

Year Two Project Narrative

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Year 2 Project Narrative

Introduction

In 2019, Georgia applied and received funds for the B-5 Preschool Development Renewal Grant. As noted in the grant application, the “big picture” plan is to use Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funds to strengthen Georgia’s already strong early education system, thereby ensuring that high quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) services are accessible to each and every child. The state proposed a variety of projects across the six Activities detailed in the application. In addition to the projects, grant funds were also identified for grant management and for the Program Performance Evaluation Plan under Activity Six.

The identified lead agency for Georgia’s grant is the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). DECAL is an independent state agency specifically focused on Georgia’s early education programs. These programs include Georgia’s Pre-K, child care licensing, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Head Start Collaboration Office, and Georgia’s Tiered Quality Rated and Improvement System (Quality Rated). In terms of its PDG activities, DECAL works closely with the Children’s Cabinet (Georgia’s Early Childhood State Advisory Council) and the Cross-Agency Child Council. These cross-sector, intra-agency organizations have state-wide representation including early childhood state agencies, early learning advocacy organizations, families of young children, and other pertinent stakeholders such as state legislators, child care program owners, and school superintendents. As detailed in the budget description, DECAL also contracts with various organizations for specific services related to PDG activities.

A prominent theme throughout this continuation application is the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on the state’s PDG B-5 projects. At the beginning of 2020, the state

was making progress on completing activities related to its PDG B-5 Initial Grant and on planning for projects related to the Renewal Grant. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic emerged and its longevity became apparent, priorities had to be adapted and PDG B-5 projects were impacted. In some cases, the timelines for projects were delayed, while in other cases, the pandemic has actually expanded or accelerated projects as state leaders are seeking to understand and further respond to this public health crisis.

This continuation application is organized as follows. For each activity, a brief description of what was proposed in Year One in the renewal grant is provided followed by what has been accomplished at the time of this writing and what will be accomplished at the conclusion of Year One. This is followed by a description of what will be accomplished in Year Two. A description of the Program Performance Evaluation (PPE) plan is included in Activity Six. The application concludes with an update of the expected goals for Year Two.

Activity One: B-5 Statewide Needs Assessment Plan

Activity Description

When the PDG Renewal application was submitted, Georgia had made substantial progress on the Needs Assessment. Data collection was complete and state leaders and key partners from Carl Vincent Institute of Government (CVIOG) and Child Trends were in the process of analyzing and synthesizing the data. The state had plans for completing the Needs Assessment in the first few months of 2020. These plans included holding public stakeholder meetings to share initial findings, gathering additional feedback, and finalizing the report. The state also had plans for incorporating data collection procedures to update the Needs Assessment in real time and to plan for a formalized update at the end of the renewal grant period. However, the pandemic has delayed completing the report and suspended any formal stakeholder engagement plans. Despite this delay, findings from the Needs Assessment have informed the

activities and projects discussed throughout the application. A key example is the way the Needs Assessment is guiding work related to Georgia's Cross-Agency Child-Level Data System (CACDS) in Activity Six.

Due to the pandemic, the state has also expanded the scope of its Needs Assessment. Specifically, state leaders recognized the need for collecting additional data related to the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency. The opportunity to incorporate additional data collection will facilitate not only the state's understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 but will also provide new insight on the early learning mixed-delivery system revealed during the pandemic. In other words, examining the factors affecting the magnitude of the COVID-19 impact at the state, community, program, and family/child level illuminates where the state should continue investing resources during and after the pandemic.

The following details the state's progress toward completing the Needs Assessment and Year Two activities that will expand it. Tasks related to completing the Needs Assessment are funded through the No-Cost Extension of the Initial Grant. Tasks related to expanding the Needs Assessment that will be completed in 2021 will be funded through Year One Renewal Grant funding (to be requested to carry over).

Activity One Progress (Completed)

- At the time of this writing, data from the Needs Assessment has been analyzed and synthesized. Rather than publish one report, state leaders determined that it would be better to post the findings in a series of interrelated reports. This entails specific reports for family engagement, data and research, ECCE workforce, quality of child care, access to ECCE programs, and overall system level. The state is in the process of finalizing these reports. Additionally, the reports will be reviewed by Georgia's federal project officer and submitted to the Governor's office for approval. Once approval from the

Governor's Office is received, the full Needs Assessment report will be submitted for federal approval.

Activity One Progress (Completed by December 31, 2020)

- Once approval is obtained from the groups listed above, the state will publish the Needs Assessment reports. In addition to finalizing and publishing the reports, the state also decided to incorporate research related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Georgia identified three additional Needs Assessment activities and has partnered with CVIOG to complete them. These activities will not only provide insight on the impact of the pandemic but will also further engage specific stakeholders (child care program owners, early education workforce, and families representing targeted populations) to receive additional feedback from these critical voices. The activities are described below.
 - *Child Care Provider Survey*: CVIOG conducted a child care provider survey about the COVID-19 pandemic, including impacts to child care programs and the benefits of funds provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to providers. The survey has been completed, findings have been shared with DECAL, and a report is being finalized. This report will be released by the end of Year One.
 - *Focus Groups*: Beginning October 15, researchers from CVIOG will be conducting focus groups with ten key focus group populations (e.g., preschool teachers, families with children in intervention, child care directors). These focus groups will be completed by mid-November and the report will be available by mid-December.
 - *Key Informant Interviews*: CVIOG will conduct key informant interviews with the members of the Cross-Agency Child Council and state agency program leadership

to help determine specific impacts to key programs and populations within the mixed-delivery system. These interviews will be completed by the end of Year One.

Activity One, Year Two Activities

The state will publish the results from the COVID-19 research mentioned above. These will be published as addendum research reports to the Needs Assessment.

- The state will gather feedback through stakeholder engagement related to the Needs Assessment reports published in 2020.
- Building on the findings from the COVID-19 research along with other findings from the Needs Assessment, CVIOG (with consultation from the Cross-Agency Child Council) will construct and distribute a survey to stakeholders across the B-5 mixed delivery system. This survey will collect feedback on the impact of the pandemic, status of programs and services, and help detail where additional resources are needed.
- Additionally, the state will commission research related to the Needs Assessment. This includes: 1) a landscape analysis of infant early childhood mental health services across the state; 2) a study of the access and quality of home visiting services; 3) an economic impact of the early learning industry study; and 4) a cost of quality study.

Summary

In summary, Year Two projects related to Activity One entail continuing research related to the pandemic and will be published as new reports related to the Needs Assessment. State leaders will also continue to share findings from the Needs Assessment and gather feedback that will inform revisions and planning for a future formalized Needs Assessment. Further, building on information gleaned from the Needs Assessment, the state will commission additional research. This builds on the information gleaned from the first Needs Assessment and the

COVID-19 research. Current Activity One Partners CVIOG and Child Trends will continue to be engaged in tasks related to this Activity.

Activity Two: B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan

Activity Description

At the time of the PDG Renewal Grant application submission, state PDG B-5 leaders were in the process of planning to begin work on the Statewide Strategic Plan. Activities related to this planning included finalizing results from the Needs Assessment, conducting meetings with the Cross-Agency Child Council, and designing the format for the Strategic Plan. CVIOG was identified as the primary partner in this work. It is important to note that part of the development of the B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan is aligned with a Strategic Plan being developed by the Children's Cabinet. CVIOG is also facilitating the development of the Children's Cabinet Strategic Plan.

The COVID-19 public health emergency delayed the Strategic Plan process. As state leaders were in the process of providing day-to-day support and responses to critical ECCE services, it was difficult to convene the Cross-Agency Child Council during the first quarter of 2020. Despite the initial delays, the Cross-Agency Child Council has moved forward with the Strategic Plan, which will be completed by December 30, 2020. No-cost extension funds from the Initial Grant are being used to complete this work.

Activity Two Progress (Completed)

- The Cross-Agency Child Council has met virtually to develop the Strategic Plan.

Additionally, a newsletter has been created to provide updates between meetings. The Cross-Agency Child Council consists of deputy-level agency staff members representing all key programs, family ambassador members, and executive staff from three non-profit stakeholder groups (Voices for Georgia's Children, Georgia Early Education Alliance for

Ready Students, and the Georgia Partnership for Education Excellence). The council has reviewed the findings of the Needs Assessment, identified the Strategic Plan themes, and will finalize goals and develop measures at the next meeting (October 20).

- Georgia also identified the need to develop a Strategic Plan for CACDS, Georgia's early childhood integrated data system (ECIDS). This work is detailed in Activity Six.

Activity Two Progress (Completed by December 31, 2020)

- The Strategic Plan will be completed and submitted to Georgia's PDG B-5 Project Officers by December 30, 2020.

Activity Two, Year Two Activities

- Year Two activities include publishing the approved Strategic Plan and sharing at the community level. It is expected that the Strategic Plan will be used to facilitate community-level early education strategic planning. In other words, community leaders (with support from DECAL staff) will use the Strategic Plan to develop community-level goals and measures.
- Additionally, the Cross Agency Child Council will meet quarterly to review progress on goals and measures.

Summary

In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the Strategic Plan process from Spring 2020 to Summer/Fall 2020. The Strategic Plan will be completed by December 30, 2020. It builds on the findings from the Needs Assessment and incorporates research findings related to the impact of COVID-19. Renewal funds are not being used to complete the Strategic Plan. CVIOG is the key partner in facilitating this work.

Activity Three: Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge

Activity Description

As demonstrated in Georgia's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant, PDG B-5 Initial Grant, and PDG B-5 Renewal Grant, Georgia is committed to partnering with families to identify ways to strengthen Georgia's ECCE program and services and support them in their roles as the most important influences on young children's learning and development. DECAL has laid a foundation for family engagement that is being strengthened with the PDG Renewal Grant work. In the Renewal Grant application, Georgia detailed how it will expand and strengthen the family engagement work and build upon the work completed in the initial PDG grant to build a cadre of skilled family ambassadors, support families in making informed choices, strengthen family voice in the state system, ensure families are informed about IDEA services and resources, and connect families to community services through strengthening partnerships and transitions. The projects include: 1) growing the family ambassador program; 2) expanding the access and content of the developmental milestones website; 3) revising DECAL's licensing reports to being more family friendly; 4) creating a cross-agency family council; 5) ensuring that families are informed about IDEA services, are able to navigate enrollment and transitions, and are connected to needed resources; and 6) expanding Two-Generation Innovation Grants to support PDG focal populations.

In the PDG B-5 Initial Grant and the first year of the Renewal Grant, the state made considerable strides in moving the Activity Three projects forward. This success will feed into Year Two. The projects have been funded with PDG Initial Grant funding.

Activity Three Progress (Completed)

- *Building a Cadre of Skilled Family Ambassadors:* Thus far, the state has trained a total of 61 family ambassadors through two training cohorts. The first cohort was trained as part

of Georgia's PDG B-5 Initial Grant and the second cohort was trained as part of the first year of the Renewal Grant. As a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the second cohort was primarily trained virtually and has been encouraged to utilize social media and conduct virtual events. Additionally, a cadre of 48 family ambassadors was trained on utilizing social media to share information about the *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* developmental milestones campaign. Utilizing the hashtag #ActEarlyGA, the ambassadors created social media posts on developmental milestones and the new developmental milestone website. Ongoing monitoring of posting and use of the hashtag shows over 400 posts have been made to date.

- *Supporting Families to Make Informed Choices:* The developmental milestones website, development.decal.ga.gov, was finalized Spring of Year One of the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant. The website has also been translated into Spanish. The website is live and will be launched in the last quarter of 2020. Initial planning also began on the project to enhance the child care licensing website and reports. The gathering of IT and design requirements will begin in the first quarter of Year Two.
- *Strengthening Family Voice in the State System:* Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the development of the Cross-Agency Family Council has been delayed. Planning for the council will begin the last quarter of 2020, including the development of a steering committee, identification of potential members, and creation of a timeline for Year Two meetings.
- *Ensuring Families are Informed About IDEA Supports and Resources:* Planning for this project has begun. The family focus groups described in Activity One will support the development of a study to specifically inform this work.

- *Connecting Families to Community Services Through Strengthening Partnerships and Transitions*: Due to the pandemic, this project has not yet begun.

Activity Three Progress (Completed by December 30, 2020)

- *Supporting Families to Make Informed Choices*: A marketing plan for the developmental milestones website will be completed; and launch activities will begin by December 30, 2020. A revised timeline will also be developed for the additional design work for the website.
- *Strengthening Family Voice in the State System*: Child-serving agencies will be trained in strategies to recruit and support families as part of their family advisory councils. The training will be completed by December 2020. A revised timeline for establishing the Cross Agency Family Council will be created; and potential members will be identified. A contract for facilitation of the Council will also be established.
- *Ensuring Families are Informed About IDEA Supports and Resources*: The family focus groups will be completed and a revised timeline for the project will be developed.
- *Connecting Families to Community Services Through Strengthening Partnerships and Transitions*: A revised timeline for the project will be developed.

Activity Three, Year Two Activities

- *Building a Cadre of Skilled Family Ambassadors*: The state has seen considerable success with this project. In Year Two of the current renewal grant, the state will train a third cohort of Family Ambassadors. In addition to this third cohort, ambassadors from the first two cohorts will continue to receive support. This includes conducting additional leadership training as well as training them in facilitation of the world café model. The family ambassadors will continue to participate in virtual activities (including online meetings and social media posts) to promote early learning programs and services, the

#ActEarlyGA campaign, and the developmental milestones website. When able, the family ambassadors will also participate in face-to-face community events and meetings.

- *Supporting Families to Make Informed Choices:* With the developmental milestones website completed and translated into Spanish, Year Two activities will focus on promoting the website with families and stakeholders and on expanding the website to focus specifically on critical populations, such as children with disabilities and infants and toddlers. The website will also be translated into the top three languages most commonly used in Georgia. For the licensing report project, the focus will be on creating the new design, building the IT infrastructure to support the new reports, and testing to gauge the utility of the new design.
- *Strengthening Family Voice in the State System:* In Year Two, the state will create the Cross-Agency Family Council. Members will be identified from existing early learning program and service family councils and advisory groups. The Council will attend trainings and will meet bi-annually.
- *Ensuring Families are Informed About IDEA Supports and Resources:* DECAL will partner with the Center for Leadership in Disability at Georgia State University to conduct a landscape analysis of how families are able to access IDEA supports and resources.
- *Connecting Families to Community Services Through Strengthening Partnerships and Transitions:* DECAL proposes to expand the number and scope of these grants to support additional communities, particularly those in rural areas and areas serving a high proportion of families from focal populations. In Year Two, Georgia will award two capacity building grants and two implementation grants.

Summary

In summary, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the state has made considerable progress in the projects under Activity Three. By working on these projects, the state will be able to meet the overarching goal of supporting families in being the most influential factor in their children's growth and development.

Activity Four: Sharing Best Practices and Professional Development for the Early Childhood Workforce

Activity Description

Georgia has a robust approach to professional learning that is designed to promote career growth and understanding of best practices in working with children and families. In the Renewal Grant application, Georgia detailed how it will expand and strengthen its professional development work in the following three key areas: supporting career pathways and aligned credentials, enhancing trainings and job-embedded supports, and supporting community leaders in understanding best practices. Six projects were proposed in the application: 1) update the Georgia Early Childhood Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for administrators, technical assistance providers, and trainers; 2) develop alternate pathways for bilingual professionals, high school students, and non-traditional students; 3) evaluate and update the DECAL Scholars program; 4) update the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) trainings and resources, including the lesson planning site, Planning Educational Activities for Children (PEACH); 5) develop a cadre of early learning coaches; and 6) continue and expand the current Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives from the existing PDG to increase understanding of trauma-responsive care.

In the PDG B-5 initial grant and the first year of the renewal grant, the state demonstrated considerable success in moving the Activity Four forward. The success will feed into Year Two Activities.

Activity Four Progress (Completed)

- *Supporting Career Pathways and Aligned Credentials:* To update the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies, a work group has been formed and a work plan has been developed. Additionally, a process evaluation of DECAL Scholars has been conducted, which will inform decisions about future DECAL Scholars initiatives. Additionally, initial meetings with representatives from the Technical College System of Georgia have been held to gather initial feedback on credential options and current challenges to recruitment and retention of a highly-skilled workforce, with an emphasis on increasing the infant toddler workforce.
- *Enhancing Trainings and Job-Embedded Supports:* Because of the pandemic, an opportunity to increase access to virtual training and coaching emerged. As a result, an expedited process was developed for approved trainers to convert face to face trainings to virtual trainings. This ensured opportunities for the early learning workforce to meet training requirements during the pandemic. Additionally, a cross-divisional team was created to explore virtual coaching platforms, develop requirements for a platform, and make recommendations for a Request for Proposals (RFP). DECAL is in the process of developing the RFP. Further, a contract for website design services was established to support the work of the updates to the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) and PEACH (Planning Educational Activities for Children) online lesson planning websites. An internal work group was established; and a project plan and timeline have been created. Requirements gathering to inform website development is

underway. The first two face to face trainings in the GELDS training series, Standards 101 and Standards102, have been updated. Additionally, four GELDS related online trainings have been developed for Georgia’s online learning platform, OLLI (Online Learning Library Initiative); the trainings will go live this month.

- *Supporting Community Leaders in Understanding Best Practices:* Two trauma- informed symposium conferences, one in November and one in December, will be conducted by the Child Welfare Training Collaborative at Georgia State University. The symposium content has been designed primarily for the early learning workforce, with community leaders as a secondary audience. The symposium will offer training hours to count toward annual training requirements and teachers, assistant teachers, directors, and family child care providers are eligible for a stipend for attendance. The Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives that received trauma-informed grants in the PDG initial grants will host sessions during which they will share their trauma-informed projects and plans for continuing the work.

Activity Four Progress (Completed by December 30, 2020):

- *Enhancing Trainings and Job-Embedded Supports:* The work plan for the revision of the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies will be reviewed and approved. The process evaluation on the DECAL Scholars program will be completed. A revised timeline for the DECAL Scholars full evaluation project will be completed and approved.
- *Enhancing Trainings and Job-Embedded Supports:* The draft RFP for the coaching platform will be developed by December 30, 2020. The Standards 101 and 102 face to face trainings will be reviewed and edits made, based upon the review. The OLLI trainings will be available for registration and attendance by the end of October.

- *Supporting Community Leaders in Understanding Best Practices:* The two trauma-informed symposiums will be conducted. Training credit will be awarded; and stipends will be paid. A revised timeline for the project will be developed. The Early Learning Leadership Collaborative application will be revised, and potential communities will be identified.

Activity Four, Year Two Activities

- *Enhancing Trainings and Job-Embedded Supports:* The revisions to the WKC's for administrators, TA providers and trainers will be updated and posted for public comment. The workforce initiatives for developing pathways for bilingual professionals, high school students and non-traditional students will be developed. A initial pilot for each population will be completed and feedback gathered. Scale-up for the pathways including credentialing, training and financial supports will occur in Year 3. A contract for the DECAL Scholars study will be established, the study design completed, and initial data collection begun.
- *Enhancing Trainings and Job-Embedded Supports:* All GELDS face to face trainings will be updated, and a train the trainer series will be developed and conducted. The updates for the GELDS and PEACH website will be underway and substantially completed. The second phase pilot of the coach designation will be implemented, and designations will be awarded to those who participate and meet the established criteria. Additionally, pilots of coaching models in select focal programs (i.e. Georgia Pre-K, infant toddler, behavior supports, home visiting) will begin. The RFP for the coaching platform will be completed and a contract for a virtual coaching platform will be in place.
- *Supporting Community Leaders in Understanding Best Practices:* Six new Early Learning Leadership Collaboratives (ELLCs) focused on trauma-informed care will be

established. Collaboratives will design a “Building a Response to Trauma” action plan and receive a grant to implement their action plans. ELLCs from the initial grant will be supported in applying for a PDG community grant or a Two- Gen grant.

Summary

In summary, even though some projects have been revised due to the Pandemic, Georgia has made significant progress in Activity 4 during Year 1. The projects implemented will support the state in building a skilled, supported and diverse workforce to support Georgia’s youngest learners and their families.

Activity Five: Improving Overall Quality and Service Integration, Expanding Access, and Developing New Programs

Activity Description

In the state’s Renewal Grant, Georgia proposed five specific projects over the three-year period for Activity Five. The overarching goal of these projects was to increase access to quality at the state and community level. Specifically, the five projects proposed were: 1) revise Georgia’s Tiered Quality Rated and Improvement System (Quality Rated); 2) enhance Quality Rated Technical Assistance; 3) develop a Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsement for Quality Rated; 4) pilot and develop family child care learning home hubs; and 5) create community grants that would be used to help communities provide better support children and families from focal populations such as children with disabilities and dual language learners.

Progress on the projects in Activity Five has been most directly impacted by the pandemic. Supporting child care programs in meeting health and safety protocols to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and supporting the stability of child care programs to remain open has been the priority focus over the first two quarters of 2020. This has necessitated delaying the start of

the projects. Additionally, understanding the impact of the pandemic will inform the revision of these projects and determine the feasibility in continuing other projects.

Three of the Activity Five projects were specifically designed to strengthen Quality Rated. As Quality Rated relies on in-person observations, which are not feasible to conduct currently, the program has been greatly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Quality Rated is implementing a temporary rating process that can be done without an in-person observation. While this process was created as a result of the pandemic, it has also helped to kickstart the beginning the Quality Rated revision process. This will also inform the second project, enhancing Quality Rated Technical Assistance (TA), as TA in 2020 has looked different than expected. The third project, the Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsement, has been delayed by the pandemic. The fourth and fifth projects, the Family Child Care Learning Home Hubs and Community Grants, have not been able to start.

No-cost extension funds from the Initial Grant are being utilized to support the work in Activity Five.

Activity Five Progress (Completed)

- *Quality Rated Revisions*: In Year One, it was expected that the state would identify a contractor and begin stakeholder feedback regarding Quality Rated revisions, but these tasks were delayed by COVID-19. However, after success with a temporary star rating process in Spring/Summer 2020, Quality Rated has expanded and formalized the Temporary Alternative Rating Option (TARO) initiative. At this writing, TARO has been developed with a pilot beginning at the end of October. Child Trends is assisting with the pilot data collection.
- *Enhancing Quality Rated TA*: Due to the pandemic, Quality Rated TA has looked different in 2020. Therefore, this project has been put on hold. However, the technical

assistance coaches (housed at the Child Care Resource and Referral agencies statewide) received training on trauma-informed care that will support their understanding of the impact of the pandemic on child care programs, the early learning workforce, and children and families. Additionally, the TARO Pilot will collect data on TA and will be used to design this project.

- *Creating a Language and Literacy Endorsement:* DECAL designed a pilot for the Endorsement with a group of 11 providers who met twice before the COVID-19 pandemic. A contract was established for the development of the professional learning content. The scope and sequence of the professional learning sessions has been developed and approved and the content is currently in development. DECAL has remained in contact with the Pilot Group and the work with them will be restarted in 2021.
- *Developing Family Child Care Learning Home Hubs:* Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this project has not yet begun. Information gathered in the Child Care Survey conducted by CVIOG will be utilized to better understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on family child care learning homes. Additionally, DECAL collects and analyzes operational status information on child care programs on an on-going basis. This data can help inform the selection and subsequent development of the Hubs.
- *Community Grants:* Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this project has not begun.

Activity Five Progress (Completed by December 30, 2020)

- *Quality Rated Revisions:* In the last quarter of 2020, eligible child care programs will be able to apply to participate in TARO. An initial survey will be conducted with selected pilot programs to understand operational status, program enrollment, and any current challenges. DECAL will also be finalizing the scope and sequence of technical assistance for TARO and will assign technical assistance coaches to programs.

- *Enhancing Quality Rated TA:* A revised timeline for this project will be developed by December 30, 2020. The process for the contractor to support this project will be conducted in the last quarter of 2020.
- *Creating a Language and Literacy Endorsement:* The content is currently in development and will be reviewed by DECAL by December 30, 2020. A meeting with the Pilot programs will be conducted in November to update them on the project timeline.
- *Developing a Family Child Care Learning Home Hubs:* A revised timeline for this project will be developed by December 30, 2020. A meeting will be held with pertinent stakeholders including the Georgia Professional Family Child Care Agency to better understand the business and professional learning needs of family child care providers.
- *Community Grants:* The Cross Agency Child Council will review current community grants projects and provide feedback to how additional community grants could benefit Georgia's identified PDG B-5 focal populations and key ECCE programs and services. The Council will also identify specific communities that can benefit.

Activity Five, Year Two Activities

- *Revising Quality Rated:* The TARO pilot will be completed in early January 2021. TARO will be the method to rate programs until at least June 30, 2021 with the potential to be extended depending on the longevity of the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the results of the pilot, Quality Rated will look at incorporating elements of TARO into the rating process. In the second half of Year Two, the state will develop a specific revision process that will be implemented in 2022.
- *Enhancing Quality Rated TA:* This project will incorporate results from the TARO Pilot. The state will develop a specific process in the second half of 2021 that will be

incorporated in 2022. Additional training on trauma informed care will be provided to technical assistance coaches.

- *Developing a Language and Literacy Endorsement:* The pilot for the Endorsement will be restarted in the first quarter of 2021. This includes implementing the professional development associated with the endorsement. It is expected that the endorsement will be awarded to the pilot programs who complete the requirements in the Fall of 2021. Scale-up of the endorsement will occur in Fall 2021.
- *Family Child Care Learning Home Hubs:* This project will begin in January 2021. Two hubs will be created in one of DECAL's six administrative regions. The design of the hubs will occur in the first quarter with the specific geographic areas identified and family providers recruited in the second quarter. Implementation of the hubs will occur in the third and fourth quarters of 2021.
- *Community Grants:* An application and review process for new grants will be developed in the first six months of Year Two. This process will build on the success the state has had with current Two Generation Innovation Grants. In these grants, the state offers communities two types of grants: Capacity Building and Implementation Grants. Capacity Building Grants allow communities to identify partners, conduct mini Needs Assessments, and determine what projects could best meet their needs. Implementation Grants provide communities an opportunity to implement a "Two-Gen" project that was identified through a Capacity Building Grant opportunity or through other stakeholder engagement. In Year Two, this process will include an opportunity for communities to upgrade their Capacity Building Grant to an Implementation Grant. The process will also

include additional Capacity Building Grants based on criteria identified by the Cross-Agency Child Council.

Summary

In summary, the state will conduct the following related to Activity Five in Year Two of the Renewal Grant: 1) Utilize the results of the TARO pilot to design the Quality Rated revisions and enhance technical assistance processes; 2) restart the Quality Rated Language and Literacy Endorsement pilot with scale-up of the Endorsement beginning in late 2021; and 3) pilot two family child care learning home hubs in one DECAL administrative region. These projects benefit from the work that has been accomplished in 2020 and through Georgia's PDG B-5 Renewal Grant.

Activity Six: Monitoring, Evaluation, Data Use for Continuous Improvement, Meaningful Governance and Stakeholder Engagement

Activity Description

Georgia's PDG B-5 Needs Assessment revealed many strengths and opportunities related to the state's use of data and research. The Needs Assessment found that Georgia has continually strengthened and updated its data capacity, including data collection, data analysis, data usage, and data visualization. However, there is a great need to increase data literacy and ensure that Georgia's data systems are operating as intended. In Year One, the state made considerable progress in updating CACDS and implementing its PPE plan. Year Two activities include implementing the processes and planning that occurred in Year One.

Activity Six Progress (Completed)

- *CACDS Enhancements*: In Georgia's PDG B-5 Renewal Grant application, the state proposed utilizing PDG B-5 funds to create CACDS 2.0. To that end, utilizing PDG B-5 Initial Grant no-cost extension funds, the state has contracted with KSM consulting to create a CACDS Strategic Plan. As of this writing, KSM is in the process of reviewing all

relevant CACDS materials, conducting interviews with key CACDS users and stakeholders, and drafting the strategic plan.

- *Program Performance Evaluation:* DECAL is working with Child Trends to develop the PPE Plan. As of this writing, DECAL and Child Trends have identified overall grant goals, identified specific projects to draft PPE Plan for, and Child Trends is identifying measures for each activity and outlining the data collection process.

Activity Six Progress (Completed by December 31, 2020)

- *CACDS Enhancements:* KSM will complete and submit to DECAL the Strategic Plan. With input from the Cross-Agency Child Council, DECAL will develop a process for implementing the Strategic Plan.
- *Program Performance Evaluation:* Child Trends will complete the PPE Plan.

Activity Six, Year Two Activities

- *CACDS Enhancements:* DECAL will begin implementation of the CACDS Strategic Plan.
- *Program Performance Evaluation:* DECAL and Child Trends will design the Year Two plan, continue to collect data, and submit the Plan. The Year Two Plan will expand to include additional projects that are being implemented in 2021.

Summary

In summary, Year Two activities will entail implementing the CACDS Strategic Plan and expanding the PPE Plan. These activities build on the findings from the Needs Assessment that detailed Georgia's success in utilizing research and data, but also areas where the state could improve data literacy and the assurance that data systems are operating as intended.

Update to Georgia's PDG B-5 Renewal Grant Goals and Conclusion

In Georgia's PDG B-5 Renewal Grant application, the state identified three overarching goals: 1) raise quality of early child care and education (ECCE) programs; 2) increase access to ECCE programs for focal populations, including the ECCE workforce; and 3) align resources and increase coordination across programs and agencies that serve children and families. These goals demonstrate the state's commitment to utilizing PDG B-5 funds to create projects and initiatives that not only strengthen the state's early education system, but also have the potential to benefit each and every child.

In Year One, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the state was able to make progress on activities and complete the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan. While these projects were delayed, state leaders recognized an opportunity to incorporate new information gleaned during the pandemic about Georgia's B-5 Mixed Delivery System into the Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan. These changes support the goals listed above, especially aligning resources and increasing coordination. The state made considerable progress in Activity Three and Four, thus raising the quality and increasing access to ECCE programs. While projects in Activity Five were particularly impacted by the pandemic, the state will be able to make considerable progress on these in Year Two and has been able to incorporate pandemic-related changes to two projects in Activity Five, revising Quality Rated and informing the Technical Assistance process. Finally, the state has developed the processes for conducting the PPE Plan and will have a CACDS Strategic Plan at the end of the year that will be implemented in Year Two. The work conducted in Activity Six will help the state meet all three of the above goals.

In summary, Georgia is proud to submit this Non-Competing Continuation Application for Year Two of the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant. While none of us could have foreseen the changes that have taken place in 2020, the state, with support from these funds, is in a good position to

continue strengthening its system, meet its PDG B-5 goals, and better meet the needs of its children, families, programs, communities, and the state at large.

Year Two Budget Narrative

Presented below is the budget narrative for Year Two of Georgia's PDG B-5 Renewal Grant. The total proposed budget for grant is \$4,838,059 for the budget period. DECAL will utilize existing state funding and in-kind support in the amount of \$1,116,475 to meet the required match portion of the proposed grant. Therefore, the total amount of federal funding required for the proposed budget is \$3,721,584.

Personnel – A senior executive position with an estimated salary of \$110,000 will dedicate 100% of their time to providing state-level executive leadership to the project vision and manage the Cross-Agency Child Council. A Grant Director with an annual salary of \$63,000 and a Grant Coordinator with a salary of \$49,457 will dedicate 100% of their time executing and coordinating grant activities according the implementation plan and budget strategy. A Senior Research and Policy Analyst with an annual salary of \$66,463, a Research and Policy Analyst with an annual salary of \$49,995, and a Research and Policy Analyst with an annual salary of \$48,884 will each dedicate 33% of their time supporting grant activities. The total personnel budget proposed is \$277,020.

Fringe – The total rate of fringes for DECAL employees is calculated at a rate of 63.211% of the current salary. This breaks down as follows: FICA is 7.650%, Health Insurance is 30.781%, and Retirement is 24.78% All rates are set by the State of Georgia. The total fringe budget proposed is \$175,106.

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

Equipment – A budget of \$0 for equipment.

Supplies - \$500 per FTE is included for office supplies for a total of \$2,000. Supplies, materials and printing for meetings is estimated to cost \$12,389. The total supplies budget proposed is \$14,389.

Contractual – DECAL intends to procure contracts as a primary means of supporting and executing the vision of the activities outlined in the grant proposal. All contract amounts proposed are based upon the agency's extensive experience procuring services to support our agency mission. The total contractual budget proposed and outlined by activity below is \$4,180,275.

Activity 1: \$175,000 for data collection and research services performed by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. \$100,000 for data and research support from Child Trends. \$500,000 to produce a new Economic Impact Study of early learning in Georgia. \$75,000 to study access and quality of home visiting services in Georgia. \$250,000 for Third Sector Intelligence to study the cost of quality child care in Georgia. \$75,000 to perform a landscape analysis of IECMH Services in Georgia.

Activity 2: \$75,000 for additional facilitation services performed by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government.

Activity 3: \$36,800 for services to provide peer family ambassador stipend payments. \$75,000 for services to perform focus groups, interview, and surveys to assess and understand how families connect to ECCE services and programs. \$50,000 for enhancing the state's child care licensing report website. \$130,000 for community two-generation grants for two grants of \$45,500, including \$10,500 in-kind support, and two grants of \$19,500, including \$4,500 in-kind support. \$2,000 for Parent Café Family Training content and delivery.

Activity 4: \$78,000 for early learning leadership grants in 6 communities for an average grant of \$13,000, including \$3,000 in-kind support. \$40,000 to support alternate career pathways in the DECAL Scholars Program. \$150,000 for the development and training related to GELDS. \$100,000 to redesign and enhance the PEACH online lesson planning tool. \$4,000 for updating standards for Workforce, Knowledge and Competencies. \$1,094,475 to enhance workforce professional development opportunities by offer training and associated substitute funding for 40 teachers to obtain a relationship-based coaching designation for \$54,000 and provide stipends to those coaches to offer training opportunities to other teachers for \$92,000 while building upon \$948,475 in current state spending for best practices training to support relationship-based coaching professional development activities. \$180,000 for Trauma Informed Care training.

Activity 5: \$500,000 for technical assistance related to continuous quality improvement efforts for the state's CCR&R's. \$130,000, including \$30,000 in-kind support, to implement a Family Child Care Learning Home Network pilot program. \$390,000 for focal population community grants for six grants of \$45,500, including \$10,500 in-kind support, and six grants of \$19,500, including \$4,500 in-kind support. \$50,000 to work with a higher education partner to develop and pilot a Language and Literacy Endorsement for QRIS programs for Activity 5. \$30,000 for facilitation services related to DECAL's proposed QRIS revision and engagement.

Activity 6: \$200,000 for planning and technical consulting services to continue developing the Cross-Agency Child Data System. \$90,000 for data and research support from Child Trends.

Dissemination Plan: \$50,000 to work with a state advocacy partner to market and disseminate grant activity outcomes.

Other – \$1,670 per FTE is included for office space rent for a total of \$6,680. \$84,000 is estimated to be needed in order to provide the meeting space for stakeholder meetings for the grant activities. \$47,427 for training and technical assistance needs and is based on 1% of the proposed direct cost of \$4,742,730 for the grant. The total other budget proposed is \$138,107.

Indirect – The total indirect is \$47,902 and is equal to 1% of the total proposed cost for direct activities as well as training and technical assistance.

Georgia has allocated \$100,000, 2.1% of the total budget, to refine and implement the PPE and is based on \$100,000 from a contract for implementation, reporting, and data system planning for CACDS in Activity 6.

DECAL intends to meet the 30% cost sharing or matching requirement in the amount of \$1,116,475 by utilizing a combination of existing state investment and in-kind support by grantees and partners in each year of the grant. In Activity 4, DECAL will leverage \$948,475 in existing state investment in workforce professional development. In Activity 3, 4, and 5, DECAL will leverage in-kind support provided by communities that are awarded grant opportunities in the amount of \$168,000.

Summary by Budget Category	Amount
Personnel	\$277,020
Fringes	\$175,106
Travel	\$5,260
Supplies	\$14,389
Contractual	\$4,180,275
Other	\$138,107
Total Direct	\$4,790,157
Indirect	\$47,902
Total Budget	\$4,838,059
State & In-Kind Match	\$1,116,475
Federal Request	\$3,721,584
Total Budget	\$4,838,059
Summary by Activity	Amount
Organizational Management	\$657,784
Activity 1	\$1,175,000
Activity 2	\$75,000
Activity 3	\$293,800
Activity 4	\$1,646,475
Activity 5	\$650,000
Activity 6	\$290,000
Dissemination Plan	\$50,000
Total Direct	\$4,838,059



Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning

BRIGHT FROM THE START

2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive SE, Suite 754, East Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334
(404) 656-5957

Brian P. Kemp
Governor

Amy M. Jacobs
Commissioner

January 21, 2020

Mr. Arif Karim
Mid-Atlantic Field Office
7700 Wisconsin Ave
Suite 8100
Bethesda, MD 20857

Dear Mr. Karim:

Please find the enclosed Public Assistance Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) for the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL). The effective date of this Plan is July 1, 2019.

In conjunction with Nichols, Cauley, and Associates, we have prepared a revised cost allocation plan for your review and approval. DECAL's revised plan is like the previously approved plan with one change. The previous plan, which was approved by HHS June 9, 2014, used the number of employees to allocate indirect costs. The revised plan uses direct salaries and wages to allocate indirect costs to the programs of DECAL.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me at 404-656-6333. Also, my email address is rian.ringsrud@decals.ga.gov

Sincerely,

Rian Ringsrud
Deputy Commissioner
Finance and Administration
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
Cost Allocation Plan



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Program Support Center
Financial Management Service
Division of Cost Allocation

DCA Western Field Office
90 7th Street, Suite 4-600
San Francisco, CA 94103
PHONE: (415) 437-7820
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Mr. H. Ray Higgins, Jr.
Deputy Commissioner
Finance and Administration
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, SE, Suite 754 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

JUN 09 2014

Dear Mr. Higgins:

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

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

1. The information contained in the Plan and provided by the State in connection with our review of the Plan is complete and accurate in all material respects.
2. The actual costs claimed by the State are allowable under prevailing cost principles, program regulations and law.
3. The claims conform with the administrative and statutory limitations against which they are made.

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

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

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

Sincerely,

Arif Kamim, Director
Cost Allocation Services

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

Unobligated Funds

Costs for contracted services in the Initial PDG were overestimated thus Georgia was able to request to utilize these funds in the approved no-cost extension. Additionally, the pandemic delayed and postponed Year One projects and caused significant delays in the contracting process. Therefore, Georgia estimates \$2,990,259 of unobligated Funds of the Year One grant total at the end of the contract year (December 30, 2020). Georgia has obligated or is in the process of obligating approximately \$1,847,800. The state has a budget and plan for obligating and extending the unobligated funds and plans to request the funds through the carryover process.

Continuation Statement

In 2018, Governor Brian Kemp designated the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) as the lead agency for PDG B-5 activities. As such, DECAL is willing and able to continue implementing activities under the PDG B-5 grant and accept a continuation award for the next year of funds.

Explanation for Not Submitting Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes Form

The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriation Act, 2008 (Public Law 110-161, Division G, Title V, section 523), requires financial assistance recipients entering into a grant or cooperative agreement of more than \$5,000,000 to submit the Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes form. Georgia's annual PDG B-5 budget includes a \$3,721,584 federal award amount and \$1,116,475 non-federal share, for a total of \$4,838,059. This amount falls below \$5,000,000, therefore Georgia is not submitting a Certification of Filing and Payment of Federal Taxes form.