short-term benchmarks, such as the number of participants or knowledge gained immediately after a training. The third evaluation question examines progress towards long-term outcomes, which is defined as desired outcomes for the end of the three-year PDG B-5 grant period. The tables then list indicators and associated data sources that will address both the unique key learning questions and the three uniform evaluation questions. Finally, the tables identify key data collection partners for the various data collection efforts.

Project: DECAL Early Education Family Ambassador Program

Activity 3: Maximizing parental choice and knowledge
Project: DECAL Early Education Family Ambassador Program
Strategic Plan Goal(s):   • Foster authentic family engagement to strengthen family voice and engage families in their children's care and education.   • Increase access to high quality programs to meet the unique developmental and familial needs of each and every child in Georgia, especially in underserved and vulnerable populations.
Inputs: Family Ambassadors (including parents, guardians, and foster parents), training (topics include: values-based leadership, early brain development, developmental milestones, social media, etc.), virtual and in-person events, stipends for Family Ambassadors, DECAL staff
Key Learning Questions: • What were family ambassadors able to accomplish, given the limitations imposed by COVID-19?   • For family ambassadors who were not able to remain active, what factors contributed to their inactivity?   • Did family ambassadors experience common successes and/or challenges that that can inform ongoing development of the project?   • What changes did family ambassadors experience as a result of participating in the program (e.g., better understand child development, feel more empowered as a community leader, more comfortable discussing child development or available resources with their peers, etc.)?

Evaluation Question 1. To what extent is the project implemented as planned?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Family Ambassadors meet the criteria in the Family Ambassador application document • A rubric is used to score applications and inform acceptance of Family Ambassador applications • Family Ambassadors receive stipends for attending trainings and holding events • Feedback from Family Ambassadors is used to improve the program	• Internal documentation • Documentation of feedback obtained and how it was used to improve the program	• DECAL Practice and Support Services • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team
Evaluation Question 2. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number and type (e.g., Head Start parent, foster parent of child enrolled in preschool special ed, live in rural community, etc.) of Family Ambassadors accepted/enrolled into the program • Number and type of Family Ambassadors who attend required trainings • Number and type of Family Ambassadors who attend ongoing trainings hosted by DECAL • Number and type of Family Ambassadors who report an increase in knowledge of training topics (e.g., the roles and responsibilities for Family Ambassadors, understanding of child development and developmental milestones, resources to share with their peers, etc.) and how they might use the information in their Family Ambassador role • Number and type of Family Ambassadors who participate in two or more events (in person or virtual) to share resources and knowledge with other families • Feedback from Family Ambassadors (including those not actively engaged) on how they learned about the program, successes, challenges, and suggestions for improvement	• Program records of recruited Family Ambassadors, including demographic information • Internal documentation of training topics and attendance records • Post-training survey *Additional data sources to consider:* • Family Ambassador progress report, informal interviews with Family Ambassadors • Family Ambassador progress report, informal interviews with Family Ambassador, survey, focus group	• DECAL Practice and Support Services • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team

Evaluation Question 3. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number and type (e.g., Head Start parent, foster parent of child enrolled in preschool special ed, live in rural community, etc.) of Family Ambassadors retained (e.g., participate in DECAL sponsored events and/or continue to offer events throughout grant period) • Number and type of Family Ambassadors who report engagement events, by differing levels of possible engagement (e.g., discuss child development or early learning resources with peers, join PTA, volunteer in their child's school, participant in focus groups, participate in a meaningful way on advisory groups, etc.) • Number and type of families reached through Family Ambassador engagement events (where applicable), by event type • Types of benefits Family Ambassadors report (for themselves) as a result of participating in the program	*Data sources to consider:* • Family Ambassador progress report, informal interviews with Family Ambassadors, training attendance records • Family Ambassador progress report, informal interviews with Family Ambassador, survey	• DECAL Practice and Support Services • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team

Project: Family-Friendly Licensing Reports

Activity 3: Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge
Project: Family-Friendly Licensing Reports
Strategic Plan Goal(s):   • Foster authentic family engagement to strengthen family voice and engage families in their children's care and education.   • Increase access to high quality programs to meet the unique developmental and familial needs of each and every child in Georgia, especially in underserved and vulnerable populations.
Inputs: DECAL licensing and development staff; GEEARS; parent and provider input into the development of the reports
Key Learning Questions: • Do the reports meet families' information needs?   • Why did families access the reports?   • How are families using the reports?   • Do families who use the licensing reports also use the Quality Rated tools? If yes, is it confusing to have two sources of information about a child care program?   • What are the characteristics of families who used the reports, such as age of their child, primary language, race/ethnicity, income, etc.?   • Do providers feel the reports are valuable and/or feel included the process?   • Are providers using the reports for marketing or other purposes?

Evaluation Question 1. To what extent is the project implemented as planned?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Parent feedback is used to develop and refine licensing reports • Provider feedback is used to develop and refine licensing reports • A timeline for developing online family-friendly licensing reports is created • Progress on developing online family-friendly licensing reports is documented, including successes, challenges, and mid-course corrections	• Parent and provider focus group findings; documentation for how parent and provider feedback was used to refine licensing reports • Provider advisory group recommendations • Timeline • Internal progress reports	• DECAL Child Care Services Division • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team

Evaluation Question 2. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number and type of pilot test participants • Pilot test participants represent intended users of final family-friendly licensing reports • Pilot test results are used to inform further development of the online, family-friendly licensing reports	• Pilot test participant list, including demographics • Pilot test findings • Internal progress reports documenting how pilot test results were used	• DECAL Child Care Services Division • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team • Contracted Services Partner
Evaluation Question 3. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**

• Number of *unique visitors* to online, family-friendly licensing report overview infographic compared to baseline unique visitors to online licensing reports
• Number of *total visits* to online, family-friendly licensing report overview infographic, compared to baseline visits to online licensing reports
• Number of *unique visitors* clicking on linked pages from the overview infographic, for each linked page
• Number of *total visits* to linked pages from the overview infographic, for each linked page
• Feedback from families is collected and used to improve the license reports and license report use, as needed. Feedback may include:
   o How families learned about the reports/how to access the reports
   o Reasons for viewing the reports
   o How families used the information in the reports (select care; learn about status for existing care, etc.)
   o Possible confusion with Quality Rated reports
   o How the online, family-friendly licensing reports can be improved
	• Internal progress reports documenting how pilot test results were used
	• Google analytics or other web traffic analytic application
	
	Additional data sources to consider:
	• Pop-up survey from family-friendly licensing reports main page, text or online survey sent to families who use child care referral call center
	• Provider survey
		• DECAL Child Care Services Division
		• DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team
		• Information Technology Team
		• Contracted Services Partner

○ Whether or not they shared these resources with other families - Feedback from providers is collected and used to improve the license reports and license report use. Feedback may include: ○ How providers learned about the reports/how to access the reports ○ Reasons for viewing/using the reports (e.g., as a marketing tool) ○ Level of support/buy-in for developing and posting family-friendly licensing reports online ○ How providers used the information in the reports (e.g., marketing) ○ Possible confusion with Quality Rated reports ○ How the online, family-friendly licensing reports can be improved		

Project: Early Learning Coach Designation

Activity 4: Sharing Best Practices and Professional Development for the Early Childhood Workforce		
Project: Early Learning Coach Designation		
Strategic Plan Goal(s): • Recruit, retain, and diversify a professional early learning workforce that supports high-quality early childhood program and services in Georgia. • Increase access to high quality programs to meet the unique developmental and familial needs of each and every child in Georgia, especially in underserved and vulnerable populations.		
Inputs: DECAL staff; training organizations		
Key Learning Questions: • Are adjustments needed to the process of applying for and assigning coaching designation levels? • Are adjustments needed to the level of required coaching hours associated with the coaching designation levels? • Are there additional, feasible methods of determining coaching quality? • What are coaches' experiences after they received the designation?		
Evaluation Question 1. To what extent is the project implemented as planned?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Rubric is used to score applications • Training and resources are offered to early learning professionals interested in coaching • Outreach occurs to identified target populations (e.g., Georgia Pre-K teachers, Quality Rated Peer Ambassadors, etc.)	• Internal documents	• DECAL Professional Learning Unit
Evaluation Question 2. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number of rounds of coach designation applications • Number of coaches applying for designation • Number of coaches receiving designation, by designation level • Number of organizations and/or approved trainings that apply • Number of trainings offered • Number of coaches attending trainings	• Coach designation applications • List of trainings offered • Training attendance lists • Internal documents recording the number of training organizations and/or approved	• DECAL Professional Learning Unit • Training organizations

19

	training applications submitted and accepted	
Evaluation Question 3. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number and percentage of coaches who attend trainings that report they gained knowledge about coaching best practices • Number and percentage of coaches who attend trainings that report applying what they learned through training to their coaching practice • Coaches' feedback on the application process, coaching levels, training, resources, and post-designation experiences is obtained and used to refine the Early Learning Coach Designation • Training organizations' feedback on the process of submitting their courses and experiences of offering courses after acceptance was received is obtained and used to refine the Early Learning Coach Designation	*Data sources to be considered:* • Post training survey to learn about knowledge gains and intended use of information provided through the training • Survey, focus groups, or interviews with coaches to obtain feedback on the application process, coaching levels, resources provided through self-study, learn how coaches describe applying what they learned from trainings, learn about post-designation experiences (e.g., increased requests for coaching), and suggestions for improvement • DECAL administrative data and/or video observations to learn about changes in quality for programs that engaged with coaches who received the designation • Survey or interviews with training organizations to obtain feedback on the process of submitting courses, experiences after acceptance was received, and suggestions for improvement • Documentation of refinements made to the Early Learning Coach Designation and why the refinements were made.	• DECAL Professional Learning Unit • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team • Training organizations

Project: Updating GELDS/PEACH Trainings and Resources

Activity Four: Sharing Best Practices and Professional Development for the EC Workforce
Project: Updating GELDS/PEACH trainings and resources
Strategic Plan Goal(s): • Recruit, retain, and diversify a professional early learning workforce that supports high-quality early childhood program and services in Georgia. • Increase access to high quality programs to meet the unique developmental and familial needs of each and every child in Georgia, especially in underserved and vulnerable populations.
Inputs: GELDS training and resources; GELDS Website, PEACH online lesson planning tools; web-developers; GELDS trainers; DECAL staff
Key Learning Questions: • Do trainers feel confident in their ability to deliver to the new GELDS training content? • What content knowledge, background knowledge, and supports do GELDS trainers need to be successful in delivering the training? • What training supports did train-the-trainers receive that they drew upon when offering GELDS training? • Was there something missing from the train-the-trainer sessions that they wished the session had covered? • Which train-the-trainer participants offered GELDS training? • Are training participants (i.e., those attending GELDS training offered by trainers who attended the train-the-trainer) satisfied with the training; did they enhance/gain knowledge on revised GELDS and associated resources (including PEACH)?
Evaluation Question 1. To what extent is the project implemented as planned?

Indicators	Data Sources	Responsible and Collaborating Partners
GELDS website • Feedback is gathered from content experts to inform the updates to the GELDS website • Test-users reflect the intended user audience (e.g., range of early childhood educators, such as infant/toddler and pre-K teachers) • The PEACH lesson planning tool is integrated into the GELDS website • Development of the GELDS website content stays within DECAL's determined scope for the project **Train-the-Trainer** • A revised GELDS Train-the-Trainer series is developed	• Meeting notes; documentation feedback is used to inform revised content of GELDS online resources • Number and type of user-testers • GELDS website content	• DECAL Professional Learning Unit • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team

• The revised GELDS Train-the-Trainer series materials follows DECAL training guidelines, including alignment with the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies and a fully developed instructional plan • The revised GELDS Train-the-Trainer materials include content on differentiating instruction, inclusion practices to support children with disabilities, and supporting dual-language learners	• Crosswalk of developed content with DECAL scope criteria • Revised GELDS Train-the-Trainer training materials	

Evaluation Question 2. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?

Indicators	Data Sources	Responsible and Collaborating Partners
GELDS website • Number of initial visitors to updated online GELDS resources, including PEACH lesson planning tool, by visitor type (e.g., pre-K or infant-toddler teacher) • Number of initial GELDS website visitors who report the revised website met intended outcomes (e.g., easy to access and navigate, easy to develop lesson plans and differentiate instruction, etc.), by visitor type **Train-the-Trainer** • Number of trainers who attend the initial Train-the-Trainer sessions, reported for each session offered, and by participant characteristics (e.g., professional background and level of education) • Number of initial Train-the-Trainer participants who report the training met intended outcomes (e.g., feeling satisfied with the quality of the training, feeling ready to offer the training, gained new or enhanced their knowledge on focal content areas such as differentiated instruction), reported by participant characteristics (e.g., professional background and level of education)	• Web analytics • Surveys and/or focus groups • Training calendars and attendance logs • Post Train-the-Trainer surveys and focus groups	• DECAL Professional Learning Unit • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team • CCR&Rs

Evaluation Question 3. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?

Indicators	Data Sources	Responsible and Collaborating Partners
GELDS website • Number of new and returning visitors to updated online GELDS resources, including PEACH lesson planning tool, by visitor type (e.g. type of teacher) • Number and type of GELDS website visitors who report the revised website met intended outcomes (e.g., easy to access and navigate, easy to develop lesson plans and differentiate instruction, etc.)	• Web analytics • Surveys or focus groups • Training calendar and attendance logs • Post-training survey • GaPDS	• DECAL Professional Learning Unit • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team • CCR&Rs

Train-the-Trainer • Total number of trainers who attend the Train-the-Trainer sessions for each session offered, reported by participant characteristics (e.g., professional background and level of education) • Total number of Train-the-Trainer participants who report the training met intended outcomes (e.g., feeling satisfied with the quality of the training, feeling ready to offer the training, gained new or enhanced their knowledge on focal content areas such as differentiated instruction), reported by participant characteristics (e.g., professional background and level of education) **Revised GELDS trainings offered by trainers who attended the Train-the-Trainer trainings** • Number and type of trainers offering revised GELDS trainings • Number and type of providers who receive revised GELDS trainings • Number and type of training participants who are satisfied with the quality of the training; gained new or enhanced their knowledge on focal content areas (e.g., differentiated instruction)	• Post-training survey	

Project: Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives (ELLC) on Trauma-Informed Care

Activity Four: Sharing Best Practices and Professional Development for the EC Workforce
Project: Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives (ELLC) on Trauma-Informed Care
Strategic Plan Goal(s): • Recruit, retain, and diversify a professional early learning workforce that supports high-quality early childhood program and services in Georgia. • Increase access to high quality programs to meet the unique developmental and familial needs of each and every child in Georgia, especially in underserved and vulnerable populations.
Inputs: DECAL staff, local leaders and stakeholders from 6 communities across Georgia (to form the ELLC), Georgia State University Child Welfare Training Collaborative, *Building a Response to Trauma* resources
Key Learning Questions: • Are required stakeholder groups represented in the ELLCs; do representatives from the required stakeholder groups attend the trainings? • What did participants learn in the training and how do they intend to use what they learned upon completion of the training? • How are participants embedding what they learned about trauma-informed care into existing policies, procedures, activities, etc.? • What types of changes did ELLC members observe in their communities?
Evaluation Question 1. To what extent is the project implemented as planned?

Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection: Responsible and Collaborating Partners
• Number and percentage of cross-sector ELLCs that include representatives from required various stakeholder organizations (e.g., school system, department of public health, local child care programs, etc.) • Number and percentage of ELLCs that complete two consecutive days of training/action planning on trauma-informed care and three virtual planning sessions • Number and percentage of ELLCs that develop a community-based trauma-informed care action plan • Number and percentage of ELLCs that implement a community-based trauma-informed care action plan	• Documentation of ELLC membership • Training attendance logs • Community-based trauma-informed care action plans • Documentation of how ELLCs implemented the plan, submitted in the	• DECAL Community Partnerships team in partnership with each ELLC • Georgia State University Child Welfare Training Collaborative staff • DECAL Community Partnerships team will document when each community submits this plan and use the Annual Reports to

	Annual Reports from each ELLC	track if/how the plan is being implemented

Evaluation Question 2. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number and percentage of ELLC participants who report an increase in knowledge of trauma-informed care and practices after participating in the two-day training • Number and percentage of ELLCs that report using and applying information learned in the trainings	• Training survey results, reported in Annual Reports submitted by each ELLC • Documentation of how ELLCs used information gained through the training, submitted in the Annual Reports from each ELLC or through follow-up survey	• Each ELLC will submit the annual report to DECAL • DECAL Community Partnerships team will request this information of the ELLCs
Evaluation Question 3. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Local programs and policies incorporate trauma-informed approaches	• Follow-up survey with ELLCs	• ELLCs and DECAL

Project: Language and Literacy Endorsement

Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality and Service Integration, Expanding Access, and Developing New Programs	
Project: Language and Literacy Endorsement	

Strategic Plan Goal(s):
- Increase access to high quality programs to meet the unique developmental and familial needs of each and every child in Georgia, especially in underserved and vulnerable populations.
- Recruit, retain, and diversify a professional early learning workforce that supports high-quality early childhood program and services in Georgia.

Inputs: DECAL Quality Innovations and Partnerships Department, professional development training modules and independent assignments, implementation supports (e.g., technology bundles, incentives, etc.)

Key learning questions:
- Did participants gain knowledge and intend to use what they learned after participating in the trainings?
- How can the trainings be improved?
- What were participants' experiences with and recommendations for training platforms: virtual, face-to-face, or a hybrid?
- How did participants use their bonus resources and what types of resources did they think were most effective?
- Do participants think participation in the endorsement process led to, or served as a catalyst for, improvements to their language and literacy development approaches, and if so, what improvements did they observe?
- Did participants sustain improved practices after they received the endorsement?

Evaluation Question 1. To what extent is the activity implemented as planned?

Indicators	Data Sources	Responsible and Collaborating Partners
• The Language and Literacy Endorsement pilot follows the expert committee's six recommendations • Feedback is gathered from programs participating in the pilot • Lessons learned from the pilot are applied to future cohorts • Future cohorts are comprised of programs who meet necessary criteria	• Internal documentation • Evaluation findings from the pilot	• DECAL Quality Innovations and Partnerships Unit • DECAL Community Outreach and Partnerships Unit • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team

Evaluation Question 2. To what extent is the activity achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number and type of participants selected to participate • Of the participants selected, number and percentage that complete the process and receive the endorsement, by program type • Number and type (virtual or in person) of trainings held for programs in the pilot and additional cohorts during the grant period • Number of teachers and program administrators who attend trainings • Number and type of training attendees who report: increases in knowledge of language and literacy practices after attending training; they plan to use what they learned during trainings; they are satisfied with the training (including delivery type: in person or virtual); and recommendations for how the trainings can be improved • Number and type of programs who write and submit a "Growth Plan" for implementing and sustaining language and literacy practices	• Internal documentation • Training records • Training evaluation surveys • Submitted Growth Plans	• DECAL Quality Innovations and Partnerships Unit • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team
Evaluation Question 3. To what extent is the activity achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number and type of programs who report quality improvements as a result of participating in the Language and Literacy Endorsement • Number and type of programs who sustain knowledge and practices learned while participating in the Language and Literacy Endorsement • Learnings from experiences during the grant period are used to establish a model that can be expanded to programs across the state • Feedback is collected from participants to learn how they used their bonuses after completing the endorsement and what types of resources they found most helpful	• Internal documentation • Training evaluation surveys • Pre-post surveys or interviews of participating programs (teachers and administrators) • Surveys or interviews with programs 6-12 months after they complete the Language and Literacy Endorsement	• DECAL Quality Innovations and Partnerships Unit • DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team • Child Trends

Project: Quality Rated Revisions: Temporary Alternative Rating Options (TARO)

Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality and Service Integration, Expanding Access, and Developing New Programs
Project: Quality Rated Revisions: Temporary Alternative Rating Options (TARO)
Strategic Plan Goal(s): • Increase access to high quality programs to meet the unique developmental and familial needs of each and every child in Georgia, especially in underserved and vulnerable populations.
Inputs: DECAL Quality Innovations and Partnerships Department, Child Trends, early child care and education programs, Quality Rated staff
Key Learning Questions: What can be learned from the TARO pilot to inform future revisions to Quality Rated?

Evaluation Question 1. To what extent is the activity implemented as planned?

Indicators	Data Sources	Responsible and Collaborating Partners
• The pilot was implemented and evaluated • Modifications were made in response to what was learned during the pilot	• Internal documentation • Pilot evaluation findings (e.g., results from participants surveys, analysis of administrative data regarding participant characteristics and their progress/scores)	• DECAL Quality Innovations and Partnerships Department • Child Trends

Evaluation Question 2. To what extent is the activity achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?

Indicators	Data Sources	Responsible and Collaborating Partners
• Number and type of providers (e.g., center, home, etc.) applying for TARO, reported by TARO option categories (e.g., option A, option B) • Number and type of providers selected to participate, reported by TARO option categories • Submission rate of portfolios and time between enrollment and portfolio submission, reported by TARO option categories • Completion rate and points awarded for Quality Rated Virtual Progress requirements (e.g., webinars, assignments, etc.), for each Topic • Number and type of all TARO providers reporting satisfaction with the process	• QR Administrative Data • Provider survey, focus group, or interview	• Quality Rated Unit • Child Trends

• Number and type of QRVP providers reporting increased or enhanced knowledge and application of what they learned through QRVP assignments and TA		
Evaluation Question 3. To what extent is the activity achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number of providers receiving QR rating, reported by star level, provider type (e.g., center, home, Head Start, etc.) and by TARO option • Number of children in programs receiving QR rating, reported by star level • Number of TARO 1-star providers that maintain or increase to 2-stars when observations become possible again • Number of TARO 2-star providers that maintain or increase to 3-stars when observations become possible again	• QR Administrative Data	• Child Trends

Project: Proposed CACDS Revision Project

Activity Six: Monitoring, Evaluation, Data Use for Continuous Improvement, Meaningful Governance and Stakeholder Engagement	
Project: Proposed CACDS Revision Project	
Strategic Plan Goal(s): - Establish a data and research agenda that enhances informed decision making in support of the effective and efficient delivery of early childhood programs and services in Georgia, especially to children in underserved and vulnerable populations. - Ensure alignment, integration, and coordination within Georgia's mixed-delivery system to better meet the needs of each and every child, especially within underserved and vulnerable populations.	
Inputs: DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team, KSM consultants, CACDS Coordinator, Director of Community Outreach and Partnerships, DECAL IT team, CACDS Executive Committee and Participating Data Contributors.	
Key Learning Questions: To be developed after CACDS Strategic Plan is developed and activities are selected for implementation.	

Evaluation Question 1. To what extent is the project implemented as planned?

Indicators	Data Sources	Responsible and Collaborating Partners
- Development of a strategic plan for CACDS revisions - Number and type of selected activities implemented as planned (e.g., following decisions outlined in strategic plan) - Types of mid-course corrections and reasons for the modifications	- CACDS Strategic Plan - Internal progress reports that document the types of activities selected, implemented, modifications made and reasons for the modifications	- KSM - DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team - DECAL Community Outreach and Partnerships Unit

Evaluation Question 2. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated short-term implementation benchmarks?

Indicators	Data Sources	Responsible and Collaborating Partners
Annual progress towards implementing selected strategic plan recommendations	Internal progress reports that document successes challenges, and suggested improvements	- KSM - DECAL Research and Policy Analysis Team - DECAL Community Outreach and Partnerships Unit

Evaluation Question 3. To what extent is the project achieving anticipated long-term outcomes?		
Indicators	**Data Sources**	**Responsible and Collaborating Partners**
• Number and type of strategic plan recommendations implemented during grant period • Number of CACDS users, particularly at the community level, prior to implementation of strategic plan recommendations and at the end of the grant period	• Internal progress reports that document the number and type of recommendations implemented, successes and challenges with meeting three-year grant goals • CACDS Reports	• KSM • DECAL Research and Policy Team • DECAL Community Outreach and Partnerships Unit