

## Executive Summary

For the reporting year, please provide a summary of your State's (1) accomplishments, (2) lessons learned, (3) challenges, and (4) strategies you will implement to address those challenges.

### Executive Summary

New Mexico is pleased to report that at the end of Year Four of the Early Learning Challenge Grant, the State continues to make significant progress in grant implementation across all six of its Early Learning Challenge Projects: *Grants Management*; *FOCUS-TQRIS*; *Early Childhood Investment Zones*; *Workforce Development*; *Early Childhood Data Systems*; *Kindergarten Entry Assessment*.

New Mexico's ongoing, comprehensive commitment to building an early learning system of the highest quality for its most at-risk young children and their families is the result of collaboration among State agencies, community partners, and stakeholders and is reflected in the following 2016 accomplishments.

#### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

New Mexico has made significant progress on the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant since it began in January 2013, with much of Years One and Two spent on gearing up to implement the grant, including hiring key staff; establishing contracts; and establishing governance and communications processes. Year Three highlights included continued strides towards building a robust, high quality learning system for our youngest children; further improving communications with key stakeholders; implementing the first statewide implementation of the Kindergarten Observation Tool; increasing TEACH scholarship participants; incorporating FOCUS-TQRIS across all New Mexico early learning programs; and initiating work in the identified Early Childhood Investment Zones.

The 2016 Annual Performance Report provides an overview of New Mexico's RTT-ELC activities for Year Four of the grant, highlighting several areas of progress and accomplishments within the six projects towards building successful state "systems of systems" that connect early care health and education into a continuum of integrated, high-quality, comprehensive services, including:

#### 1. Grants Management

##### Governance

Enhanced collaboration and communications continued as a result of New Mexico implementing a coordinated governance model that places authority and accountability across the three participating agencies - Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD), Department of Health (DOH), and Public Education Department (PED). The structure includes an Executive Team and Leadership Team. The Executive Team meets monthly to gain updates and resolve inter-agency concerns. The Leadership Team continued to meet twice per month to discuss policy questions and implementation plans, review the status of each project, discuss any major challenges, maintain alignment among project policies and activities, and discuss and confirm any necessary adjustments to the budget, scope of work, and implementation plans.

The Project Grant Manager continues to oversee the overall management and implementation progress for the RTT-ELC grant. While authority and accountability is managed across the three departments, management and reporting responsibilities continued within PED, with quarterly status reports provided to the Department Secretary. The following additional activities were achieved under Grants Management in 2016:

##### No-Cost Extension

New Mexico completed the necessary requirements to be approved for a 1 year No-Cost Extension amendment to complete the following work: *Grants Management*, to provide oversight and support, in particular, staff to oversee and monitor contracts for other extension projects and to ensure compliance with grant requirements; *FOCUS-TQRIS*, to complete the work of extending FOCUS-TQRIS across three state agencies; *Professional Development*, to complete the activities through the FOCUS-TQRIS professional development system that supports New Mexico's early childhood workforce; *Data*, to complete development

of an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) to integrate data from the three state agencies; and *Kindergarten Entry Assessment*, to fully complete KEA implementation by June 2017.

### Monitoring

In October 2016, New Mexico participated in the “Part B Desk Monitoring” review with focus on the following areas: Successful state systems; high quality programs; and investments in supporting early childhood educators, learning development at kindergarten entry, and data systems. The report findings concluded that there were no recommendations to strengthen implementation.

### Sustainability

In October 2016, New Mexico contracted with Policy Equity Group, LLC to work with the state's Sustainability Team to develop the New Mexico RTT-ELC Sustainability Plan. The work initiated in 2016 includes reviewing work and conducting an inventory of accomplishments in preparation for input from stakeholders and further plan development during 2017. Goals of the sustainability Plan are to tell New Mexico RTT-ELC story, actively engage the RTT-ELC stakeholder community, develop criteria and identify each project's need for sustainability and the overall amount of funding necessary to sustain the work, and recommend funding amounts and sources that can be used to sustain the projects.

### Communication

New Mexico continued to implement the communication and marketing plan initially developed in 2014 and further refined in 2015. The plan includes communications to both internal State staff and external stakeholders. During 2016, the Early Learning NM website - - [www.earlylearningnm.org](http://www.earlylearningnm.org) continued to expand in content and serve as a resource for information on upcoming events; RTT-ELC project updates; testimonials on the impact of the work thus far; priorities and activities of the New Mexico Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC); and information on early learning programs in order for parents to know how to access these programs and services. In addition to periodic e-newsletters issued throughout the year, a statewide stakeholder meeting was held in April to provide an update on the work accomplished thus far; reinforce how stakeholders fit into and are engaged in the system transformation; and provide input on how best to inform early childhood system partners on the progress and benefits realized thus far.

## **2. Raising the Quality of Early Learning Programs**

### Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS)

New Mexico's progress towards an aligned FOCUS-TQRIS includes agreed upon essential elements that support: family engagement; inclusive practices for children with developmental delays or disabilities; culture and language; dual language learners; promoting social relationships; Professional Qualifications; Intentional Teaching and Early Intervention Practices; Intentional Leadership; and Continuous Quality Improvement. Progress towards an aligned FOCUS-TQRIS system is being articulated and measured in sustaining our Early Learning standards within all sectors to benefit young children, families and communities. Year Four accomplishments in this area include:

- Family Child Care (FCC) providers were convened to launch a new criteria. The FOCUS FCC Criteria was created to better accommodate the unique learning environment children experience in a home center. Approximately 20 licensed programs from across the state participated in the initial launch. During the pilot phase, feedback and suggestions were welcomed from programs in order to improve the draft criteria. Additionally, a webinar orientation about the new criteria is posted on the *New Mexico Kids* website, a site designed for both early care and learning providers and families and easily accessible.
- Criteria for Out-of-School Time programs followed. The document was presented at the New Mexico Association of the Education of Young Children in March. It launched with four pilot programs in April.
- A full day event titled, *New Mexico Early Learning Institute: A Journey to Celebrate*, was held with 350 providers, consultants, administrators and higher education faculty participating. The institute highlighted and celebrated the success of quality early learning programs throughout the state. FOCUS providers shared their TQRIS journey and the knowledge they've gained in presentations and through a gallery walk.
- The FOCUS Essential Elements of Quality for State-Funded Preschool Programs was developed using the

New Mexico PreK Program Standards as the basis for the 5 Star Criteria. Thus far, all PED PreK programs are being phased into FOCUS. PreK is funded in 54 of 89 districts and 6 charter schools. Additionally, 41 of the 89 districts are fully implementing FOCUS in their Special Education and Title I preschool programming. A total of 244 New Mexico PreK, 1900 special education, and 67 Title I preschool classrooms received monthly consultative support to implement the 5 Star Criteria during 2016, while all FOCUS trainings were offered to preschool personnel and administrators in all 89 school districts and any state charter schools with preschool programs.

- New Mexico's Family Infant Toddler (FIT) program completed its Essential Element measurement tools for all Level III practices and Level II - IV scoring rubric; completed the FIT Focus document; and continued work to determine how the FIT FOCUS scoring rubric for each Essential Element of Quality rolls up into the overall program score.
- The FIT Program held its annual conference in June with over 160 participants from the 34 FIT provider agencies across the state participating. The conference focused on the work being conducted under grant to develop TQRIS. Panel discussions highlighted pilot programs underway to promote evidence-based early intervention practices through the use of video recording of home visits and the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) Quality Rating Scale, a tool that promotes the development of functional, routines-based and family centered IFSPs.
- To support the program's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process, the FIT program designed a pilot to promote evidence-based early intervention practices through the use of video recording of home visits that are then reviewed in a reflective coaching session. The pilot includes utilizing the tools from the Family Guided Routines Based Intervention approach (<http://fgrbi.fsu.edu/index.html>) as part of a collaboration with Juliann Woods Ph.D. from Florida State University. Larry Edelman, from Colorado, collaborated with the FIT Program and Juliann Woods to build into the design the use of video technology.

### Testimonials

*"Family involvement and community engagement have been the main focus of our FOCUS. As a result, we have better relationships with our families and are giving our children a stronger sense of community whereby they are showing more initiative and improved communications in the classroom and with each other."*

*Beverly Stokes, Miss Bev's Child Care*

*"Prior to FOCUS, support for special education programs and professional development varied. FOCUS has built a foundation for high quality programs from every aspect. No matter where your child lives, through FOCUS you now have access to a quality early learning program for your child."*

*Alex Ruiz, UNM Training & Development Consultant*

### 3. Investing in Communities

#### Early Childhood Investment

The Early Childhood Investment Zones touch every region and every border of New Mexico, and range from rural to urban population centers, covering 11 priority counties (based on child risk index) and 35 priority school districts (based on academic risk index).

The Investment Zone initiative is strategically designed to engage all sectors of the early childhood system (home visiting, FIT, early learning, Head Start, 619 special education, Title I, Pre-K, public health, and family support) to make a shared commitment to improving outcomes for young children. As a co-learning opportunity, the Family Development Program provided collaborative leadership training for effective coalition-building and immersion in *Mind in the Making: The Science of Early Learning* to support development of a common, accessible language for how young children learn and grow. The overall goal of this engagement is to establish cross-sector commitment and coalition sustainability for local communities to become fully engaged in FOCUS and its long-term investment in quality for all young children in New Mexico.

### Testimonials

*"Our goal is to establish a listing of resources for teachers and families that are already in existence in our*

community. For example, many times resource directories include listings in Albuquerque and no one realizes that our local WIC office and pediatricians can connect families. In sustaining our work, we are reaching out to engage other community groups, like the local rotary, small business association, local newspaper, school board, etc. to share our goals and gain their support in helping us promote and sustain our early childhood investments.”

Lara Lehman, UNM Continuing Education Early Childhood Services

“We are more a frontier community than a rural community with mostly seniors now raising their grandchildren. We recently partnered with the school during their family night and had a huge turnout. We planned for 50 and had three times the amount of people attend. We are helping our families to socialize and engage more with their children.”

Alejandro Ortega, UNM Health Services & Prevention Resource Center

“We are small but a mighty group. There are five of us who consistently attend our monthly meetings to plan activities with families to reinforce the importance of reading and learning through play. Our long range goal is to have a child care center in our community.”

Jenny Warren, Guadalupe Early Childhood Home Visiting Program

#### 4. Professional Development

##### Early Childhood Higher Education Task Force

New Mexico developed the Early Childhood Higher Education Task Force to establish a professional development system in New Mexico's early childhood workforce. The task force examined the competencies that guide the professional development system and accompany the early childhood licensure. Through this effort, mobile students and families will have the same requirements for licensure no matter where they go. the primary task was the successful articulation of the two-year and four-year institutions through the development of common core content and the creation of a statewide common catalog of courses.

##### T.E.A.C.H.® Scholarships

The scholarships are helping early childhood programs have more qualified staff and more effective programs for New Mexico's children. Some of the educators who are taking advantage of T.E.A.C.H. scholarships funded by Race to the Top are New Mexico PreK education assistants or teachers, educators working in programs involved with the new FOCUS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (also funded by Race to the Top), parent educators and parent-teachers working with Spanish speaking parents and children, family child care home educators and teachers working in programs that are preparing to get involved with FOCUS, home visitors, early interventionists, and early childhood special education teachers in the public schools.

284 Scholarships supported by Race to the Top are listed below by distribution category:

<b>Funders/Categories</b>	<b>Scholars</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
RTT PED Scholars	29	10%
RTT Home Visitors	23	8%
RTT DOH Early Intervention	26	9%
RTT PhD cohort at NMSU	13	5%
RTT PhD cohort at Walden	1	0.4%
RTT CYFD Childcare	193	68%
<b>Total</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>100%</b>

## EarlyEdU Institute

The Office of Child Development attended with University of Washington's EarlyEdU Alliance Institute, in partnership with the New Mexico Higher Education Task Force. Individuals from the CYFD, Santa Fe Community College, and the Thornburg Investment Firm were present at the two-day Institute. As a result, work began to crosswalk the EarlyEdU course syllabi to the New Mexico Universal Catalogue of Courses for Early Care, Education and Family Support. To date, two New Mexico higher education Institutes are offering the EarlyEdU courses to help students complete degrees in the Early Childhood field.

## Integrated Learning Approach

The New Mexico *Integrated Learning Approach* was introduced to impact change in the field of Early Childhood by transforming professional development opportunities into dialog rich, learning-centered events that respect and value the prior experiences of the adult learner. The roll out of this approach began with a 4-day course (30 hour) event designed to introduce trainers, consultants, and coaches across the state to the NM Integrated Learning Approach.

Participants in this course shared a common goal of effectively educating, facilitating, and/or consulting with Early Childhood professionals. They strive to create situations where learning is sustained and makes a difference for children and families throughout New Mexico. As trainers and consultants, they are committed to continued growth and learning. Additionally, many of the course participants will be key to sustaining the impacts of the roll out of this new *Integrated Learning Approach in Professional Development*. All participants will apply their learning from this course to strengthen their approach with the future learning opportunities they plan and implement. Following is feedback received from roll out attendees:

### **Testimonials**

*"The response to the Integrated Learning Approach is so positive! We are witnessing more dialogue and interaction as a part of the learner application. How do we know they're learning? They're modeling it!"*

*"I have been using the Integrated Learning Approach in my debriefings during consultation visits. How great that this approach gives people the opportunity to empower themselves by learning through discovery, dialogue and action!"*

*"We organized a 2-hour session using the "4 As" from the Integrated Learning Approach - Anchor, Add, Apply and Away. The outcome was great! Participants had time for reflection, conversation and action. My colleague ran into one of the participants at another meeting and she shared that it was one of the best sessions she had ever attended!"*

## Training and Consultation Competencies

New Mexico's continued contract with Global Learning Partners, Inc. (GLP) to implement a training and consultation model based upon assessment and feedback obtained was further implemented in 2016. In implementing this approach, GLP introduced Dialogue Education™, a researched-based approach to working effectively with adults as well as from the proven and effective principles and practices from Early Childhood trainers and consultants. Dialogue Education™ is a structured system made up of tested principles of adult learning theory and practices based in the work of Dr. Jane Vella. The principles have demonstrated over time the ability to transform learning in most settings. These promising practices balance delivery of new information with learner's experiences through interactive, dialogue-based and hands-on involvement with the content to be learned. This system is "learning-centered" as opposed to trainer- or consultant-centered.

Participants in this course built on their actual and perceived current practices and discovered new ways to create training and consulting events that are even more meaningful to those with whom they work, thus ensuring each future event is relevant, engaging and immediately applicable. By the end of FY17, approximately 180 individuals making up 10 cohorts will have completed this course and will be working towards using the Integrated Learning Approach in their work as a facilitator of adult learning. Each cohort has cross sector representation with participants joining together to form an ongoing community of learners.

## NM Pyramid Partnership for Social-Emotional Competences

To date, over 400 individuals from New Mexico have participated in “train the trainer” events to ensure that training is available on the Pyramid Framework to all early childhood practitioners in every corner of New Mexico. In addition to the work of the Master Cadre, a cross sector leadership team, known as the New Mexico Pyramid Partnership, is guiding the initiative with the intent of developing and sustaining a statewide, collaborative professional development system that further utilizes the Pyramid Framework.

## **5. Promoting Accountability**

### Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS)

Throughout 2016, New Mexico made substantial progress with promoting accountability by developing a data system that integrates data from across early learning programs serving young children to measure child outcomes over time and to enable planning for early learning investments. As with most projects of this scope and level of complexity, there were challenges to overcome in the development process. Despite the challenges, the following implementation milestones were realized:

- In January through March 2016, contract negotiations with selected software development vendors concluded; a contracted Project Manager was brought on board; and a kick off meeting was held to identify project deliverables, assumptions and a framework for implementation. Technical and Project Management strategy sessions followed the kickoff meeting.
- A shared project document repository was created and the following relevant documentation was produced: Issues/Action Items Log; Project Team Directory; Change Request Log; Risk Register; Configuration Management Items; Decision Log; Task List; Meeting Folders; Monthly Status Reports; and Project Management Plan folder.
- A multi-agency “ECIDS IT Project Team” was formed with technical leads from each source data agency. To enhance communications, regular Monday project meetings were established to include technical leads and the software development vendor.
- A series of data mapping meetings were initiated among the database architects and source data agencies to begin mapping *Essential Data Elements* to the CEDS V5 data dictionary. This was expanded to include Department of Health required data fields that are not education related.
- The above data mapping led to the development of the *Unique ID (UID)* component of the overall ECIDS data system. Data mapping and development of the Complete Data Warehouse (CDW) product followed later in the year.
- A series of meetings among the 7 ECIDS source data agencies' IT staff network were conducted to determine the best method for the ETL (extract, transform and load) procedures and to enable uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by both participating state agencies and programs into the ECIDS Unique ID system and data warehouse.
- Work continued through the summer with the data governance working group drilling down to the data elements that will be used to inform the data profiles defined. Help was enlisted from New Mexico State epidemiologists in the area of GIS and defining geo-code elements to include in the ECIDS data warehouse for mapping purposes.
- The second half of 2016 was very busy with end-users resolving near matches and together resolving duplicate or shared IDs. ECIDS Unique IDs were also assigned for historical data for all data sources. Additionally, the platform was expanded as the electronic data management (eDM) software and the CDW product were loaded into the TEST environment.

### **EPICS Child Care and EPICS PreK Success's**

As of December 31, 2016 CYFD has completed its requirement gathering, the development and the UAT User Acceptance Testing for the Child Care components and PreK in EPICS. The development of these pieces have utilized all Race to the Top (RTT-ELC) funds related to the EPICS data project - Grads 360 Task 5.5 Develop EPICS (Enterprise Provider Information Constituent Services) system for CYFD Early Childhood programs. The development of Child Care for RTT-ELC consisted of Child Care Assistance to include Intake/Application, Eligibility and Placement/Contract. Also developed was Child Care provider management to include provider certifications and their quality levels for licensed and registered providers.

These Child Care components were built to complement existing EPICS functionality to include Background Checks and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). By aligning these systems into EPICS we were able

to strengthen the Health and Safety for our children. All providers who will provide child care and PreK must be certified in EPICS and only those caregivers and educators that have eligible background check can provide services to our children. Various notifications have been developed to provide information to staff regarding their Back Ground Eligibility. All caregivers and educators are constantly being screened in EPICS against the NM Department of Public Safety Sex Offender Registry.

We have developed the PreK program that was being supported by a contractor into EPICS. PreK will use the same Health and Safety checks that are used for Child Care. We have developed a PreK Classroom to include Early PreK and PreK and to be broken out by classroom sessions. Teachers will have the ability to enter a child's assessments for the fall and in the spring and compare the child's results individually or by session. Various notifications have been developed to provide information to teachers so that they can manage their PreK students. EPICS PreK will track teacher's educational levels and any training they may have taken.

By aligning Child Care and Prek into EPICS we are able to follow the child's progress in one system versus the tracking of a child in silo systems. EPICS is a web based system allowing Child Care workers and PreK teachers to access the system via the World Wide Web.

The Child Care and PreK components will go into production in April 2017. We will begin using PreK for the new school year starting in July 2017.

All Child Care components including the RTT-ELC components will be in production in late 2017 for full use in January 2018.

### **New Mexico Indicator-Based Information System (NM-IBIS)**

During calendar year 2016, work continued on IBIS-PH version 3.0. Changes to the database were fairly radical. We knew the changes would require several months of effort, and that the effects of those changes would not result in new features or functionality. The new database structure was necessary to support the types of data visualizations we desire, including the following:

- Dashboard interface, with interactivity between the charts and maps.
- User options over how data are displayed, with improved ability to make comparisons between various data dimensions, e.g., compare school district, child care center, county, or community with state values, national benchmarks, or target values.
- Allow for display of trends within dimension values, e.g., how a school district, child care center, county, or community has performed over time.
- The new database structure has been implemented and the IBIS-PH-Admin application (the interface that sits over the DB and allows staff to maintain their indicator report content) has been rewritten to conform to the new structure.

### **Geocoding Statewide Address File (GSAF)**

The GSAF continues to gain records and accuracy as more New Mexico data records are geocoded and as counties and communities across the state improve their tax parcel files and E-911 locator files. Major improvements to the GSAF in 2016 included replacement of data resulting from the Rio Rancho address verification project (a project undertaken by the City of Rio Rancho, one of New Mexico's largest and fastest-growing communities).

A large number of duplicate records were cleaned from the GSAF in 2016. Those duplicates were largely multiple-unit housing structure. For apartment buildings and multiplexes, only one pair of geocoordinates (point) is desired. The GSAF file went from a peak of 841,583 records in October 2015 to its current total of 780,696. The reduction in the number of records did not reduce the geocoding power of the GSAF reference file. In fact, it improved its utility for automated geocoding processes because a staff member does not have to resolve those duplicates each time one is encountered during the geocoding process.

According to the most recent American Community Survey, New Mexico had 914,979 housing units in 2015. Of those, 761,797 were occupied units, and 141,969 were multiple-unit structures (requiring only one geocode for anywhere from 2 to 20+ units). In addition, we had 140,131 commercial addresses in 2014. Those numbers suggest that a 100% complete GSAF file would include about 939,400 address records, and that our current GSAF appears to be about 83% complete.

The NM GSAF geocoding process is now matching 90% of a statewide sample of New Mexico Public Education Department's STARS database without manual intervention.

DOH has implemented an ArcGIS server that will permit web-enabled use of the GSAF for geocoding of data records.

## **6. Supporting Schools in Meeting Each Child's Needs**

### Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT)

As part of our comprehensive plan to ensure that all New Mexico students have the opportunity to succeed in school, the Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT) was developed to help teachers better understand a child's strength in learning, well-being, social development, and conceptual understanding at the beginning of school.

In 2016, all New Mexico public, charter and K-3 Plus kindergarten programs implemented the KOT within the first 30 days of this school year, with all final data being submitted by October 15, 2016. This accomplishment includes:

- 1,447 teachers completed their participation in the KOT;
- 22,073 students statewide had Final Ratings submitted; and
- 89 school districts, 23 state charter schools, and numerous district charter schools received PED technical assistance, support and guidance during the full implementation.

Additionally, key improvements to the KOT Application (KOTA) and its' server were made prior to full implementation based on field test participants' feedback. Data from KOT field testing was used to conduct a set of further analyses and validation. One area that continues to be a focus for ensuring the KOT positively impacts early learning throughout the state is communication with stakeholders. We learned from this implementation that we focused intensely on communicating directly with teachers in the field, but not with the school and district leaders who are also affected by the KOT. Teachers requested more intentional training and communication with principals and district leaders. Informing the leaders about the purpose and structure of the KOT would further support the teachers in the field administering the KOT in their classrooms

The KOT team recognizes that sustainability will be essential for the KOT to remain a positive force in early childhood education in the state of New Mexico. Without additional funding sources, the KOT runs the risk of being implemented without fidelity. Without fidelity to the proper administration of the KOT, the data runs the risk of being invalid. So much is hinging on the KOT being the first opportunity to collect quality data in public education in our state. Therefore, sustainability efforts are ongoing including legislating for funds to retain the efforts gained through the RTT-ELC grant.

### **Testimonials**

*"KOT is really easy to use. It's a testimony to how much care they took in developing the online application for us teachers who do not have the technical background. With KOT, I can now demonstrate where a child is developmentally and immediately begin to address their individual needs."*

*Dana Pacewicz, Albuquerque, NM*

*"When I at first saw we needed to observe 27 rubrics, I thought how time consuming this was going to be. In reality, KOT helped me zero in on where my students are in each of the different developmental areas. It helped me to see and understand more clearly the whole child right at the start of the school year."*

*Amy Hurley, Corrales, NM*

*"With KOT, I was able to group my class according to their needs and quickly be able to bring the entire class upto speed ... behaviorally and academically. In early education, it is so important to look at the whole child and with KOT I am able to validate my observations."*

*Jessica Southard, Clovis, NM*



*"KOT helped me document and confirm right away what I had thought in my initial observation. As a result, I was able to make sure each student received the appropriate intervention immediately. I have to admit, at first I was not thrilled with administering another assessment. I quickly understood it's not a test, it's a valuable tool to guide instruction and intervention that can actually prevent a child from spiraling downward."*

*Lexi Romero, Maxwell, NM*