



ESSA—Preschool Development Grants Overview (Sect. 9212)

Note: this is an internal review of the legislation and does not constitute a formal funding announcement or interpretation of federal policy.

See also [FFY comparison](#) of PDG (Sect 9212) and PDG “legacy”

Purpose: to assist States to **develop, update, or implement a strategic plan that facilitates collaboration and coordination among existing programs of early childhood care and education in a mixed delivery system** across the State designed to prepare low-income and disadvantaged children to enter kindergarten and to improve transitions from such system into the local educational agency or elementary school that enrolls such children.

- Coordinating the delivery models and funding streams existing in the State’s mixed delivery system
- Develop recommendations to better use existing resources to improve participation in mixed delivery systems of Federal, State and local ECE programs
- Improve program quality while maintain availability of services
- Improve parental choice & maximize it among mixed delivery system
- Improve school readiness for low income children
- Encourage partnerships with Head Start, SEA/LEA, Indian tribes and private providers (faith & non-faith based)

Duration:

- Grant award shall be a period of not more than **1 year** and may be renewed by the Secretary of HHS, jointly with the Secretary of Education

Matching:

- Each State awarded a grant shall provide funds from non-Federal Sources (cash/in-kind) to carry out activities in an amount not less than **30% of the grant award**

Application:

- Among the standard requests, must address: participation in high quality programs including Head Start, child care programs, and other Federal, State, and local ECE programs (faith & non-faith).



- Description of how State proposes to accomplish activities including: timeline for strategic planning, and how proposed activities will increase participation in high-quality early childhood education & preschool programs.
- Description of Federal, State and Local existing programs for which State proposes to facilitate activities including Head Start, including Early Head Start as carried out under HS Act, Child Care (Faith/non-faith), tribal organizations.
- A description of how State in collaboration with Centers of Excellence in ECE (*note definition: The term “Center of Excellence in Early Childhood” means a Center of Excellence in Early Childhood designated under section 657B(b) of the Head Start Act*) will provide T/A and best practices
- Description of how State entity with will work with State Advisory Council & Head Start collaboration offices

Use of Funds:

- Needs assessment of children served, improving transitions, partnerships with Head Start and mixed delivery (*note definition: The term “mixed delivery system” means a system— (A) of early childhood education services that are delivered through a combination of programs, providers, and settings (such as Head Start, licensed family and center-based child care programs, public schools, and community based organizations); and (B) that is supported with a combination of public funds and private funds*),
- coordination with State Advisory Councils, builds on CCDBG, increase enrollment, maximize parent choice in mixed delivery (parents to be provided info on mixed delivery), increased parent involvement, evidence best practices to improve PD.

Eligibility: (awaiting final rules)

- All states are eligible for 1 year planning grant.
- Duration under this subsection for a period of not more than 3 years

Priority:

- A State shall prioritize activities to improve areas in which there are State identified needs that would improve services for low-income & disadvantaged children **living in rural areas**

Special Rule:

- State receiving a renewal grant and elects to award subgrants to programs in a mixed delivery system across the State designed to benefit low income and disadvantaged



children shall NOT for the first year of the renewal grant use more than 60% of the grant funds available for such year to award such subgrants; AND

- For each of the 2nd & 3rd years of the renewal grant, use more than 75% of the grant funds to award subgrants

Limitation of Federal Interference:

- Nothing shall be construed to authorize the Secretary to establish criterion for grants that specifies, defines, or prescribes: early learning & development guidelines, standards, or specific assessments, measures or indicators of quality (including the term “high-quality”), curriculum, teacher and staff qualifications & salaries, class sizes & ratios, length of program and length of program year, staff evaluation.

Reporting Requirements (due within 6 months of grant ends)

- strategies undertaken at the State level and, if applicable, local or program level, to implement recommendations in the strategic plan
- any new partnerships among Head Start providers, State and local governments, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and private entities (including faith and community-based entities); and
- how these partnerships improve coordination and delivery of services;
- if applicable, the degree to which the State used information from the report required under section 13 of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 to inform activities under this section, and
- how this information was useful in coordinating, and collaborating among, programs and funding sources;
- the extent to which activities funded by the initial grant led to the blending or braiding of other public and private funding;
- how information about available existing programs for children from birth to kindergarten entry was disseminated to parents and families,
- and how involvement by parents and family was improved; and
- other State-determined and voluntarily provided information to share best practices regarding early childhood education programs and the coordination of such programs.