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Project Tile: Empowering Utah Families Through a Coordinated Early Childhood B-5 System
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Project Summary/Abstract

Utah is recognized as having the highest birth rate in the country, the youngest median age and the youngest average age for marriage. As a result, children under 6 years old comprise nearly one-third of Utah's child population but comprise 40 percent of the children experiencing poverty. These statistics emphasize the importance of establishing a coordinated and aligned B-5 Early Childhood System. Although Utah values government efficiency and restraint, it prioritizes family and recognizes its strength depends on cohesive and healthy families. It is through these unique values, strengths and attributes that the Utah Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care (OCC) proposes the first phase in establishing a coordinated B-5 Early Childhood System that empowers Utah families with young children to make informed decisions to support their young children's healthy development through the "Empowering Utah Families Through a Coordinated B-5 Early Childhood System (Empowering Utah Families)" project.

Currently, Utah's B-5 Early Childhood System (B-5 System) is administered through six offices within four state agencies and several community-based organizations. As a result of the system's current complexities, families face challenges navigating the system and connecting to resources. This is cause for concern in Utah, where the Governor's Education Excellence Commission developed an ambitious education roadmap that includes the goal of ensuring all Utah children are ready for kindergarten. Utah's ability to ensure all young children are ready for kindergarten depends on families' ability to make the choices necessary to support their young child's healthy development, beginning at birth.

During the grant year, OCC will primarily focus on Activities One, Two, and Three while laying the foundation for Activities Four and Five. Through the "Empowering Utah Families" grant, the organizations and partners that comprise Utah's B-5 System will establish a framework for a coordinated and aligned system. The grant will be used to identify the needs of Utah families throughout its metropolitan statistical areas, rural counties and frontier counties recognizing that both the needs of families and resources available vary greatly in the diverse communities of Utah. Although a coordinated system must be implemented for all Utah families, the needs assessment will focus on populations at risk, including children experiencing poverty, intergenerational poverty, English language learners and children with special health needs. The analysis contained in the needs assessment will be utilized to develop a strategic plan for establishing a coordinated system to ensure all Utah children are ready for kindergarten. The grant will also be used to design a universal website that will allow Utah families to navigate the various resources available to address the needs of young children. Through these activities, Utah will be well positioned to implement a coordinated B-5 System that promotes parental choice.

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Expected Outcomes

Through the successful completion of a needs assessment and creation of a statewide early childhood strategic plan, Utah anticipates the establishment of a coordinated B-5 System consisting of existing early childhood programs. This anticipated increased coordination will allow parents to maintain the role of their children's first and most important teacher, particularly among children who are low-income or otherwise disadvantaged, and support them in preparing their children to enter kindergarten. In addition, Utah's "Empowering Utah Families" will lead to a more unified early childhood services system that is easily navigable by families, supporting them in ensuring that their young children are healthy and ready to learn upon entry to kindergarten. The expected outcomes of this grant are 1) Utah will have a clear understanding of the needs of families and the capacity of the B-5 System to meet those needs, and 2) Utah will design a strategic plan to develop a coordinated system to meet those needs.

The release of a statewide strategic plan based on data collected during the needs assessment identifying gaps, redundancies and opportunities for collaboration, coordination and alignment of resources and services will help ensure a unified early childhood system that supports children and families from the moment children are born until they enter grade school.

Approach

The following provides a detailed explanation for Utah's project, "Empowering Utah Families," including the project scope, entities involved and expected outcomes for each component of the project. The components described throughout this application will also include explanation with regard to the outlined activities in relationship to the overall goal to empower parents to make informed decisions in addressing the needs of their young children.

The work of "Empowering Utah Families" will be centered on three primary activities: completion of a needs assessment, development of a strategic plan and creation of a framework

for a universal early childhood web platform that will maximize parental choice and knowledge about the state's mixed-delivery system. The first two activities are the central focus of this project and are expected to occur throughout the 12-month grant year. The University of Utah will be contracted for these activities to employ a process that aims to conduct both activities in a timeline in which the needs assessment informs the development of the strategic plan.

The needs assessment will build on the Utah Early Childhood Services Study (2017 Study), released in December 2017, commissioned by the Utah Legislature, which identified data gaps and provided an initial overview of the services available to children ages 0-5 and their families. The 2017 Study provides the basis by which a comprehensive needs assessment will be completed during the grant year. The comprehensive needs assessment will include extensive data collection and analysis supplemented by parent and other stakeholder experiences with the early childhood system reported through a statewide deliberative community engagement process led by the University of Utah.

Upon the completion of a needs assessment, the strategic plan will be developed through a collaborative process that brings diverse stakeholders together around a shared vision to improve the state's early childhood education and learning system. This work will be contracted to the University of Utah, with OCC oversight.

In partnership with the Utah Department of Technology Services (DTS), OCC will also begin designing an integrated early care and learning website to expand parental education and maximize choice. This integrated website, which will function as a "one stop" portal for parents, will be a repository for resources to help identify services and programs for which children might be eligible and provide access and eligibility information. This component of the project aligns with requirements in the Child Care and Development Fund's requirements involving parental choice and consumer education.

Activity 1: B-5 Statewide Needs Assessment

Utah's emphasis on outcomes achieved through data-driven policymaking leads to its ability to maintain government efficiencies while effectively addressing the needs of its citizens. It is unable to administer state functions in the absence of obtaining understanding of the needs of families. Yet despite its emphasis on the needs of families and children, Utah has not obtained a comprehensive understanding of the needs of families with children between the ages of 0 and 6 years old. Utah cannot achieve its goal of ensuring all Utah children are ready for kindergarten in the absence of a coordinated early childhood care and education system. Similarly, a coordinated and aligned early care and education system cannot be effectively designed to serve families in the absence of understanding their needs, identifying the manner in which those needs are being met and whether outcomes for young children are achieved effectively by the programs and entities designed to meet those needs. Thus, the "Empowering Utah Families" project must begin with the development of comprehensive needs assessment.

Utah is proposing to utilize $160,000 of its funding request to the development of a needs assessment. The needs assessment will be designed to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data on Utah's B-5 System in a manner that maintains the focus of the system on serving families. It will seek to expand its understanding of the needs of families throughout Utah, while targeting communities with high rates of children experiencing poverty. Additionally, the needs assessment will incorporate regional and geographic differences in Utah where family needs may differ dramatically between those living in a metropolitan area versus a frontier community. The approach to developing the needs assessment will include deliberative community engagement strategies to supplement the quantitative data with personal stories and other qualitative information revealed through these sessions. The quantitative components of the needs assessment will be acquired through utilizing Utah's data systems, data from the U.S. Census

and data reported to various federal agencies. In addition, data will be obtained through researchers at the University of Utah. By combining these processes and using each to inform the other, OCC anticipates a robust needs assessment that ensures the voices of families and groups throughout the state are incorporated. The findings of the needs assessment will be contained in a document that will be used to develop the strategic plan, described in Activity Two. The following provides an explanation of OCC's approach to developing its needs assessment.

Upon approval of this grant funding, OCC will establish a partnership with the University of Utah. This partnership will not only involve the development of the needs assessment but also address Activity Two through the development of the strategic plan, described later in this application. Both of these activities will take place over the 12-month grant period, with the development of the needs assessment occurring in the first six months of the grant period. A description of these activities is outlined below; however, a detailed contract, scope of work, work plan, deliverables and timelines will be developed within the first few weeks of the grant award.

Within the first few weeks of the grant period, OCC will execute agreements with the University of Utah to perform this work, which will involve both the qualitative and quantitative needs assessment. Given the extensive procedures DWS has in place to ensure proper oversight of its partners, the typical timeline for executing a contract is one month, and would begin immediately upon awarding of this grant. The contracting process includes developing a contract that includes a detailed description of the specific activities in which the University will engage and outcomes expected. The agreement will also include a detailed budget narrative describing the funds needed to execute the strategies, the individuals performing the work and the timeline for meeting the deliverables contained in the agreement. Once a contract is signed, it will be monitored by OCC staff, in collaboration with DWS staff within the agency's Finance Division.

Qualitative Needs Assessment: Deliberative Community Engagement

The University of Utah intends to capture the needs of Utah families with young children through a "deliberative community engagement" process. Within the first month of the grant period, a deliberative community engagement process will begin and consist of two primary activities: (1) concern circles; and (2) deliberation sessions. These two activities are designed to obtain greater understanding of families' experiences with the B-5 System. A deliberative community engagement approach offers a way for decision makers and stakeholders to consider the concerns, perceptions and values of a variety of people in order to make informed decisions. This approach brings people with a wide variety of perspectives together, provides them with a foundation of high-quality information, and allows them to share perspectives and work collaboratively to find productive ways forward. It is designed for use by government entities, school districts, non-profit organizations and others interested in inclusive and informed public input.

Concern circles. As a first step in the deliberative community engagement process, a literature review will be conducted. This will include review of completed reports and studies to establish a landscape of the early childhood system. This survey of existing resources will include the 2017 Study, as well as OCC's 2016-2017 Utah Parental Child Care Survey.

Upon completion of the literature review, individual interviews, as part of a 'concern circle' process, will be conducted with stakeholders from various programs and services to deepen the understanding of the coordination, budgetary and data constraints faced by government entities and private service providers. The stakeholders whose input will be used during this process will be a subset of those already deeply in engaged in thinking about the early childhood system as part of Utah's State Advisory Council, Early Childhood Utah (ECU).

Roughly 25 individuals from private, non-profit, government, and parent perspectives will be included in the concern circle process.

This process will result in the development of an issue guide that establishes trade-offs and outcomes related to various solutions and outline possible action steps for each approach; the issue guide will be shared with OCC in advance of its use as part of the deliberation sessions. These approaches will be used to inform and enhance discussion with Utah families and communities in the next phase of the deliberative community engagement process.

Deliberation sessions. Following the concern circles and information gathering, 10 to 12 communities in which to conduct deliberation sessions will be identified. OCC and the University of Utah will determine the communities in which these sessions will occur based on data indicating areas with high rates of children with risk factors such as poverty, intergenerational poverty, English Language Learner (ELL) status, a lack of child care providers, and other designations. Much of this data is used in Utah's Intergenerational Poverty Initiative and readily available to quickly establish locations for the deliberation sessions. There may also be an opportunity to leverage ongoing community meetings, such as parent cafes held by the Help Me Grow program, or other such forums already taking place throughout the state. It is expected that half of the forums will take place in Utah's population center, the Wasatch Front, which is comprised of several large counties; the other sessions will take place in rural areas throughout the state.

The deliberation sessions will engage participants from a wide variety of backgrounds, both in terms of demographic characteristics and in terms of perspective on the programs offered to preschool age children. Parents will be the primary focus, but teachers, case workers, health care providers and others will also be encouraged to attend. Each session will be composed of 20 to 25 individuals divided into three deliberative groups. These groups will learn about the issues

facing the early childhood education and learning system, as identified in the concern circles and outlined in the issue guide. The issue guide will facilitate discussion of participants' experiences and perceptions of the current system as well as trade-offs and priorities related to possible changes to the system. In addition, parents and agency representatives will discuss shared values for the B-5 system, deliberate the trade-offs associated with different approaches and identify possible next steps and recommendations through facilitated discussions.

These sessions will occur over a maximum of four months, and be conducted concurrently with the quantitative component of the needs assessment. The University of Utah will implement a robust process in which the qualitative data and information collected as part of the deliberation sessions will be shared on a rolling basis with the lead researcher conducting the quantitative needs assessment. This coordination will provide greater context and inform the quantitative research.

At the conclusion of the deliberative community engagement process, a report summarizing the findings, including the issue guide, will be developed and shared with OCC and used to provide feedback in the development of the strategic plan. This deliverable will be built into the contract with the University of Utah.

Quantitative Needs Assessment

In addition to the qualitative component of the needs assessment, the needs assessment will include a quantitative component. This component will build on the 2017 Study, which provided a high-level overview of programs and services used by children in Utah. Although the 2017 Study provides an important starting point for the needs assessment, the B-5 needs assessment will expand in scope. It will establish a comprehensive picture of the children and families being served by programs, as well as identify barriers and challenges that impede access

to services. The quantitative component of the needs assessment will include obtaining enhanced data, evaluation of system needs, fiscal analysis and analysis of quality and access to programs.

Enhanced data collection

Although the Early Childhood Services Study captured data across multiple domains and programs, the short timeframe in which the report was required to be produced limited reported data to administrative data available to state entities. Additionally, the data was often not disaggregated for young children and included data for children up to age 17, most notably in the area of health and wellness. This subsequent needs assessment will expand this data by including additional resources and leveraging the research capacity in this grant to better identify the utilization of early childhood needs.

Moreover, the needs assessment will disaggregate data across multiple variables. To the extent possible, data will be disaggregated by geographic and regional areas, including rural and urban counties. In addition, data will be disaggregated by income and other socio-economic factors. Through disaggregation of the statewide data, the needs assessment will reveal any potential geographical challenges and opportunities to service delivery in portions of the state, as well as needs of various groups to determine if needs vary by populations.

Stakeholders have already shared concerns about program utilization and are seeking additional information on the degree to which access barriers, stigma and other factors may be leading to under-utilization of programs and services. Data collection as part of the needs assessment may reveal the degree to which there is under-utilization of programs. As noted, the deliberative community sessions may inform the quantitative data by providing additional clarity on access barriers in a family's ability to access services to support their child's healthy development.

In addition to the typical methods of data collection, researchers plan to employ creative means to attain local data, which can sometimes be uniquely challenging to collect. For example, the use of a Google form to collect Local Education Authority (LEA) data on preschool availability in that setting.

System needs

While data collection is a crucial component of a needs assessment, evaluating the system components of the B-5 System is equally important. The 2017 Study established five components required in a coordinated, comprehensive early care and education system: governance, early learning standards, data systems, professional workforce and funding. These core areas will be reviewed in the B-5 needs assessment and further developed so Utah better understands where coordination is working and where improvement is needed.

In addition, to improve the quality of early childhood care and education programs and align coordination among providers and practitioners, a thorough understanding of budgets and funding streams is essential. Utah's mixed-delivery early childhood system, as detailed in this application, includes funding from federal programs, state general fund expenditures, and private or philanthropic support. The system review within the B-5 needs assessment will include a detailed mapping of the funding streams through which early childhood care and education programs are supported. Stakeholders will need this information when drafting a strategic plan, as recommendations to blend funding, braid funding, or both may be feasible approaches for enhanced service coordination.

In October 2018, during a grant application planning session, a key area of concern raised by stakeholders was the ineffective information sharing among programs and providers, potentially resulting in duplicative services and a lack of program coordination. This is important

feedback for the needs assessment, which can be used to identify where coordination is working and where it needs to be improved.

The component of the needs assessment analyzing the system will include analyses of the quality and availability of programming available to families with children under six years old. In order to analyze the quality and availability of programming throughout the state, the needs assessment must include unduplicated counts of children and families accessing services and those requiring services but unable to access those services. A potential key partner in the analysis of the quality and availability of programming and supports serving children birth to five is Early Childhood Utah (ECU). A staff member of ECU serves as staff to the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) data policy committee and has been working on the execution of a data system that would allow for unduplicated counts of children. Currently, the data sources that have signed data sharing agreements include sources mostly from the Department of Health through vital statistics, but also includes two Head Start programs and the Department of Workforce Services. Sample reports show an ability to search for de-identified information narrowed by demographics, zip code and risk factors. As of the writing of this application, ECIDS was in the beginning stages of inputting data from the data sources into the ECIDS platform as well as continuing to encourage more data sources to sign data sharing agreements.

Despite having the framework for a strong ECIDS, the data policy committee knows it will need to connect ECIDS to other data systems in the state in order to obtain longitudinal data. Currently, ECIDS is limited to providing demographic data and identifying unique counts of children served. While this is useful information, it does not speak to whether children who participate in services prior to kindergarten show success in their later school careers. Data on school success is collected by the Utah State Board of Education and, as required by legislation,

reported to the Utah Data Research Center (UDRC). In order for Utah to have a more complete set of data, including outcome data, ECIDS will need to connect its data to the data system used by UDRC. Collaboration on this front is already underway, but the timing of this grant, if Utah were to receive approval of this application, could speed up the timeline of connecting these two data sources. Further, the needs assessment conducted in Activity One could help inform the data questions that would be undertaken in the future by ECIDS and UDRC and the standard reports agreed upon by these entities.

Utah is confident it can access unduplicated counts of data for children being served by many of the programs in its mixed-delivery early childhood system. Many of these data points were accessed in the 2017 Study and with the proper partnerships and data agreements between the needs assessment researchers and state entities, updated data will provide a complete picture of the number of children being served.

OCC will be utilizing additional federal and state needs assessments to inform the development of the needs assessment evolving from this project. As noted, the 2017 Early Childhood Services Study provides a valuable foundation from which to develop a comprehensive needs assessment under this grant. The 2017 Study categorized programs, services, resources and needs into four domains (1) family support and safety, (2) health and development, (3) early learning, and (4) economic stability, and identified existing data, data gaps, and preliminary policy recommendations in each of these areas. As a result of this initial inventory of Utah's early childhood system, all programs reviewed in the 2017 Study will inform the comprehensive needs assessment, which will likely include additional programs and resources.

In addition to the 2017 Study, OCC and its partners will utilize additional state needs assessments evolving from statewide initiatives focusing on education and reducing

intergenerational poverty. In 2015, Governor Herbert tasked his Education Excellence Commission to develop a strategic education plan which identified needs in the Utah's education system, defined as preschool through Grade 20, or "P-20" education system. This strategic plan included needs within early learning. The 2018-2027 Utah Education Roadmap highlights the importance of quality early childhood programs to promote cumulative learning and improve educational outcomes. Several strategies are recommended in the Roadmap to improve early learning opportunities, including:

- *Inform and support parents, guardians, and families in their role as a child's first teachers by providing information and resources regarding at-home learning activities that support their child's healthy development.*
- *Evaluate existing early learning programs and explore evidence-based practices successful in other communities to establish an early learning framework that optimizes parent choice and utilizes resources effectively.*

These recommendations directly align with the priorities of this grant to identify and implement evidence-based policies, share best practices among early childhood providers and maximize parental choice and knowledge. Additionally, the Roadmap includes funding considerations for several recommendations agreed to by stakeholders and members of the Education Excellence Commission. These figures are informative for the work being done under this grant, particularly the strategic plan and, later, the implementation of a coordinated early childhood learning and education system.

Utah's ongoing Intergenerational Poverty Initiative and seven annual reports will also provide essential data and definitions that can be leveraged for the needs assessment. Among the state's key priorities, Utah is committed to ensuring that children experiencing intergenerational

poverty are prepared for kindergarten. In support of this goal, DWS compiles and releases data identifying the broad range of services and programs accessed by families experiencing poverty in Utah. Each of the state's seven annual reports analyzing families experiencing intergenerational contains data across four areas of child well-being, one of which is early childhood development. Within this area of child well-being, which is recognized as critical for establishing the foundation for a child to be on a pathway for success into adulthood, the report includes outcomes and several indicators that overlap with the areas that will be included in the B-5 needs assessment will include. The report analyzes data relating child development outcomes, kindergarten preparedness and health outcomes.

Finally, the needs assessment will be informed by OCC's 2016-2017 Utah Parental Child Care Survey. The survey included interviews of over 1,500 parents who had children under six years old. It was designed to identify the needs of parents with young children with particular emphasis on child care. Through that survey, important questions were answered with regard to access to affordable child care, impact on employment and geographic distinctions of child care access.

The 2017 Study, Education Roadmap and Utah's Intergenerational Poverty Initiative each identify opportunities to improve the state's system of early childhood education and learning programs. These efforts demonstrate Utah's commitment to improving the mixed delivery system and will be leveraged to inform the needs assessment conducted under this grant. OCC also recognizes that several federally-funded programs require needs assessments and program data. These needs assessments and data reports will be reviewed and utilized in the needs assessment. These reports and needs assessments include those required by Head Start programs, including those produced by the Head Start Collaboration Office and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Quality Progress Report, when it is produced. These

assessments will be used by OCC and its partners to inform the needs assessment performed under this grant.

Although the needs assessment will provide an overview of the needs across the state and for all families with children under the age of six, it will also analyze the needs of children considered vulnerable and needs of families living in Utah's rural and frontier counties. In general, OCC defines vulnerable children as those with disabilities or impairments or with Limited English Proficiency as well as those experiencing homelessness, living in poverty or in a low-income household or residing in a household with unstable housing or transportation. While some children may be considered vulnerable, they may not be underserved depending on availability and ease of accessing needed services and resources. Contracted to complete the B-5 needs assessment, University of Utah researchers will be expected to establish definitions for vulnerable and underserved children based on those used widely in the field by researchers and practitioners alike. These definitions will be informed by existing reports and available data and will be developed in consultation with OCC and other partner organizations.

With regard to the definition of rural areas, there is broad consensus in the state as to which of the 29 counties are designated as non-metropolitan. Most of Utah's residents reside in four counties, clustered in the northern part of the state: Davis, Salt Lake, Utah and Weber. The remaining 25 counties may be considered rural or frontier counties. Prior to embarking on a needs assessment, OCC expects that the University of Utah will develop a definition of rural areas that is consistent with definitions used in other reports and programs throughout the state to ensure integrity of this terminology. In addition, the Workforce Research and Analysis division within DWS has established definitions of rural and frontier counties based on labor market data and other economic information.

Within the first half of the grant, OCC expects the needs assessment deliverables to include a narrative needs assessment and gap analysis, both of which will inform the strategic plan. Additionally, the University of Utah will organize documentation of data findings and sources in a format that is most useful to OCC and DWS researchers as well as external stakeholders

Activity 2: B-5 Statewide Strategic Plan

Upon completion of the needs assessment and deliberative community engagement process, the University of Utah will begin contracted work on a strategic plan development process. Utah has budgeted $105,000 for this work. The strategic plan will be informed by the comprehensive needs assessment developed in Activity One. The intent of the strategic plan will be to develop a family-centered, B-5 system that is coordinated and easy to access to ensure that families are able to support their child's healthy development. The University is the optimal partner for this process, given their impartial standing in the early childhood services field in Utah, the relationships they will build during the needs assessment and community engagement processes and intimate knowledge of the landscape of the B-5 mixed delivery system the University will gain through those processes.

As part of the strategic plan process, the University of Utah will review other states' early childhood systems which are centered on a family approach and which effectively coordinate and encourage collaboration among providers and programs. This process, although it will be used to inform the recommendations and goals in the strategic plan, will take place while the needs assessment is being conducted in an effort to maximize the grant period.

The University will be expected to review the recently adopted Early Childhood Utah (ECU) strategic plan when formulating an approach to a B-5 early childhood services system strategic plan. The ECU strategic plan was created with input from many of the same key

stakeholders identified in this grant. The format of the ECU strategic plan includes priority areas, which include tactics detailing how to accomplish specific goals related to each priority area, as well as lists who is responsible for accomplishing the tactics, supporting partners, resources needed and anticipated start and end dates. This format would likely be an effective format to follow for this grant project; as such, the University may be expected to develop a strategic plan with a similar format. The University shall also take into consideration the content of the ECU strategic plan so as not to duplicate priority areas and rather build upon tactics that may already be underway through ECU. The University may also be asked to present at quarterly ECU meetings to ensure all ECU members understand the progression of the B-5 early childhood services strategic plan.

As facilitators of the strategic planning process, the University will be expected to bring together the key state agency stakeholders identified in the grant, as well as any private and community partners who participated in the needs assessment and community engagement sessions to inform the creation of the strategic plan. This collaborative process will include a review of the findings contained in the needs assessment, input received in the deliberation sessions and key points highlighted in previously published early childhood or education reports.

After the review, the University will facilitate identifying priority areas and tactics with reasonable timelines for completion based on recommendations for collaboration, coordination and quality improvement activities in Utah's existing early childhood services. Given that in-person meetings can vary in attendance, the University may be asked to gather input and feedback through surveys to key partners in order to obtain a wide variety of feedback.

Based on information gathered in the needs assessment and through other reports or surveys, the strategic plan will be expected to address particular strategies for improving children's transitions to grade school. This process will likely be influenced by ongoing work

within the state to establish an integrated early childhood data system, which would better inform early childhood service providers about the level of school readiness of incoming kindergarteners, as based on data collected from the state's kindergarten entrance assessment, the Kindergarten Entry Exit Profile (KEEP). Strategies for using the data available as well as future reports developed by data partners throughout the state shall be included as tactics within applicable goal areas. Identifying indicator data that can inform goal areas will allow Utah to assess the progress and impact of its strategic plan. Some of this work has already been initiated by the Early Childhood Services Study, which identified data indicators for each of its four domains. This may serve as another source of information to ensure that the strategic plan guides Utah toward a system that positively impacts children and families and produces tangible and trackable child outcomes.

Utah is also proud to have an effective State Advisory Council, ECU, that meets regularly and whose input will be leveraged to develop the strategic plan. Many of the stakeholders on ECU will be deeply involved in the development of the B-5 strategic plan, bringing forward their expertise and unique perspective on the challenges and opportunities for coordination and alignment of services.

The strategic plan will include a mission statement agreed upon by stakeholders as the guiding principles by which recommendations will be made for alignment. By establishing a goal or value statement for a coordinated system, the strategic plan team can establish short- and long-term goals with key markers of success to track progress as each program, funding stream, service, and resource is improved upon or linked to a coordinated system. It is also anticipated that the University will develop a realistic timeline within the strategic plan based on input from stakeholders and the recommendations and goals included in the plan. This timeline will be

important as Utah considers the potential for future grant years and, in particular, the milestones that would need to be reached in Activity Five.

Activity 3: Maximizing Parental Knowledge and Choice

Utah's vision for this grant was chosen specifically with the goal to increase parent knowledge and choice about services available throughout Utah for children between the ages of 0 and 6 years old. With the parents of young children increasingly coming from the millennial generation, and therefore being digital natives, the expectation for information to be found intuitively and easily online will increase. Where previously access to the Internet was a concern for low-income families, it is much more common now for low-income families without Internet or computers at home to have smartphones with capabilities of accessing the Internet through free Wi-Fi networks or cellular services. In Utah, the Utah Education Network (UEN) provides Internet service to low-income families through partnering with agencies such as Head Start programs across the state. Another benefit of utilizing the Internet to connect with families is that accessing information online can be done at any time, which reduces the burden of travel that families may experience in trying to visit offices in-person during business hours, especially if multiple services are being sought from agencies at different locations. Information available online can be updated at a rate much faster than printed materials, and at a much reduced cost, and can be translated into a variety of languages, leading to more accurate and timely information for families. For these reasons, Utah views an integrated, universal online web platform as a key strategy in meeting CCDF requirements of informing parents of resources to support their child's healthy development and in ensuring that parents statewide are provided information about the variety of early childhood services available in the state's mixed delivery system. Utah has budgeted $250,000 of the proposed grant funding to support this project.

Currently, OCC is updating its three websites to combine them under one web platform. During this project, OCC will be incorporating more information about the quality of child care programs in Utah through posting ratings of programs participating in the Child Care Quality System, with clear definitions for parents to understand the meaning of each rating. This is an example of the way in which a universal website communicates information about the quality of programs to families. Each child care program profile on the website will also include information regarding vacancies. Ideally, the universal early childhood web platform will include similar information regarding eligibility requirements, fees required based on income, wait lists and locations of services for each program listed on the website.

Given that state agencies in Utah create and maintain their websites through relationships with the Department of Technology Services (DTS), the state anticipates that DTS will be instrumental in helping coordinate the web presence of the aforementioned key partners. In particular, most partners operate out of one of three state agencies: the Department of Health, which includes Medicaid, CHIP, Title V Maternal and Child Health Programs, WIC, IDEA Part C, Child Care Licensing and the Bureau of Child Development; the Utah State Board of Education which includes public preschool and kindergarten and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); or the Department of Workforce Services, which includes the Office of Child Care, the Head Start Collaboration Office, SNAP, FEP, Child Care Subsidy and housing services. By aligning these main systems and providing links to community resources outside of the state agencies, families will have easier access to learning about and engaging with services.

The first step of this process will be for DTS to review the current websites of key partners and catalogue current website functionalities. From this information, DTS would propose a design of the universal web platform. This design would include the scope of the functionalities of the system and timeline for migrating information from current websites to the

new web platform. Utah anticipates this part of the process may start during the first year of the grant and be informed by the information collected from the needs assessment, depending on the progress of both the needs assessment and the strategic plan during the 12-month project period.

Upon completion of the design proposal, DTS would be able to move into implementation and development of the website. Throughout this process, collaboration will occur through ECU concerning items on the web platform that align with ECU's strategic plan, such as using ECU definitions throughout the website, as well as through pre-existing meetings such as those that already occur between OCC and Utah's Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, Care About Childcare and OCC and the Head Start Collaboration Office and Utah Head Start Association. Additional meetings regarding online content and functionality specific to each agency will occur between each agency and DTS. It is likely that a coordination team of representatives from each agency will meet with DTS to ensure alignment of resources, messaging and common functionalities, such as a single sign on system. An ideal outcome of this collaboration will also be for programs to see the scopes of each other's work and identify crossover and redundancies, thereby creating a clearer picture of the services available for families as their children are born and move toward entering the grade school system.

The universal web platform will be designed with parents and families as the primary audience, with a focus on creating intuitive navigation and search features to connect families directly with services corresponding to their needs. By communicating messages regarding school readiness and kindergarten transition in a streamlined fashion, rather than in the patchwork quilt currently available by piecing resources together from various programs, parents will have a clearer picture of expectations as well as how to connect with receiving schools regarding their child's particular successes and challenges. A universal web platform provides an opportunity for child care, Head Start programs and public pre-kindergarten programs to develop

aligned tools for families to use to support their child in being ready for kindergarten. By having a central online presence, Utah will be able to connect families with information applicable to each stage of their child's development, from birth to entry into the grade school system.

Activity 4: Sharing Best Practices among State Early Childhood Care and Education Providers

OCC will focus on Activities One, Two and Three during the 12-month grant period and cannot yet hypothesize the type of best practice sharing system that will be most beneficial to providers and practitioners in the state. Utah anticipates that the deliberative community engagement sessions and information gathering during the needs assessment will provide the additional information necessary to establish a framework for sharing best practices. However, OCC is requesting both the funding identified in Activity Three for the integrated website, as well as $15,000 to support its efforts within Activity Four. The following described the activities in which it intends to utilize resources for the purpose of sharing best practices among state early childhood care and education providers.

First, the "Empowering Utah Families" project will incorporate within its web platform development in Activity Three a platform for which best practices, data and resources will be shared among those in the early childhood care and education field. At this point, the specific best practices to share will be more clearly identified through the needs assessment and strategic plan. During a stakeholder meeting regarding this grant application, stakeholders voiced concern about duplication of services that may be occurring due to limited coordination. With all early childhood services listed on one universal web platform, it will be easier for service providers to connect with programs offering similar services and coordinate their services.

In addition, as mentioned later in Activity Five, Utah anticipates that an improved technology system will also include an improved professional development system, as well as clearer messaging regarding resources and support services available. It is anticipated that this

will also help early care and education professionals access information about best practices. This improved platform will result in a better integrated and coordinated early childhood professional development system, which will be a key strategy for disseminating and sharing best practices.

Finally, the "Empowering Utah Families" project includes sharing best practices among early care and education professionals to support kindergarten transitions, a priority of both CCDF and Head Start. Utah has begun this work across Head Start, child care and public education and believes that this coordination allows it to develop and share best practices within this specific topic. Recently, OCC and the Head Start Collaboration Director surveyed child care programs, Care About Childcare agencies and Head Start programs regarding the status of kindergarten transitions in Utah. This information, in conjunction with information regarding gaps in data as identified by the Early Childhood Services Study, will be used to host more effective Kindergarten Transition Summits across the state. In addition, in October of this year as part of the American Association of School Administrators' meeting of the School Superintendents Association, the National Head Start Association, in collaboration with the Utah Head Start Association and Utah Head Start Collaboration Director, hosted a pilot breakout session focused on connecting public school administrators with Head Start program administrators. From this meeting, it became clear that providing time and support to principals, Head Start program administrators and child care directors throughout each year is imperative in building and maintaining relationships and creating agreements regarding best practices for transitioning children into kindergarten. As such, Utah includes $15,000 as part of this grant to support ongoing momentum in hosting regional Kindergarten Transition Summits across the state and including best practices, information and resources from these meetings onto the universal early childhood web platform.

As mentioned, upon conclusion of Activities One and Two, Utah will have a clearer sense of the primary challenges facing service providers, the ways in which resources can be better leveraged to streamline services, and the mechanism(s) by which information within the early childhood education and learning system can be effectively shared. At that point, Utah will further develop a plan for Activity Four to be accomplished in potential future grant years.

Activity 5: Improving Overall Quality of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs/Providers/Services

Utah forecasts that Activities One through Three will concurrently run the entire 12 months of the grant period. Given the requirement to complete the first two activities prior to engaging in Activity Five, Utah anticipates that little or no time with remain to address Activity Five. As such, Utah plans to use areas of crossover with Activity Three regarding an improved technology system as its primary strategy for improving the overall quality of early childhood services, should time remain in the initial grant period. Utah sees opportunities to improve service quality through a universal early childhood website as well as an improved early childhood integrated data system (ECIDS) that connects data from a variety of programs with longitudinal data regarding school success from USBE. Creating a strong ECIDS will allow Utah to evaluate the reach and successes of its programs and identify areas of opportunity to strengthen services.

As mentioned in the description of Activity Three, a universal early childhood web platform will provide clearer messaging to parents about the quality and availability of services; similarly, the web platform will help Utah better connect early care and education programs with other early childhood services and resources that comprise the B-5 mixed delivery system. OCC foresees an increase in demand for these supports once child care programs receive ratings in the Child Care Quality System. As more programs seek to become high-quality, a unified source of

information regarding quality practices will be key in helping programs make changes toward best practices and improve quality. A universal early childhood web platform provides an opportunity to connect child care programs working to increase quality with resources and support from a multitude of early childhood support services, and include consistent and coordinated messaging.

In addition to providing parents and child care programs with resources and information about early childhood services, Utah anticipates that the universal early childhood web platform will also provide an opportunity to strengthen its professional development system, which relies heavily on its Internet presence to track early care professionals' transcripts and connect individual professionals with training. As of the writing of this grant application, OCC is working on the initial phase of combining its three websites, all of which currently contain data about or resources for professional development as well as Utah's youth and early care workforce registry. This grant would provide Utah with the opportunity to explore further phases of implementation of a coordinated professional development system that could be used by the entire B-5 System. Currently, OCC's system focuses primarily on child care professionals performing direct care and emphasizes training opportunities provided by Care About Childcare agencies. An expanded system may include professionals working as specialists and coaches or in other positions within the profession that do not involve direct care, but instead provide key support to child care professionals. Through the establishment of a universal early childhood web platform, there will be increased coordination of the professional development offerings available throughout Utah. Given that professional development is a key component in improving the quality of early care and education programs, Utah sees improving its professional development system and workforce registry as an important strategy in helping families receive the quality of service and care for their children that they seek.

Given the potential breadth of an improved technology system, Utah sees this strategy addressing Activities Three, Four and Five of the grant. As such, the funding requested for Activity Five would be blended with the funding requested for Activities Three and Four to ensure the successful initiation of these web-based projects; however, Utah also anticipates that the needs assessment and strategic plan completed in Activities One and Two will inform new strategies in addition to the proposed technology system improvements. Until Activities One and Two are completed, Utah lacks the research to support initiating other plans and will refrain from hypothesizing on future activities until the needs assessment and strategic plan are complete.

Organizational Capacity and Management

OCC has confidence in its capacity for successfully executing the projects outlined in this grant application. DWS, the state agency that houses OCC, has consistently been recognized in Utah as the best managed state agency. It is the agency that oversees most public assistance programs that support Utah's low-income populations, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Child Care and Development Fund programs and Unemployment Insurance, among other coordinated programs. As a coordinated agency providing resources to families with children, it has a comprehensive network of support that allows OCC to be in a strong position to meet the requirements of the Preschool Development Grant. These additional supports include divisions focused on finance, legal and internal audit as well as the Utah Data Research Center. Through the structure of both program expertise and sound fiscal management, OCC has sufficient infrastructure to administer and manage this grant, when awarded.

"Empowering Utah Families" requires strong fiscal, administrative and performance management. This oversight will be conducted through OCC staff responsible for the project, in

partnership with DWS, Finance Division, Legal Division and Contract Division. As noted, DWS is a comprehensive agency with elaborate and extensive processes for fiscal management. The agency oversees several large federal grants utilized by Utah representing hundreds of millions of dollars of federal funds and requiring systems of accountability for those funds. The system includes processes for contracting with partners, invoicing for reimbursements, accounting practices and contract monitoring. DWS utilizes current grants to achieve outcomes and measure performance. These expectations of performance and measuring performance will be embedded in all contractual relationships established to meet the outcomes of this project. DWS' sound fiscal and monitoring policies will be included in this project to ensure funds are expended in accordance with the requirements of the grant.

In addition to the fiscal and administrative practices, OCC has the organizational capacity and management expertise to ensure the project outcomes included in this application will be met through the involvement of members from its management team. Specifically, OCC will utilize three primary staff members who will play key roles in ensuring the requirements of the grant program are met: Tracy Gruber, Director of OCC; KC Hutton, OCC Program Manager, Policy and Training; and Nune Phillips, OCC Program Manager, State Preschool Initiatives, Data and Research. Among these individuals, the responsibilities for meeting the requirements of the grant will be met. The OCC Director will provide general oversight and direction of the project. Ms. Gruber is co-administrator of the Child Care Development Block Grant for Utah and has experience coordinating with many partner agencies to fulfill the requirements of that grant. Additionally, she leads Utah's Intergenerational Poverty Initiative, which utilizes data and research to measurably reduce the incidence of Utah children remaining in poverty. This work includes specific emphasis on early childhood development. In addition, Ms. Gruber serves on the Governor's Educational Excellence Commission and co-chairs Utah's State Advisory

Council, Early Childhood Utah. Through these state initiatives, which all include a focus on ensuring Utah's young children are ready for kindergarten, she is able to play a key role in the development of a coordinated early childhood system. Ms. Gruber also has experience in managing large budgets and targeting resources to ensure Utah's priorities and outcomes are met through efficiency and sound fiscal practice. In addition, she has extensive experience utilizing data and research to develop plans to serve vulnerable populations.

As noted, the primary tasks associated with the grant will be executed by the OCC Program Managers. The Program Managers will ensure that any partnerships established to execute the "Empowering Utah Families" grant will follow all procurement and legal requirements, as well as the specific outcomes OCC will be seeking to meet the plan requirements. In addition, the Program Managers will be responsible for the communications among all relevant stakeholders in Utah's early childhood system to ensure the strategic plan that emerges from this grant is one all partners support. This will require the Program Managers to organize and facilitate meetings with partners. As OCC anticipates it will be contracting with the University of Utah to assist in the development of both the needs assessment and the strategic plan, the Program Managers will also be responsible for ensuring these partners are meeting their responsibilities including organizing meetings throughout the state to gather information from Utah families to develop the needs assessment and strategic plan. In addition, OCC expects to contract with Utah's Department of Technology Services to assist in the design of a universal website for Utah's early childhood system. The oversight of these tasks will be performed by the OCC Program Managers.

The OCC Program Managers have the necessary experience to successfully complete this project. Both program managers are responsible for managing existing programs within OCC, which includes community partnerships, developing contracts and Memorandums of

Understanding (MOU) and contract monitoring. In addition, both individuals have expertise in designing outcome-focused initiatives that utilize data to track a project's progress. Although both program managers are responsible for key initiatives within OCC to ensure its compliance with CCDF, both individuals oversee program specialists that will be available to support any additional needs that may arise from this project. Similarly, both program managers understand Utah's current B-5 System and recognize the need to develop one that is coordinated. Until recently, Ms. Hutton served as Utah's Head Start collaboration Office Director which exposed her to the various needs of families with young children from a variety of populations, including low-income, English language learners and refugees. Similarly, as the individual responsible for overseeing state-funded preschool initiatives, Ms. Phillips understands the challenges of meeting the needs of preschool-age children in Utah's current system.

Each of the individuals who will be involved in this project have experience working with the partners that comprise Utah's B-5 System. These individuals work with different partners to achieve the objectives of each of the programs associated with child care. Since child care is critical component of early childhood, these partnerships naturally involve partners addressing early childhood health, behavioral health, early care and education, family empowerment and child development.

While staff at all of the required partner agencies are key to the success of this grant, crucial partnerships will be with policy centers at the University of Utah to conduct the needs assessment and to conduct statewide focus groups and facilitate the creation of an early childhood strategic plan. In 2017, the University partnered with OCC to meet the requirements of the Utah Legislature to conduct the "Early Childhood Services Study." Through its role as one of the state's lead research institutions, it is able to lead the work in developing the comprehensive needs assessment and strategic plan. It is familiar with the data necessary to identify needs

through quantitative analysis. In addition, it has a strong reputation throughout the state such that it will be able to identify the communities from which obtaining qualitative analysis from families is critical. As a trusted institution, the University will be able to engage families to ensure the needs assessment captures their concerns regarding their children's development and the current systems ability to address those concerns in all regions of Utah.

Additionally, Utah's State Advisory Council, ECU, will play a crucial role, in assisting with collaboration and alignment efforts. Specifically, its director, Carrie Finkbiner, will partner with OCC to ensure all Utah early childhood stakeholders are familiar with the project and its outcomes and leverage the efforts of that entity to support the implementation of the strategic plan. Ms. Finkbiner has extensive experience in system design and collaborative partnerships through her work developing Wisconsin's early childhood mental health system.

As described in the overview, the project will incorporate the development of a universal website. OCC will leverage its partnership with DTS to meet the requirements related to this activity. This state agency is responsible for all of the technology systems utilized through state government. These systems include coordinated technology systems, website design, data security and system security. OCC will partner with DTS within DWS through its director, Mark Schultz, to draft a design for a universal early childhood web platform. This effort will require DTS to coordinate and partner will each state agency that serves families with young children and embed each agency's existing platform into the proposed integrated early childhood website.

The grant activities proposed in this application align with multiple projects currently being explored or initiated in Utah. For example, the proposed grant activities align with the Intergenerational Poverty (IGP) Initiative and Governor's Education Excellence Commission. In addition, the grant activities support current strategic planning efforts undertaken by Early Childhood Utah, as well as efforts by OCC to implement the Child Care Quality System which

will better inform families about high-quality child care and expand access high-quality child care for children living in low-income families.

Plan for Oversight of Federal Award Funds

The Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) is a department within the executive branch of government of the State of Utah. The State maintains a centralized accounting system that is used by all executive branch departments. The State has also developed statewide accounting policies and procedures and a statewide system of internal controls for areas such as budgeting, purchasing, payments, receivables, revenues, inventory, capital assets, travel, payroll, cash receipts and cash management. In addition, DWS has developed policies and procedures which either mirror statewide polices or are more restrictive that the statewide policies. DWS has also developed a system of internal controls which provide reasonable assurance that DWS manages federal awards in compliance with federal statues, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal award. Source documentation that supports each accounting transaction is captured electronically at the time the transaction is recorded on the State's centralized accounting system. The electronic images for each transaction are stored on the centralized accounting system.

DWS has extensive experience managing federal awards. An experienced fiscal grant manager will be assigned to manage all of the financial aspects of this grant. The fiscal grant manager is directly supervised by a financial manager who reports to the chief financial officer. The fiscal grant manager performs the following activities and tasks for each assigned grant and program:

- Manage grant applications and track grant awards.
- Determine federal and state share of expenses for each grant, as applicable.
- Manage grant budgets, including:

    - Forecasting expenses
    - Tracking fiscal status
    - Coordinating with and regularly updating program managers and operations managers on the budget status.
- Draw revenue for grants according to the Cash Management Improvement Act (CMIA) guidelines established in the Treasury-State agreement.
- Reconcile grant revenue drawn per the applicable federal payment system to reported expenses and to revenues recorded on the State's centralized accounting system.
- Review and approve budgets for contracts and provide support as needed to the contracts team and accounts payable team to facilitate execution of contracts and payment of invoices.
- Review and approve invoices, ensuring expenses and activities included on the invoice are allowable. Reconcile invoices to the approved budget for the associated contract. Ensure amounts paid meet applicable state and federal guidelines.
- Complete other fiscal monitoring activities for each contract or sub-award based on the risk level assigned to the contract or sub-award as delineated in DWS contract monitoring policies and procedures and in accordance with applicable federal guidelines, including 2 CFR §200 (Uniform Guidance).
- Review payroll charges for accuracy. Communicate any needed adjustments to the budget manager.
- Prepare federal revenue reports and expenditure reports in accordance with applicable federal guidelines. Submit prepared reports to management for review and approval a minimum of three business days prior to the prescribed due date. Ensure reports are submitted to the federal government and are certified by the prescribed due date.

In addition to a fiscal grant manager, a contracts and grants analyst is also assigned to oversee each contract executed by DWS. The contracts and grants analyst works with the assigned program managers to track monitoring progress and results for fiscal and programmatic monitoring activities conducted by DWS. Through these processes, DWS ensures thorough oversight of federal award funds.

State B-5 Mixed Delivery System Description and Vision Statement

The primary motivation for seeking funding through the Preschool Development Grant is to ensure Utah families with young children have the knowledge needed to navigate Utah's early childhood system and access resources to support their young children. The funds will be utilized to support this objective through the design and subsequent implementation of a coordinated early childhood system. Currently, Utah's early childhood system is a complex web of multiple state agencies, local governments and community-based organizations administering several early childhood programs. This complexity impedes a family's ability to address the needs of their young children.

As defined by the funding opportunity announcement, Utah's B-5 Early Childhood System includes core care and education programs, as well valuable supports for low-income families. The programs listed in the following table comprise Utah's B-5 mixed delivery system and identify the agencies primarily responsible for the current structure.

Program	Administering Agency	Other Agencies Involved
Child Care	OCC	Department of Health, Child Care Licensing
Child Care Supporting Education	Post-secondary Institutions	
Early Head Start/Head Start	Various community organizations	
Head Start Collaboration Office	OCC	
Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIEHCV)	Department of Health (DOH)	Community organizations and local governmental entities
"Baby Watch Early Intervention Services"	DOH	Community organizations and local governmental entities
Special Education Preschool	Utah State Board of Education (USBE)	Local Education Agencies (LEA)
Title I Preschool	LEA, at its discretion	
Other State Funded Preschool	OCC, USBE	Various private child care providers and LEAs
Medicaid/CHIP	DWS, DOH	
Maternal & Child Programs	DOH	
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	USBE	Various private child care providers
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)	DOH	
Child Welfare and Protective Services	Department of Human Services (DHS)	

The majority of the resources utilized to support Utah's B-5 Mixed Delivery System are federal funds. However, there has been increasing prioritization of expanding access to high-

quality preschool for low-income children. This has led the state to expand its investment in this effort. The expanded investment is supporting improving the quality of preschool programs, expanding the number of children served and implementing a home-based technology preschool program.

Although the above table identifies the primary components of Utah's early childhood system, there are also community-based organizations that are critical to the state system. These programs include "Help Me Grow," an early childhood resource program that assists parents in identifying developmental delays and connecting them to relevant resources needed to mitigate those delays. It also includes entities in early childhood behavioral health. These entities include The Children's Center which provides services to families and child care providers with young children exhibiting behavioral health needs.

The complexity and siloed nature of Utah's mixed delivery system leaves not only families confused but also policymakers. As a result, the Utah Legislature required OCC to conduct a study to identify Utah's early childhood system. In 2017, it met the legislation's requirements by releasing Utah's "Early Childhood Services Study," (2017 Study) which was drafted through a partnership with the University of Utah. The study identified Utah's mixed delivery system through an organized framework addressing four domains in which families may utilize the system. The four domains of services identified by the study for families with children birth to five are: family support and safety, health and development, early learning and economic stability. Each domain included its own set of goals and data indicators recommended by the authors of the study. The following summarizes the report and its findings regarding Utah's B-5 mixed delivery system.

Family Support and Safety

Within the family support and safety domain the study identified four key programmatic components: home visiting programs, parenting resources and programs, child welfare programs and child care programs.

Home Visiting

The study noted that a variety of programs in the state and within counties have a home visiting component. This includes Medicaid, which provides public health nurses who conduct home visits for mothers with infants on Medicaid through a targeted case management approach. Additionally, some of the services of the Department of Human Services' Division of Child and Family Services have a home visiting component, with a focus on child abuse prevention.

In particular, the Utah Department of Health, Office of Home Visiting (OHV) supports and coordinates many home visiting programs in Utah, including three different evidence-based models: Nurse-Family Partnerships, Parents as Teachers and Family Spirit. A family's income must fall within 185 percent of the federal poverty level to be eligible for services through an OHV program. Utah's OHV receives funding from federal sources including the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program as well as the TANF grant. In 2017, the Utah Legislature passed SB 135, requiring the OHV to conduct a study on home visiting programs. The study determined that 1,821 families received services; of that number 1,166 received services from OHV funded programs. The other 655 families received services from Housing Opportunities Inc., Carbon County Family Support Center, Holy Cross Ministries, the Guadalupe School, Bear River Head Start, DDI Vantage Early Head Start, Davis/Morgan/Summit Head Start, RUCD Early Head Start, Salt Lake City School District Early Childhood or the Utah Community Action Early Head Start Home Base.

Given that the OHV receives only federal funding, OHV supports home visiting programs in just 14 of Utah's 29 counties. Many of the unserved counties are rural. Even with non-OHV home visiting programs serving an additional five counties, there are still 10 counties in Utah with no home visiting programs. The study estimates that of the estimated number of children in Utah age 0-6, living in a family below poverty level, only 5 percent are served. An ongoing challenge for the OHV is to secure funding for the future to, if not grow, at least maintain their current services.

Parenting Resources and Programs

Utah has many examples of parenting resources and programs, both in-person and technology-based, that are funded through a variety of public and private sources: Uplift Families, an initiative of the First Lady of Utah; Healthy Relationships Utah, free parenting classes taught through Utah State University Extension sites; Text4Baby, a service from the Utah Department of Health in coordination with local health departments and medical providers; the Utah Parent Center, training regarding parenting children with disabilities; Welcome Baby, volunteer home visiting and parent support through United Way Organizations; Help Me Grow, a non-profit that works in conjunction with United Way to provide free information and referral services to parents; parent support groups, hosted by community and non-profit organizations; Community Learning Centers and other Family or Community Centers, provide wraparound services to low-income families; online resources, provided by a multitude of agencies and programs through a variety of websites.

However, the 2017 Study notes, "the state lacks a coordinated parenting program and it also lacks an organized communication and outreach effort," which also means that "without a

state-level specific parenting program to collect, data, there is also a lack of uniform data in this area." At this time, it is difficult to know how many parents have participated in any of these services, as there is no central place to record that information. The development of a universal website, as outlined in Activity Three, will address limitations of the existing system.

Child Welfare

Utah's child welfare system is state-administered through the Utah Department of Human Services, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and coordinated through five regions. DCFS partners with hundreds of agencies, local providers and contract providers to run child abuse and neglect prevention services, including child abuse and neglect investigation, case management, individual and family counseling, peer-parenting, parenting skills training and education, community-based family support services, post adoption services, family preservation services, respite day care and sexual abuse treatment.

DCFS has shown strengths in collaboration throughout the B-5 mixed delivery system in Utah. For example, DCFS collaborates with the Utah Department of Health's Baby Watch Early Intervention Program (BWEIP) in the following ways: 1) each child under three years old with a supported finding of abuse or neglect is referred to BWEIP for follow up screening and potential identification for services and 2) children in foster care who score below the recommended score on the Ages and Stages Questionnaire screener are referred to BWEIP if they are under age three, and to the school district or local mental health provider if they are between the ages of three and five years old.

Collaboration also occurs through the DCFS Child Welfare Improvement Council; the Council's duties are outlined in state statute and include advising DCFS on child abuse and

neglect issues, recommending allocation of certain funds and providing input on DCFS' performance.

Further opportunities exist to collaborate with DCFS through its work with Strengthening Families, Protective Factors. Local child care resource and referral agencies called "Care About Childcare" also host trainings regarding the Strengthening Families, Protective Factors for the early care and education workforce. Connecting these two projects could help better collect information about the reach of Strengthening Families, Protective Factors programs in Utah and perhaps increase efficiency of the projects.

Child Care

In Utah, child care is regulated by the Department of Health, Child Care Licensing (CCL); the lead agency in the state for Child Care Development Block Grant funds is the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Child Care (OCC), which disperses CCDBG funds to many partner agencies, including CCL. CCL assesses the compliance to health, safety and basic professional development and credential standards for licensed programs caring for children. In 2017, this included 22,424 children aged birth to five (not in kindergarten).

OCC provides resources to promote high-quality child care that is accessible and affordable for low-income families in Utah. OCC develops and maintains partnerships with educational partners, fellow state agencies, child care providers, parents and the community to best serve Utah's families and children. In particular, OCC provides funding to six Care About Childcare agencies to act as child care resource and referral agencies throughout the state.

In 2017 OCC contracted with researchers at the University of Utah to complete a child care needs assessment survey. The survey results indicated that the availability of high-quality, affordable child care in Utah is lacking. Rural areas particularly lack care options. Throughout

nine rural counties, there was an estimated 4,009 children aged birth to five. Within those same counties, there was only 191 licensed child care slots. Moreover, fifteen counties in Utah reported vacancy rates of 15 percent or lower, with infant and toddler vacancy rates being even lower.

OCC currently contracts or hosts multiple websites regarding child care services. One website, careaboutchildcare.utah.gov, has a search feature for parents to assist them in finding child care providers; however, many child care programs do not update their vacancies consistently, which can lead to parent frustration in calling programs that list a vacancy, only to find out the slot is no longer available. Additionally, other care options outside of private child care, such as public school pre-kindergarten and Head Start programs, are not featured prominently on the website. OCC is currently in the process of designing a single web platform to address these issues.

Health and Development

The 2017 Study identified the following key programmatic components in the health and development domain: health care access; mental and behavioral health services; physical health and wellbeing; and early intervention.

Health Care Access

The 2017 Study focused on insurance coverage as a key indicator of access to health care. Medicaid is a main provider of insurance in Utah to low-income families. Medicaid programs include Medicaid for children of specific age groups (under age 1, age birth to five and age six to eighteen), Child Medically Needy, Pregnant Women, Medically Needy Pregnant Women, Baby Your Baby and Parent/Caretaker Relative. In addition to Medicaid programs, three programs

provide insurance to low income families: Utah's Children's Health Insurance Plan (CHIP) provides access to medical care for children birth through age eighteen who do not have health insurance and who do not qualify for Medicaid; Utah Premium Partnership for Health Insurance (UPP) is a state program that assists low income families in paying their health insurance premiums; Primary Care Network (PCN) provides insurance coverage to adults ages 19-64 (dependent on income) to cover the costs of primary care providers as well as provide free or low cost medical care services, including early intervention to children of adults enrolled.

The 2017 Study notes that of the children in Utah who are uninsured (6 percent, or roughly 54,000 children), 63 percent may be eligible for public insurance coverage, depending on income level. However, limited data exists regarding why these children remain uninsured.

Mental and Behavioral Health Services

Utah's mental and behavioral health services are administered throughout all 29 counties by the 13 Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHA) contracted through the Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (DSAMH) in the Department of Human Services, although there is no existing coordinated early childhood mental health system incorporating best practices and universal credentialing of early childhood mental health professionals. Services offered include psychological testing, emergency response, case management, peer support services, psychosocial rehabilitation, respite, outpatient therapy, medication management and assessment. Depending on the availability, treatment services may also include play therapy, trauma informed therapies, parent child interaction therapy, family therapy and parenting classes. There are also three LMHA that offer Autism Preschool programs that focus on healthy physical, mental, social and emotional development of the children who attend. Partnerships with Early Intervention services, Head Start and Early Head Start, Children with Special Health Care Needs,

local private providers and community coalitions have been developed to ensure a whole child and family approach to treatment.

In addition to services from DSAMH, families in the greater Salt Lake area can receive services from The Children's Center, a non-profit that provides comprehensive mental health care for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and their families. Utah also has a local division of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). NAMI Utah offers free education materials, on-site consulting for mental health concerns and organizes support groups for families and caregivers in the greater Salt Lake area.

While the Early Childhood Services Study provided an overview of the services available, it did not report the rate at which these services are used by families with children ages birth to five. The data reported in the study was for children ages five to 17. This is another early childhood service area that would benefit from coordinated data regarding how families come into contact with services, how many families and young children are served, the accessibility of services and the need for services in all areas of the state.

Physical Health and Wellbeing

Primary care and preventative services are the backbone of long term physical health and wellbeing. In Utah, preventative care is provided to low income families through Child's Health and Evaluation Care (CHEC), which provides preventative medical and dental care to children ages 0-22 who qualify for Medicaid. Utah Health Centers also provide preventative services in 51 clinics in 13 health center locations across the state. Utah Health Centers receive funding from federal Health Resources and Services (HRSA). Health Centers are able to serve as primary medical homes for patients, and fees are charged on a sliding scale. Utah is divided into 13 local health districts, which are responsible for providing public health services.

Preventative care services are also provided by the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) and Immunize Utah programs, both programs of the Department of Health. In addition to food vouchers, WIC offers nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support and referrals to public health programs and health care providers. Immunize Utah provides vaccines to children ages 0-18 who are enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP, children who are not insured or whose insurance does not cover immunizations and American Indian/Alaskan Native children.

Teaching Obesity Prevention in Childcare Settings (TOP Star), a program of the Department of Health and its Healthy Living through Environment, Policy, and Improved Clinical Care Program (EPICC), provides professional development, consultation and technical assistance to child care programs regarding best practices for nutrition and physical activity. TOP Star collaborates with the Child and Adult Food Care Program to connect with child care programs and help programs choose balanced and healthy meals. This is an encouraging area of coordination, in which the Office of Child Care has also collaborated with TOP Star to include TOP Star endorsements as a way for child care programs to earn points in their Child Care Quality System.

Early Intervention

Utah administers the federal grant program Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) Part C – Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities through the Baby Watch Early Intervention Program (BWEIP), a program of the Utah Department of Health. BWEIP offers identification and intervention services for children birth through local county health departments, universities, school districts and non-profits. Children must meet or exceed the definition of developmental delays in one of six areas to qualify; children born with

certain health conditions, including Down syndrome, hearing loss and vision loss, are automatically eligible for services.

In addition to BWEIP, there are screening and referral programs that support early intervention. Utah's version of "Learn the Signs. Act Early," called "Act Early" encourages parents to monitor children's development through checklists and tools to help parents understand appropriate developmental milestones. Act Early's resources are primarily shared through its website, but are also disseminated through social media and at various clinics. As part of the Act Early campaign, the Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Child Development provides access to and information about the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screening tool. ASQ screenings are provided through coordination with services such as BWEIP and home visitation programs, as well as through some child care programs. Help Me Grow Utah also connects parents with an online version of the ASQ screening tool. Help Me Grow Utah operates a free helpline that provides parents with information and referrals to services, including BWEIP and extending to private providers.

While these programs provide much-needed services to families, there are some gaps in data sharing and connecting families to services. For example, child care programs are trained to use the ASQ screening tool and report screening results to the Bureau of Child Development; however, once results are sent to the Bureau of Child Development, there is not a clear mechanism for ensuring that children who "flag" on the ASQ screening tool ultimately receive services. Coordination between child care programs, the Bureau of Child Development and community referral programs such as Help Me Grow Utah will close a service gap to families and collect better data regarding the services needed and accessed by Utah families.

Early Learning

The early learning domain of the 2017 Study identified early literacy, Early Head Start and Head Start, preschool and kindergarten as the four key programmatic components.

Early Literacy

The 2107 Study notes that while Utah has many programs targeted at early literacy, "the state lacks a coordinated early literacy program that brings together the numerous actors working in this area. This also means there is no centralized or uniform data in this area about the number of children or families receiving these services, and from which entities." The 2017 Study suggests that Utah could maximize its resources and unify the community if it were to embark on coordination of this component. In particular, the 2017 Study suggests that coordination will help programs determine who was best to serve specific groups of families, such as low-income, single parent families, new parents, refugee families, teenage parents and what resources could be used to serve all families, regardless of demographics.

Some of the early literacy programs in the state include: Ready to Read, a program of the Utah State Library Division that provides information and training on emergent literacy to Utah librarians and community partners; 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten, a non-profit that partners with libraries to promote reading to newborns, infants and toddlers; Reach Out and Read, a non-profit community-based organization that partners with doctors to prescribe books and provide books to children at pediatric visits; Read Today, a summer reading program from the Governor and First Lady; Pioneer Preschool, a program of the Utah Education Network, which receives legislative funding to provide curated online resources to families to support early literacy; and Envision Utah, a non-profit campaign to increase public awareness and support for key educational strategies, including talking to and interacting with babies and toddlers.

Funding for these programs come from state funds and philanthropic donations. Given the lack of data in this area, it's difficult for policy makers and professionals to know how families first learn of these programs and the extent to which they engage, as well as what outcomes each program has for young children.

Early Head Start and Head Start

Utah has 12 Early Head Start and Head Start service providers with 143 program locations throughout the state with total funded enrollment of 6,694, as of 2016-17. Due to enrollment turnover and mobility of families served, the programs served a total of 8,151 children and pregnant women during 2016-17. Early Head Start programs serve pregnant women, infants and toddlers up to age three. Head Start programs serve families with children ages three through five.

In addition to providing early literacy and school readiness support, Early Head Start and Head Start programs connect families to health and development screenings, oral health services and mental health support, as well as assist adults with obtaining education or training, financial security, housing stability and other personal goals, all of which help strengthen the family unit.

Preschool

Utah has various state- and locally-run preschool programs, but lacks a comprehensive statewide pre-kindergarten program. Like many of the other multi-agency systems, there is not uniform or complete data collection on preschool programs in the state, or the number of children served by different types of preschool providers.

Under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), school districts across the state offered preschool services to 10,199 three- and four-year-old special education students in the 2016-2017 school year. These services were provided either directly through local schools or through contracted third-party providers.

In addition to Part B services, some local education agencies (LEAs) offer general education preschool programs. LEAs offering these preschool programs use federal Title I funding, local funding sources, grants and private donations to fund preschool classrooms. At this time, LEAs are not required to report preschool enrollment, though the study estimates that based on the numbers that were reported for school year 2016-17, 25 percent of incoming kindergarteners were served by public school preschools. It can be hypothesized that the other 75 percent of incoming kindergartners received services through private child care or Head Start, or remained at home prior to beginning public school.

Though there is not a comprehensive, state-funded preschool program in Utah, the Utah legislature has funded several pilot programs, including Utah Preparing Students Today for a Rewarding Tomorrow (UPSTART), High-Quality School Readiness (HQSR) and High-Quality School Readiness Expansion (HQSR-E).

UPSTART provides a kindergarten readiness computer software program to families to use at home with four-year-old children in the year prior to enrolling in kindergarten. The program provides individualized reading, mathematics and science curriculum with a focus on reading. UPSTART targets low-income families and families who are non-native English speakers, though all Utah children are eligible to participate.

HQSR began in the 2014-15 school year and was created by the 2014 General Session House Bill (HB) 96 as the first “Pay for Success” program in the nation. The program is designed to fund high-quality preschool programs at LEAs, private child care providers and

home-based technology providers serving economically disadvantaged three- and four-year-old children. During the 2016-17 school year, 1,000 preschool children were funded through HQSR.

HQSR-E was created in the 2016 General Session through Senate Bill (SB) 101 and appropriated federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) reserve funds to provide additional slots for children to attend programs that were deemed high-quality. The funding for this initiative expires June 30, 2019. In the 2016-17 school year, 662 four-year-olds were funded by HQSR-E.

Kindergarten

Compulsory public school attendance does not begin until age six in Utah, which is typically first grade, making kindergarten not mandatory. Utah schools receive state per-pupil funding for kindergarten through the Minimum School Program at about half the amount they receive for first grade, meaning each school is only funded for a half-day of kindergarten (two to three hours). Some schools use local or other discretionary funds to supplement this state funding to offer a full-day of kindergarten or other extended options, such as an extra hour. Another strategy some LEAs use is to offer kindergarten enrichment, an academic enrichment program for the remaining hours of a regular school day, but for a fee.

Since 2007, the legislature has appropriated funding for pilot extended-day programs. The first of these, Optional Extended-day Kindergarten (OEK), created a four-year pilot program to fund a limited number of full-day or extended-day kindergarten options statewide. In 2012, the legislature transitioned the OEK pilot program to the Early Intervention Program (EIP). EIP provided funding for enhanced kindergarten programs that are not necessarily required to be full-day. In 2017, the legislature created the Kindergarten Supplemental Enrichment Program (KSEP) to offer grants to LEAs that were not receiving money from the EIP. During the 2017-18

school year, KSEP funds were awarded to 38 schools across 14 districts and charter schools. The funding served 894 kindergartners in extended learning opportunities statewide. Given that statewide enrollment in kindergarten has hovered at about 48,000 students per year, the vast majority of students, 80 percent, do not receive any extended-day kindergarten programming.

In 2017, the legislature required the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) to establish a kindergarten entry and exit assessment; USBE developed Utah's Kindergarten Entry-Exit Profile (KEEP), which focuses on assessing the literacy and numeracy skills of kindergarteners at the beginning and end of the school year. The KEEP also includes a small portion on social-emotional development, but results of the social-emotional component were prohibited from being reported, even at an aggregate level. USBE collects data on the literacy and numeracy components. In 2018, the legislature required USBE to create a corresponding preschool entry and exit assessment. The tentatively-named Preschool Entry-Exit Profile (PEEP) is undergoing final draft reviews and piloting and should be ready for use in the 2019-20 school year. Unfortunately, while many non-public school early childhood education programs would like to use the PEEP and the KEEP and report their scores to USBE in order to obtain aggregate longitudinal data regarding the long-term success of their students, there is currently not a way to assign state student identification numbers (SSIDs) to children outside of the public schools. This means a large amount of data about children in Utah and their preparation and experiences upon entering grade school may not be captured.

Economic Stability

The final domain of the 2017 Study, economic stability, focuses on the following four areas: employment and financial assistance, child care assistance, housing and food security. Without stability in the lives of the adults caring for young children, these children will have a

much more difficult time becoming prepared for success upon entering grade school and later in life.

Employment and Financial Assistance

Utah's Department of Workforce Services (DWS) administers both employment and financial assistance programs. DWS offers workforce training programs for adults and assists displaced workers in finding new employment, with the goal of securing steady income to provide security to families. DWS's financial assistance programs are funded through TANF and includes the Family Employment Program (FEP) and the Family Employment Program – Two Parent Program (FEP-TP). DWS also provides Child Only Assistance to children when there is not a qualifying parent, such as when children are cared for non-parental adults or when a child has a parent who qualifies for social security due to a disability. In FY2017, Utah provided cash assistance to 8,752 households through one of these programs.

DWS also administers three child care assistance programs, using funding from the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and TANF. On average 11,000 families receive child care subsidies. The Employment Support Child Care program (ESCC) provides assistance to families whose income is at or below 56 percent of the state median income, who have eligible children under 12 (or under 18 if the child has special needs). Once a family is eligible to receive ESCC, they may increase their income up to, but not exceeding 70 percent of the state median income. Job Search Child Care is provided for up to three months to parents who become unemployed while receiving ESCC subsidies. The Family Employment Program Child Care (FEP) provides subsidies to families who qualify for the aforementioned FEP financial assistance program. Transitional Child Care subsidies are provided to families who are exiting FEP, but who are not yet eligible for ESCC. Homeless Child Care subsidies are

provided to homeless families residing in shelters. Roughly half of all children in licensed child care programs receive subsidies.

Housing

Utah administers several housing programs funded through TANF and other federal grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development with goals to prevent families from eviction, becoming separated or becoming homeless, including the Emergency Assistance/Homeless Prevention Program; Rapid Re-housing; Federal Rental Assistance; Family Unification Program; HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance; and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program. Utah also offers homeowner assistance through a state funded program, the Olene Walker Housing Fund, as well as through the HOME Home-Buyer Assistance program and the Utah Housing Corporation. To assist families with utility costs, Utah administers the Home Energy Assistance Target (HEAT) Program through DWS from funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as well as the Weatherization Assistance Program.

Food Security

According to the Early Childhood Services Study, 13.1 percent of Utah households experienced food insecurity in 2017. Some of the programs in Utah that address food insecurity include Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Food insecure households in Utah may also receive assistance from the Utah Food Bank and local food pantries.

WIC is designed to provide low-income women and young children with access to nutrition education, counseling, nutritious food and help with finding healthcare and community

resources. WIC is funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered by the Utah Department of Health and supports 51,000 individuals each month. SNAP is also funded through the USDA and is administered by DWS. The program provides eligible recipients electronic benefits equivalent to cash to be spent within the parameters set by the USDA. To be eligible for SNAP, households must be at or below income and resource thresholds correlated to the size of the family and meet employment requirements. CACFP is administered locally by USBE and is funded by the USDA to help provide nutritious meals to children in child care programs.

While it is noted throughout the 2017 Study that Utah lacks security of funding for some of its services, what is more notable are the opportunities for collaboration and alignment that could help Utah better use the funding it has to serve more families more effectively. Utah's vision in applying for the Preschool Development Grant is to begin establishing a more coordinated B-5 System across all of the multiple programs and resources addressing the needs of Utah's young children.

The improved technology system proposed to address Activities Three, Four and Five would include both a public-facing universal early childhood services website that includes information regarding all the programs listed above including how to obtain direct services, as well as a comprehensive data repository where the aforementioned programs could report data and have data matched from various programs to identify unique counts of children served and how these services correlated with long-term outcomes.

By having a universal early childhood services website, parents in Utah could be seamlessly connected to services depending on their particular needs, rather than searching through countless individual websites. The vision for this project includes a search feature within

the website where parents could enter information about their child and family, such as the age of their child and their family income, as well as information regarding a particular concern, such as developmental delays, and be immediately linked with services for which they may qualify, such as BWEIP and OHV home visiting programs. Given that services across Utah have different income eligibility requirements, this website could potentially increase the efficiency of programs by directing parents in lower income brackets to services that serve the lowest income brackets first, thereby opening more spaces in programs with higher income eligibility to families in higher income brackets who would exceed income eligibility requirements of other programs.

Moreover, a universal early childhood services website would help public and private entities learn about and connect with each other, whereas the fragmented system today almost requires having a prior knowledge about certain programs to be able to find information about the programs online. Additionally, having one early childhood services website would encourage alignment of definitions and print- or copy-based resources for families, which would allow for clearer messaging to families in Utah and reduce the redundancies of multiple services creating similar resources for parents. Alignment of resources could improve the transitions from early care and education programs to grade schools by clearly messaging that all early childhood services support the same definition of kindergarten readiness and by curating a set of school readiness resources that could be used across programs.

An integrated data system could also assist Utah programs in achieving school readiness goals and improving transitions from early childhood services to grade school. By providing aggregated longitudinal data on long-term school success back to programs that provide early childhood services, those programs could make data-driven decisions on programming, as well as use data to demonstrate the success of their programs to policy-makers and potential funders.

Additionally, a data system that could provide information about children and families receiving multiple services concurrently could provide an opportunity for these service providers to connect to create a comprehensive plan for ensuring successful transitions to kindergarten.

Key to the success of this vision will be partnerships with all of the aforementioned services through coordination with ECU, in which most of these services participate. An additional partnership with Utah's Department of Technology Services to design a universal early childhood website will need to be created. Lastly, a focus on coordination of data between ECIDS, USBE and UDRC as well as incorporation of data from a greater number early childhood services into one of these systems will be paramount.

Ultimately, Utah aims to achieve a short-term goal of increased access to and use of existing services by at-risk children and families and a long-term goal of increased school readiness as measured through PEEP and KEEP assessments, and improved long-term educational success as assessed at benchmarks throughout grade school until graduation.

Timeline and Milestones

The project timeline and milestones will be managed and monitored by the OCC lead to ensure deliverables are timely and all contract requirements are being met. The timeline following timeline table captures major tasks and milestones of the 12-month grant period. The Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan, as the focus of the grant year, will take up the majority of the year. It is expected that the Needs Assessment will require 6-9 months of work; the Strategic Plan work will begin during that time and there will be several months of overlap with these two Activities. At the end of the ninth month, a Needs Assessment will be completed; at the end of the project period, a Strategic Plan will be completed.

A detailed timeline will be developed in collaboration with partners at the University of Utah and Department of Technology Services and be included in the scope of work for those

respective contracts. The timeline managed over the course of the project period will be continually updated and reflect areas where progress is on track, behind or ahead of schedule. Due dates for contracted work will be specified in contract requirements and those entities will be contractually obligated to meet set deadlines. Any modifications to timelines will occur in consultation with OCC and must be approved in advance.

Utah PDG 0-5 Project Timeline and Milestones			
Activity	**Month**	**Task**	**Details and Additional Considerations**
Quarter 1			
1 & 2	Dec-Jan	Finalize contracts with University of Utah	For Deliberative Community Engagement, Needs Assessment, and Strategic Plan
3	Dec-Jan	Finalize website Project Manager contract with DTS	Will be hired as a contracted position for 12 mos.
1&2	Jan-Mar	Review other state systems	States with similar demographic or governance structures will be the focus
1	Feb	Concern circles and information gathering completed	Materials collected will inform Deliberation Sessions
3	Feb	Hire website Project Manager	DTS will oversee job posting, interviews, selection of candidate
3	Feb	Finalize requirements of website architect with DTS	Determine if position will be internal or not. Estimating .25 FTE
1	Feb	Needs Assessment begins	Quantitative data collection
3	Mar	Select or hire website architect	DTS will oversee job posting, interviews, selection of candidate (if new)
3	Mar	Convene 1-2 website planning meetings with DTS	Begin discussion of potential scope of website, current sites, and partners; detail outline of website needs
1	Mar	3-4 Deliberation Sessions take place	Statewide; these sessions will inform Needs Assessment in real-time
Quarter 2			
1	Apr-Jun	Needs Assessment continues	Lead researcher will continue collecting and analyzing quantitative data; receive qualitative data from Deliberation Sessions
3	Apr	Convene 1-2 website planning meetings with DTS	Survey and document all early childhood services websites in Utah

1	Apr	3-4 Deliberation Sessions take place	Statewide; these sessions will inform Needs Assessment in real-time
3	May	Convene 1-2 website planning meetings with DTS	Meet with stakeholders from other departments and divisions to review websites, functionality, discuss updates
1	May	3-4 Deliberation Sessions take place	Statewide; these sessions will inform Needs Assessment in real-time
1	May	Deliberative Community Engagement Process Ends	Summary report provided to OCC and Needs Assessment lead researcher
3	June	Convene 1-2 website planning meetings with DTS	Meet with stakeholders from other departments and divisions to review websites, functionality, discuss updates
Quarter 3			
3	July	Convene 1-2 website planning meetings with DTS	Meet with stakeholders from other departments and divisions to review websites, functionality, discuss updates
2	July	Begin work on Strategic Plan	Initiate stakeholder meetings to review Needs Assessment preliminary analysis
1	Aug	Needs Assessment draft completed	First draft provided to OCC and other partners for review and input
2	Aug	Continue work on Strategic Plan	Draft outline of recommendations and vision for Strategic Plan
3	Aug	Convene 1-2 website planning meetings with DTS	Consult internally to review partner websites and begin outlining wireframe proposals and budget estimates
2	Sep	Continue work on Strategic Plan	Stakeholder input; first draft
1	Sep	Needs Assessment finalized	Updated based on OCC and partner input
3	Sep	Convene 1-2 website planning meetings with DTS	Consult internally to review partner websites and begin outlining wireframe proposals and budget estimates
Quarter 4			
3	Oct	Planning sessions continue with DTS	Website design details - options and required implementation budget presented
2	Oct	Continue work on Strategic Plan	Second draft; final input from stakeholders
2	Nov	Strategic Plan completed	Final Strategic Plan provided to OCC and stakeholders

Performance Evaluation Plan

Given that Utah anticipates the focus of the first year of the grant to be on Activities One and Two, the plan for program performance evaluation will be in regard to the successful completion of a needs assessment and creation of a strategic plan. As mentioned, Utah plans to contract out the requirements of Activities One and Two to the University of Utah, and will do so through the established contract procedures at the Department of Workforce Services. These procedures include creating a detailed scope of work based on SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely) goals and outcomes, determining appropriate contract monitoring protocols, determination of the responsibilities of OCC as the contractor and agreement on a practical and reasonable detailed budget that will support successful completion of the SMART goals. The budget form requires a budget justification that includes details regarding all anticipated costs incurred.

OCC will design the contract in order to support the outcomes described in the logic model included in this grant application. In particular, OCC will ensure appropriate funds are included to support the University of Utah in obtaining more specific data than it was able to use in the Early Childhood Services Study, in order to meet the requirements of this grant. This may occur through collaboration with the Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) and the Utah Data Research Center (UDRC), both of which are further along in their data projects than they were when the 2017 Early Childhood Services Study was conducted, as well as through obtaining any updated needs assessments that key partners have conducted in the interim. As an additional strategy, OCC plans to require 10-12 deliberative democracy sessions to be held statewide, which will be used to inform both the needs assessment and the creation of the strategic plan. Utah will expect parts of the needs assessment and deliberative democracy sessions to collect data regarding how to design a web platform that would more efficiently

inform parents of the scope of services available to children birth to five in Utah; this expectation would be written into contracts and monitored through DWS contract monitoring protocols.

Utah has full confidence in the University of Utah to execute a methodological approach that includes proven strategies for data collection, sampling, measurement and analysis, given their prior success in performing similar reports and studies on behalf of DWS. Success will be evaluated on whether the needs assessment encompasses the requirements of this grant, as well as any additional questions determined by OCC and its key partners. Success will also be determined by whether a timeline is adhered to for activities as outlined in the contract. Due to the compressed timeline of 12 months, adherence to process check points will be vital. Lastly, success will be evaluated regarding the engagement of stakeholders in the deliberative democracy sessions and the creation of the strategic plan. An expectation of the contract will be to facilitate strategic planning meetings with an established level of participation from key stakeholders and to produce a draft of a strategic plan to be approved by the state at the end of the first year. The strategic plan will be expected to align with previously identified priorities, particularly those identified by the governor's office in the Utah Education Roadmap and those implemented by Early Childhood Utah, and would have actionable tactics agreed upon by key stakeholders, including an expected timeline for achievement of tactics.

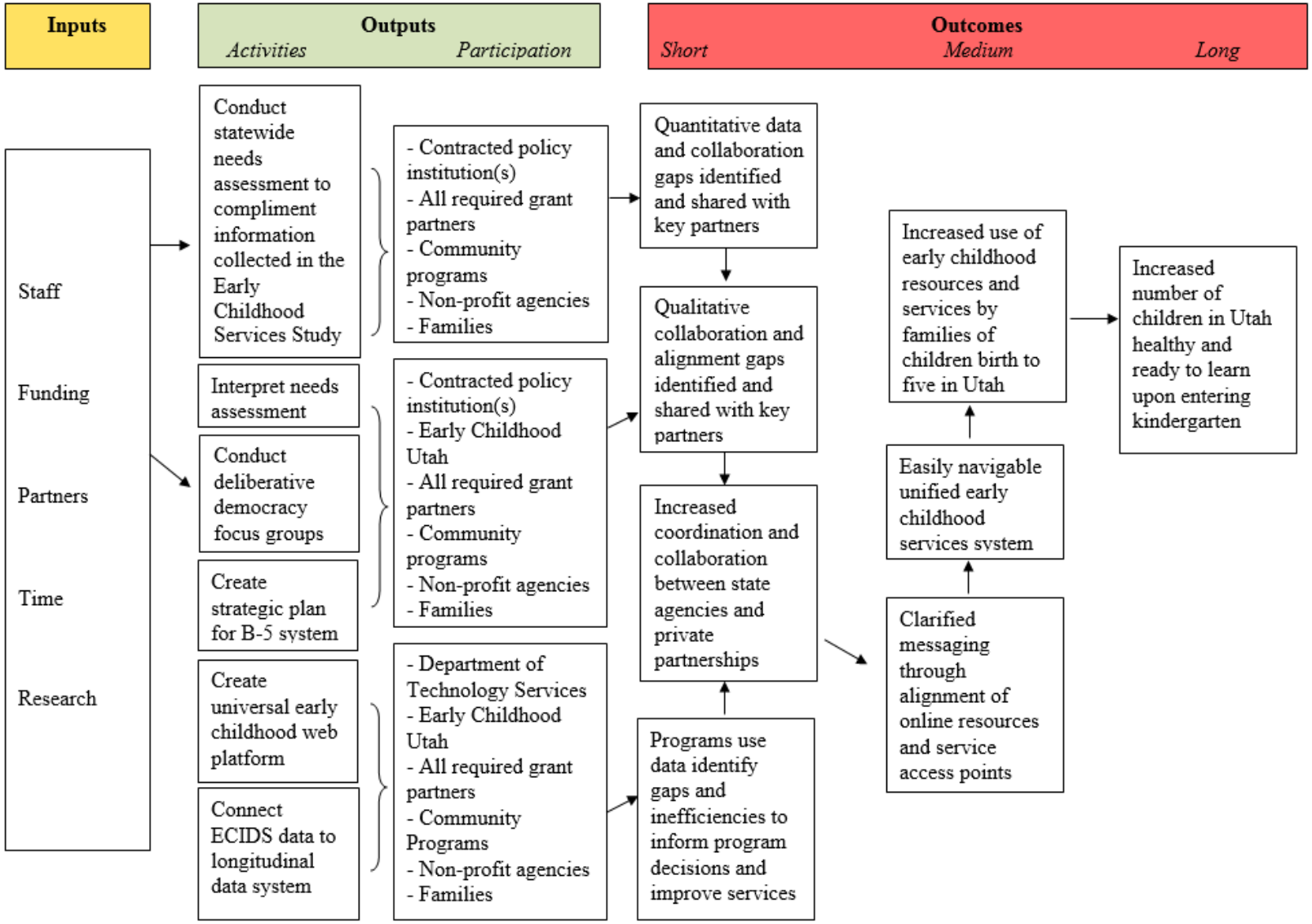
While Utah also anticipates contracting with the Department of Technology Services regarding the design of wireframes for a universal early childhood web platform, implementation of the wireframes would not occur until after the first year is complete. Therefore, evaluation of the program in year one will be limited to whether Utah was successful in obtaining designs for a web platform and a budget proposal for implementing the web platform, and would follow a similar protocol as the above described DWS contract procedures. Adhering to the timeline and successfully engaging with key stakeholders would again determine success of the contract.

Lastly, upon approval of this application, Utah will examine ways to support the ongoing collaborative data projects and will determine the specifics of a contract with data partners that would best expedite the integration of the ECIDS and UDRC data systems. Success would be determined by the ability of the systems to link data in order to produce reports that would link data regarding the services a child obtained prior to entry to grade school to indicators of success collected by USBE.

The first year of the grant, if awarded, should result in the successful completion of the "outputs" portion of the logic model, with some progress on the "outcomes" portion. Utah anticipates completion of the outcomes listed during years two through four, with the successful completion of the output activities informing the specific strategies used to achieve the long-term goal of children in Utah being healthy and ready to learn upon entry to kindergarten. Utah anticipates that the information gained from the successful completion of Activities One and Two will greatly impact the specific tactics and activities chosen by the state in years two through four, which will inform the program performance evaluation plan for those years. At that time, this information will be updated and refined based on technical assistance provided through the grant.

UTAH PRESCHOOL DEVELOPMENT GRANT LOGIC MODEL

Situation: Utah has limited coordination between its various early childhood services and lacks data regarding the outcomes and reach of its birth through five mixed delivery system.



Sustainability Plan

Utah has a record of strong fiscal responsibility and has written this application with a scope that will ensure sustainability. The amount requested in this grant application is for the purpose of investing in one-time activities that are necessary to achieve a coordinated B-5 System. Upon the establishment of the system, Utah will utilizes existing resources to maintain that system. This application intentionally limits requested funds to one-time activities given its fiscal policy of maintaining the size of government and operating within its means for ongoing expenses. For example, designing a universal early childhood web platform will incur a one-time cost for wireframe creation and potentially a one-time cost for implementation. Development of resources to include in the web platform would come from pre-existing funding that each key partner receives for the purpose of communicating with and supporting parents and families.

Key to sustainability will be ongoing collaboration and coordination between state agencies and private partners focused on implementation of the strategic plan. This should happen through the strengthening of participation in Early Childhood Utah through the execution of its recently developed strategic plan, which more clearly defines its membership and purpose. The strategic plan that will be developed during the first year of this grant will outline ways to improve efficiency of existing programs and use of currently available resources to better serve families in Utah and include timelines for completion of tactics. While many coordination activities currently occur throughout Utah among the multitude of services that exist, this grant gives Utah the opportunity to bring a clear focus to coordination through a statewide strategic plan that will identify key partners and their responsibilities in ensuring goals are completed in accordance with an established timeline. Having a guiding document for all early childhood services to use as reference will help Utah achieve its outcomes and sustain progress made during this grant, if awarded.

Dissemination Plan

Upon approval of this application, dissemination of the scope of the project, including its goals and objectives, will be issued by email to the Governor's office and to required state agency and community partners. Additional dissemination and updates will occur through bi-monthly OCC Advisory Group meetings, monthly Care About Childcare directors meetings, Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission meeting, Governor's Education Excellence Commission meetings, quarterly Early Childhood Utah meetings as well as through other meetings hosted by key state agencies and stakeholders.

Reports will be posted online through OCC's website as well as other key partners' websites and discussed at the abovementioned meetings. Engagement with target audiences may occur through ECU, but will particularly occur through meetings convened by the University of Utah during its development of the needs assessment and strategic plan. The OCC administrative assistant will be available for assistance with dissemination of information, in addition to the key OCC staff listed previously. Evaluation of the project through monitoring of participation in the needs assessment, deliberative democracy and strategic plan meetings will occur in alignment with participation goals detailed in the contracts executed between OCC and the University of Utah upon approval of this grant application.

Budget and Budget Justification

Utah is requesting a grant in the amount of $538,000 to support the work outlined in this grant application. Those funds will be used as detailed in this section.

Out-of-state Travel: $8,000

Description: Cost for four (4) individuals to travel to Washington, DC for a 3-day meeting.

Justification: $2,000 per person to include airfare, hotel, meals, and ground transportation.

Meetings and events: $15,000

Description: Funds to pay for a portion of the Kindergarten Transition Summit event(s) held annually.

Justification: Cover the cost of a speaker or additional attendees to join with the perspective of sharing the importance of the work on this grant as part of the ongoing Transition efforts.

Contract to University of Utah: $65,000

Description: To cover the cost of the Deliberative Community Engagement process and participation in the development of a strategic plan.

Justification: The University of Utah will institute a Deliberative Community Engagement process to include research and interviews with stakeholders to develop an issue guide, and convening deliberation sessions throughout the state. The contract will cover the cost of personnel and travel to conduct stakeholder interviews and deliberation sessions. The contracted work will include providing feedback to and informing the strategic planning process.

Contract to University of Utah: $200,000

Description: To cover the cost of the needs assessment and development of the strategic plan.

Justification: These activities include:

- Complete Needs Assessment
    - Literature review
    - Data collection
    - Stakeholder interviews
- Develop Strategic Plan

Interagency Agreement with Department of Technology Services: $250,000

Description: To support DTS activities in creating wireframe proposals of a universal early childhood services website. An Interagency Agreement is treated as a contract for the purpose of fiscal oversight.

Justification: This funding covers

- 1 FTE contracted Project Manager
- .25 FTE Website Architect
- Survey and documentation of all early childhood services websites within state agencies and, as feasible, of private service providers.

- Travel to and facilitation of meetings with key stakeholders from various divisions and programs within the Department of Workforce Services, Department of Human Services, Department of Health and the Utah State Board of Education for 12 months.
- Consultation time with DTS staff at key stakeholder agencies regarding current website functionalities for 12 months.
- Creation of wireframe proposals and budget estimations for implementation of a proposed wireframe.
- Aesthetic design of wireframes as contracted through an outside design company.
- Coordination between DTS wireframes team and website aesthetic design company.

Match Requirement

To meet the 30% requirement, Utah will be matching $161,400 to support this work. The sources of match are detailed below.

University of Utah

The University of Utah (Sorenson Impact Center) will provide in-kind match in the amount of $60,000. The funds are being used to conduct an assessment of the early childhood system which will supplement the development of a B-5 needs assessment as part of this grant.

Results-Based Contract Funds

Results-Based Contract Grants are intended to improve the academic performance of students and reduce remediation costs associated with poor academic outcomes. Using state general funds, the Contract Grants are awarded to high-quality preschool programs through a competitive application process. A portion of the Contract Grants, in the amount of $101,400, will be used as a match for this project, which aligns with the work being done within the state to improve program quality. As one of just a few state-funded programs to support children before they enter the public education system, the Results Based Contracts are a key component of Utah's mixed-delivery system and will continue to be in the coming year through the 12-month grant period.

File 2 Documents: Letter from Governor Herbert

November 6, 2018

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Office of Administration
Office of Grants Management
330 C Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

To Whom It May Concern:

Utah is please submit its application for the Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5), HHS-2018-ACF-OCC-TP-1379. This comprehensive application reflects Utah's commitments to fiscal responsibility and allowing parents to be empowered to serve as their children's first and most important teacher through informed decision making that meets the needs of their families. The project outlined in Utah's application, "Empowering Utah Families Through a Coordinated Early Childhood B-5 System," aligns with various state initiatives that focus on the goal of ensuring all Utah children are prepared for kindergarten. The project recognizes that the early childhood system is not exclusively comprised of government programs but includes valuable programs within a network of community-based organizations. The Preschool Development Grant will allow Utah to achieve its goal through the establishment of a coordinated and aligned early childhood care and education system.

I am pleased to designate the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Office of Child Care (OCC) as the state entity responsible for executing the requirements of the PDG B-5 grant, when awarded. OCC is best suited to easily and successfully oversee and manage the grant. OCC is a division of one Utah's best managed state agencies. As a coordinated agency, DWS oversees multiple federal programs in addition to CCDF, requiring it to have sophisticated systems and policies of accountability for those funds. These additional supports include divisions focused on finance, legal and internal audit. Moreover, the agency currently oversees the Utah Data Research Center allowing OCC to have access to comprehensive data across state agencies and programs that relate to the early childhood development. Through the structure of both program expertise and sound fiscal management, I am confident that OCC has sufficient infrastructure and leadership to administer and manage the grant.

In addition, OCC's role as the Lead Agency for the Child Development Fund (CCDF) and involvement in multiple state initiatives focused on preparing Utah's young children for kindergarten establish it as the best-suited state entity to facilitate collaboration and coordination across the early childhood care and education system. As the CCDF Lead Agency and co-chair of the Governor's State Advisory Council, Early Childhood Utah, OCC is positioned to facilitate collaboration and coordination across program. It serves over 11,000 families and 20,000 children annually which allows it to understand the challenges families in Utah face in navigating and receiving resources to support their children's healthy

development. Many of these families have needs beyond child care and those needs are addressed and coordinated by OCC through its multiple collaborations and partnership with other early childhood programs. These include connections with the services and programs specifically listed in the PDG B-5, including Baby Watch Early Intervention, the Office of Home Visiting, Women, Infants, and Children, and Medicaid and other health services.

In addition, through its involvement in the Governor's Education Excellence Commission and state's Intergenerational Poverty Initiative, OCC plays a central role of ensuring families have the knowledge to address the needs of their young children and support kindergarten preparedness, a goal of both initiatives. OCC is responsible for kindergarten readiness both through meeting the requirements of CCDF and providing oversight of state-funding preschool programs. It has primary oversight of the state's child care resource and referral agencies, "Care About Child Care;" ensuring child care programs create a healthy and safe environment; supporting families utilizing child care in addressing development and behavioral challenges; and providing oversight of Utah's early childhood professional development system. Moreover, OCC staff includes the director of Utah's Head Start Collaboration Office, a key partner in the grant.

Across early childhood care and education programs, OCC is seen as a central source of collaboration and coordination in Utah. I am confident that it is the appropriate state entity to oversee the requirements contained in Utah's grant application.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Governor Gary R. Herbert
Utah