

Stronger Together Missouri (STMO)
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
205 Jefferson Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101
573-751-0397
JoAnne.Ralston@dese.mo.gov

Missouri has a proud history of developing early childhood programs that support the larger Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) system. Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education created the Parents as Teachers Program, Project Construct Curriculum and Missouri Accreditation. Clearly, Missouri is well positioned to build the next phase of the ECCE system infrastructure through the Preschool Development Grant B-5 opportunity.

The four child serving state agencies in Missouri, the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education, Health and Senior Services, Mental Health and Social Services work together with the Missouri Head Start State Collaboration Office in a collaborative group, the Early Childhood Interagency Team (ECIT). ECIT develops strategies to implement statutes, rules, regulations and policies that impact ECCE.

In this application Missouri proposes to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment building from the Maternal and Child Health Service Title V Block Grant, the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program and the state plan for the Child Care Development Fund. The needs assessment will include existing data from these sources and look at gaps in the data that are needed to provide a more inclusive look at the essential needs of Missouri's most vulnerable children birth to kindergarten entry.

Missouri's Early Childhood Strategic Plan developed by the Coordinating Board for Early Childhood, in partnership with the Early Childhood Comprehensive System will be revised based on the quantitative information of the needs assessment and the qualitative information of the Community Listening Sessions. ECCE professionals and families will be engaged through listening sessions to provide valuable perspective for this revision.

Parental choice and knowledge will be emphasized by building on the Project LAUNCH Parent Café and Parent Leadership Council to foster authentic collaboration with families. The Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework will be used to develop and support families through this activity. A focus will be given to the current work with the Quality Assurance Report (QAR) by providing technical assistance based on the classroom and program assessments. Workforce development events will include development of a career lattice, increase trauma training, and provide T.E.A.C.H. Missouri scholarships to ECCE educators.

Finally, the application will focus on professional development based on the needs assessment and information from the Quality Assurance Report pilots. Some of the areas of knowledge and support needed will be leadership, program management, implementation of authentic assessment for young children or use of formative assessments to develop learning opportunity plans for individual children and the class as a whole.

With a strong evaluation process and team, Stronger Together Missouri is primed to measure outcomes in a manner that allows for continuous improvement of the logic model and a keen understanding of markers of success and indicators of change. Missouri has focused on long-term sustainability as one of the key tenants of STMO and emphasizes activities that build infrastructure, reduce duplication of effort and establish collaboration between programs to encourage sustainability.

STRONGER TOGETHER MISSOURI (STMO)

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STRONGER TOGETHER MISSOURI (STMO)

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION AND APPROACH

Introduction

The Masai tribe in Africa greets each other with, “How are all the children?” And the response is, “All the children are well.” This is the question Missouri will be exploring as we work to build a more efficient system for families with children birth to kindergarten entry. The Stronger Together Missouri (STMO) project will enable the state of Missouri to implement a comprehensive, statewide, birth to kindergarten entry needs assessment while concurrently holding regional strategic planning sessions to effectively update the 2015 Missouri’s Early Childhood Strategic Plan. Stronger together will be achieved through a collaborative approach of the Early Childhood Interagency Team (ECIT) comprised of members of Missouri Head Start State Collaboration Office (MHSSCO) and the Departments of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Mental Health (DMH) and Social Services (DSS). DESE in coordination with the Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood (CBEC) will work to combine the data gathered from the needs assessment with data from the statewide Quality Assurance Report (QAR) initiative. The data gathered will inform the strategic plan. This process will identify strategic priority areas for intervention around the areas of maximizing parental choice and knowledge, sharing best practices and improving quality of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE). STMO will contract with evaluators to perform evaluations on the grant’s eight required areas of reporting. Evaluations will be conducted to ensure a focus on continuous quality improvement in areas of process, cost and program implementation reporting.

Expected Outcomes

DESE expects to find information in the needs assessment to be used to revise the strategic plan, increase efficiencies across the child serving agencies and ultimately provide more opportunities of ECCE for families with children birth to kindergarten entry.

Approach: Activities One through Five

Activity One: Birth to Kindergarten Entry Statewide Needs Assessment Plan

STMO provides the unique opportunity to leverage prior work on some of the most robust existing maternal and child health needs assessments by identifying and addressing gaps that exist between them. Gaps in data will be explored and addressed in the needs assessment. DESE will ultimately use findings to revise, improve, and measure the State's existing Strategic Plan for ECCE.

Data Sources

Via federally required needs assessments, the majority of the data required for birth to age three is currently collected. However, the data are not synthesized in a way that reflects a comprehensive assessment. Additionally, the state will utilize the Zero to Three Infant/Toddler State Self-Assessment Tool Kit that comprehensively examines across health and early childhood systems building, including policies and potential funding models. This toolkit includes two surveys, one geared to families and their experience accessing services and the other geared to systems stakeholders. Zero to Three can also provide technical assistance on implementation of this self-assessment. In contrast to the birth to age three data, the age three to kindergarten entry data in Missouri is subject to more siloed workflow and provides a less holistic perspective due to the various funding sources and licensure status. For the age three to kindergarten entry cohort, data consists of both qualitative sources and multiple databases

accounting for facilities in varying licensing categories (See Section Three). Therefore, this component of the needs assessment will likely require synthesizing the qualitative and the quantitative data sets, as well as development of metrics to better understand issues characterizing the at-risk population. ECIT and evaluators will consider a tiered approach to data by first developing questions around what we need to know to more accurately understand the needs of children and families and existing programs.

Next STMO will incorporate quantitative analysis from state and other agencies to map existing data elements to determine how we can use this data and assess what new data elements will need to be collected.

Finally, Missouri will incorporate ancillary and longitudinal measures that address the overall well-being of each child, including metrics of health, social and emotional development, and transitions from one educational stage to the next into their needs assessment.

Through collaboration with a contracted partner in the state university system, DESE will first leverage DHSS resources, specifically the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) and Maternal and Child Health Service Title V Block Grant (MCH) needs assessments. These will serve as the crux of the birth to age three information. DHSS, a key partner in this application, will re-administer each of these in January 2019, to identify any potential gaps. The STMO contractor will have direct access to the process, metrics, and data gleaned in these two critical assessments. An additional federally required assessment will be the Head Start Needs Assessment, administered by the MHSSCO. This tool is designed to analyze and address local Head Start agency collaboration and coordination needs and therefore offers unique insight into local community needs.

Home Visitation Mapping

For the birth to age three population a critical component of the assessment will be understanding access to and utilization of home visiting services by Missouri families. Home visiting is funded statewide through three departmental agencies; DESE, DHSS and DSS, as well as the statewide foundation for child abuse/neglect prevention, Children's Trust Fund. Regional funding is provided for home visiting via LEAs, private foundations, and local governments. Various providers and models are used, including Nurse Family Partnership and Parents as Teachers (PAT). As the birth place of PAT, Missouri is in a unique position of being the only state where PAT is guaranteed to be in every school district and one of the few states where PAT is established in statute. Funding for services remains a priority of both the Governor and the legislature.

While this broad and varied set of funding streams for home visiting are elements of a system, it has multilayered points of entry as a way of serving families with young children. A vital outcome of the needs assessment will allow Missouri to better understand the potential overlaps and gaps across the numerous home visiting programs.

Capacity and Quality Data

DHSS maintains the capacity data for licensed and license exempt providers for the birth to kindergarten entry population (See Section Three). Based on the 2010 – 2015 Census Data for Missouri there are over 290,000 children under the age of six where both parents are employed outside the home. Understanding that not all two parent working families will need ECCE, data suggests that there is a need for quality ECCE in the state. Currently, 58 percent of the total needed slots are available through licensed, licensed exempt Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) subsidy providers and exempt from licensure CCDF subsidy providers.

DSS retains qualitative data around those serving the age three to kindergarten entry cohort of children. As the department that administers the CCDF, in accordance with federal requirements, DSS must hold at least one public hearing across the state every three years to garner qualitative data that informs its State Plan. For the last state plan cycle, DSS held 12 public hearings across the state. The objective of these sessions is to understand the needs of ECCE providers to improve quality.

After a period of years in which Missouri had a statutory prohibition on implementing a quality rating and improvement systems for ECCE providers, a three year pilot for a QAR is now in statute for DESE to work in collaboration with MHSSCO, DHSS, DMH, and DSS. Current state-based funding provides the state an opportunity to develop a QAR pilot. PDG B-5 will provide the funds to expand QAR improvement strategies.

Currently a framework of elements has been developed and is available for public input for 90 days, ensuring stakeholder input in the design of the QAR. This PDG B-5 provides an opportunity to develop this system with alignment to the STMO vision and plan. Allowing STMO to pilot our strategies for best practice and family engagement. The QAR is designed to be driven from consumer perspective and to serve as a vital education tool for families, as well as an indicator of quality for providers and system stakeholders.

Missouri, with partnership of the MHSSCO, will work to encourage Head Start programs to participate in Missouri's QAR development and pilot to determine barriers preventing Missouri programs from participating, including moving beyond initial interest/registration into the QAR to the training/technical assistance needed for better alignment.

While this process ensures the provider stakeholder voice is included in the needs assessment, there is also a need for families and community-at-large voices to be integrated into

the whole process. This input will be gleaned through Community Listening Sessions across the state, as well as via a public input media campaign. This qualitative input will be a critical component of vetting and validating the findings of the needs assessment as it is leveraged to inform the Strategic Plan. Listening sessions will be representative of urban, suburban and rural communities.

Finally, there are a multitude of disparate data sources within DESE that contain capacity and enrollment information for children participating in programming within their department, including Missouri First Steps (birth to age three, early intervention, IDEA Part C), and Missouri Preschool Program, and LEA programming (both funded through Foundation Formula Funding and local funding). Each of these sources will provide crucial data for the compiled comprehensive needs assessment and will enrich the overall picture of children currently being served in ECCE components in Missouri and the unmet needs that exist.

Vulnerable Populations

Missouri has disparate populations of vulnerable children, both underserved in high-density urban areas as well as in under-resourced rural communities. According to Missouri KIDS COUNT, supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 12 percent of infants are born preterm and 8.7 percent are low birthweight. Missouri KIDS COUNT uses birth outcomes, health insurance, vital statistics, dental health and other variables such as teen births, and a lack of or little prenatal care as indicators of health. In Missouri's public schools 51.2 percent of children qualify for free and reduced price lunch. Within the total percentage of children, 64 percent of rural Missouri children qualify for free and reduced price lunch in elementary schools. These indicators outline the general risk factors and social determinants of health affecting Missouri children. More specifically the state has outlined known gaps in ECCE access,

including those children above the 138 percent poverty line required for subsidy, those who live in child care deserts, etc. (See Section Three). The needs assessment will further quantify the capacity for quality child care for these children and for those underserved and awaiting care. This will allow Missouri to overlay already known statewide health and poverty indicators with ECCE availability indicators creating a comprehensive assessment of the state of ECCE.

To conduct the process of inventorying and synthesizing existing federally required and state assessments (See Table 1.1), DESE will contract with an entity within the state university system with expertise in data analysis. DESE has the ability to execute contracts quickly due to the delegation of authority to directly contract with state universities. DESE will engage with a resource within the state university system and together further define the scope, processes, and resources required.

The final phase of the needs assessment will include articulating and disseminating findings in a culturally competent and audience-specific manner. DESE will work with the contractor to produce a communication plan that effectively engages stakeholders across sectors and geographies.

Implementation and project management of Activity One will be led at the state by JoAnne Ralston, Coordinator of Early Learning, and the ECIT team (See Section Two). This team will be responsible for the oversight and execution of the contracted needs assessment. The needs assessment is estimated to occur within the first six months of the project period.

This team will also assume responsibility for ensuring the fidelity of the process and adherence to the scope with the knowledge that other STMO activities, particularly two and five, are dependent upon the timely and effective completion of Activity One. Evaluation will be

coordinated with the Lead Evaluator and Evaluation Advisory Committee, as described in Section Five.

Table 1.1 Existing Data Sources

<i>Data Source</i>	<i>Description</i>
DHSS, MIECHV Needs Assessment	Federally required
DHSS, Title V Needs Assessment	Federally required
DSS, CCDF State Plan	Federally required - derived from qualitative provider input
DSS, Missouri Children’s Division	Children in Out of Home Placement
DSS, Missouri Children’s Division	Number of families and children in which there was a finding of abuse or neglect.
DSS and Child Care Aware of Missouri, Child Care Capacity - license and license exempt	Self-reported enrollment
DHSS, Child Care Capacity - license and license exempt	Capacity determined at initial licensing study
DESE, Missouri Preschool Program	Enrollment data
DESE, Title I	Enrollment data
DESE, Foundation Formula Funded Pre-K	Enrollment data
DESE, First Steps	Enrollment data
DSS, Medicaid	Enrollment data
MHSSCO, Missouri Head Start, Program Information Report	State aggregate data on health outcomes, family services, work force, and capacity.
MHSSCO, Head Start Needs Assessment	Federally required - designed to analyze and address local HS agency collaboration and coordination needs.

Activity Two: Birth to Kindergarten Entry Statewide Strategic Plan

The state of Missouri has a robust strategic plan, last updated in 2015, whose creation and maintenance is statutorily assigned to the CBEC. This independent state council, housed in DSS but accountable to the Governor’s office, has the responsibility to review, revise, and measure the existing strategic plan. Key input to this updating process will be the needs assessment, stakeholder input gleaned from the QAR and stakeholder input from 20 regional facilitated strategic planning sessions and at the annual statewide Conference on the Young Years.

Missouri’s Early Childhood Strategic Plan

The current birth to kindergarten entry strategic plan considers governance and leadership, financial resources, quality assurance and accountability, public engagement to be key infrastructure components critical to the development of a comprehensive ECCE system and

integral to the achievement of desired outcomes for children. Each component has an associated goal.

The plan recognizes Missouri's system of ECCE programs and services as a group of interacting, interrelated and interdependent components that form a complex and unified whole. A primary purpose of this system is to promote school readiness among children, families, programs and communities. Desired outcomes for young children outlined in this section include: family support, parenting education, early childhood programs, health and mental health and social emotional development.

While each of the components outlined in the current strategic plan map to activities contained in this project, there exists a need to prioritize and measure the state's progress toward the individual short and long-term outcomes. The needs assessment will bring greater clarity to priorities for the highest need children and families. This project will allow Missouri to define high-priority, high-yield items necessary to building infrastructure and improving systems.

Implementing Improvements

In her dual roles as a member of CBEC and leader of STMO, JoAnne Ralston will serve as co-lead of the strategic planning process, along with the CBEC chair. This process will require the engagement of a contractor to design and facilitate listening sessions, lead the development of a statewide communication plan, synthesize qualitative and quantitative input, and assist CBEC with integrating all inputs.

The findings of the needs assessment will guide the prioritization of the plan objectives and goals. However, prior to its completion and concurrent with its administration, stakeholder input will be garnered on the current strategic plan, its contents, and perceived omissions or gaps

from community members. This qualitative input will be coupled with the findings of the needs assessment to guide the CBEC in their update of the Missouri's Early Childhood Strategic Plan.

Stakeholder Input

Twenty regional listening sessions will be conducted across the state, occurring in the same locations used in the needs assessment phase (See Activity One). Attendance will be solicited through utilization of partnering regional and statewide agencies' listserves, newsletters, and community events, as well as a social media campaign created through STMO. Statewide collaborating agencies include direct service providers, convening entities, and advocacy groups (See Section Two). While these sessions will be open to the public, the target audience will be families, caregivers, and ECCE providers.

With approximately 900,000 page views per month on Facebook, and 230,000 monthly Twitter impressions, DESE has a foundation which allows a large group of stakeholders to be reached through social media. Through a coordinated and targeted campaign geared at securing community attendance at regional sessions, who will aim to ensure attendance of providers, administrators, and family stakeholders. The digital campaign will serve dual purposes, as it will invite stakeholder participation in not only the listening sessions, but the QAR as well. This will ensure maximum engagement across sectors, as well as provide for additional data for the CBEC to consider and integrate in the strategic plan updating process.

DESE has a unique opportunity to engage provider and child serving stakeholders in early 2019 through its annual Conference on the Young Years (CYY). This conference regularly garners between 1,500-1,800 attendees including ECCE providers, administrators, academic faculty, advocacy leaders, home visitors and state department staff. CYY will leverage the ability to solicit facilitated input to the strategic planning process from all sectors of professional

stakeholders. DESE will use a half day of committed conference time to conduct these facilitated listening sessions with attendees.

CYY is the largest convening of home visiting programs in Missouri. For the past three years it has included an entire day of programming designed specifically for home visiting. CYY is the ideal setting in which to conduct listening sessions that include home visiting providers from across Missouri. Because mapping home visitation across the state is a crucial component of the needs assessment, this conference day offers the opportunity to verify quantitative understanding of quantitative data from the needs assessment, as well as glean qualitative input for the strategic plan. CBEC also houses a home visiting workgroup that will serve as the convergence of home visiting providers' quality improvement opportunities and best practice sharing. Stakeholder input from the QAR will also be leveraged and synthesized in the strategic planning process (See Section One for description of QAR).

Alignment of Updated Plan

With the needs assessment and a broad range of family and provider stakeholder input, DESE and CBEC will complete the task of updating the strategic plan's vision and outcomes to the current needs of Missouri's most vulnerable children. As this plan becomes aligned to the logic model and vision stated herein, it will continue to guide investment, activities, and policy creation for ECCE in Missouri. Priorities will be well-defined, measurable per the logic model, and implemented by DESE, DHSS, DMH, DSS, MHSSCO and collaborating agencies to ensure strategic investment in training, quality improvement, and systems that support and are necessary for children's successful growth and development.

Activity Three: Maximizing Parental Choice and Knowledge

The activities described in Activity Three are designed to maximize parental choice and knowledge so it is possible for families to make informed decisions. Special emphasis is given to activities that will maximize family involvement, engagement and increased knowledge of resources and programs. To ensure that there is equitable access to quality ECCE throughout Missouri, especially for low-income or disadvantaged families, focus will be on creating strategies that provide timely information in plain language that is easy-to-access for families and addresses known needs, including parent-to-parent information sharing, parental involvement in program planning, and transitions within and between ECCE programs and into kindergarten.

Parent-to-Parent Information Sharing

One of the key strengths of ECCE Missouri is the well-established relationship between various state agencies such as DESE, DHSS, DMH, DSS and MHSSCO. DESE will support maximizing parental choice and knowledge by leveraging these relationships to better use existing resources and facilitating collaboration and coordination among partners and providers. Building off of the successful Project LAUNCH program formerly funded by a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant, DESE will recommend CBEC reconvene the Family Engagement Workgroup to bring together these existing family leadership groups. The established groups include: the statewide Parent Advisory Council, State Interagency Coordinating Council, Head Start Family Leadership Council, Missouri Head Start Association Family Leadership Initiative, and CBEC. The primary function of the workgroup will be the application of the Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework to design solutions for better family engagement across the ECCE and social service systems. The

workgroup will make recommendations that yield integrated family-friendly approaches, institutionalize family engagement and remove barriers. Information from the needs assessment (See Activity One) will guide the workgroup.

Parent-to-parent information sharing will be emphasized through the utilization of Parent Cafés, a parent-driven best practice model that was previously instituted in regions across the state under Project LAUNCH and the Children’s Trust Fund (CTF). The Parent Café trains parents to facilitate group conversations that encourage parental connections and involvement. Missouri has established an initial group of trainers and will expand this to establish a regional network of certified trainers. Programs are currently offered on a limited basis by MHSSCO and DSS. DESE will collaborate with these programs to ensure fidelity to the high standards of the model and to fund further expansion into regions of the state currently without the model.

To meet the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and their families, STMO will collaborate with State’s early intervention system, Missouri First Steps. This will ensure infants and young children who are developmentally disabled have equitable access to high-quality, inclusive ECCE. STMO will connect with families providing them with the resources and information they need to be a full partner in decision making around their child’s ECCE. STMO will provide strategies for Parents as Teachers (PAT) programs to serve children that do not qualify for Missouri First Steps. The strength of existing partnerships between agencies will aid in providing rapid access to information, resources and referrals in order to empower families in making timely choices about ECCE.

Parental Involvement in Program Planning

To ensure that families are being engaged in a linguistically and culturally sensitive way, all communication materials, including hard copy and online formats, will be written using the

Federal Plain Language Guidelines. A family engagement web page with interactive tools will be linked to the QAR system, which will enable families to have access to existing programs, resources and opportunities for engagement with other families. STMO will promote to families through multiple channels how ECCE programs can support child development and working families and share the expectations for school readiness as defined by DESE.

In order to more fully involve families for whom English is a second language, the Language Use Survey (LUS) will be distributed to preschool families in public schools during year one of this project. Data from the survey will be used to inform planning. The expansion of the LUS advances DESE's capacity to address the needs of all families in Missouri, especially those for which access to quality ECCE programs is limited. STMO will use results from the LUS to determine an appropriate screening tool for preschools.

Home visiting is a powerful tool for working with families and an important resource for disseminating timely, accurate information to the families with which home visitors work. A key piece in helping families transition from one educational program to the next, home visiting will also be used by DESE to increase family engagement and empowerment.

While Missouri has several well-established home visiting programs, such as Early Head Start, Parents as Teachers (PAT), Building Blocks, and Nurse Family Partnerships, increased collaboration and communication would benefit the provision of services to families in Missouri. For example, no comprehensive referral resource exists that includes all major home visiting programs. As part of the Needs Assessment (See Activity One), STMO will initiate a project to map all major home visiting programs in Missouri and develop recommendations that minimize service duplication and expand statewide capacity for family engagement via home visits. By establishing enhanced collaboration between home visiting programs supported by multiple state

agencies, as well as private foundations and regional non-profits, STMO will be able to leverage state and federal investments across DESE, DHSS, DSS and MHSSCO to realize efficiencies and fill gaps in services.

STMO and its partners will coordinate efforts around home visit quality assurance and how home visitors emphasize and support parental access and choice. With the current focus of home visiting programs serving vulnerable communities, the STMO strategy emphasizes delivering a culturally and linguistically sensitive approach to share timely and reliable information about the variety, quality, access, and affordability of ECCE across Missouri.

Transitions within and between ECCE Programs into Kindergarten

Parents as Teachers (PAT) is a key component in supporting the transition process for children from prekindergarten to kindergarten. In Missouri, PAT often serves as the initial entrance for families into their local school system. Guided by the PFCE Framework, DESE will expand a transition program to focus on younger children who are transitioning from infant care to toddler care and toddlers into preschool programs as well. A joint venture between PAT and MHSSCO will guide this expansion.

Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework

PFCE Framework will be used extensively by DESE to guide collaboration with families and programs, staff, and community service providers across multiple initiatives. As a systems-thinking approach to change management, PFCE Framework specifies how components of multiple systems work together to promote family engagement including infrastructure and funding, continuous learning, workforce and professional development, and consumer education and engagement. It defines important drivers for these outcomes across the entire ECCE field, including equity, inclusiveness, cultural and linguistic responsiveness. DESE will tailor the

framework for Missouri by designing and promoting a visual representation of PFCE Framework that communicates the importance and strength of system alignment to advance ECCE program providers, with a clear emphasis on families making informed choices and ongoing engagement of families across the system.

Activity Four: Sharing Best Practices

DESE will share best practices which link to areas identified in the needs assessment across many program areas throughout the state. This need-driven approach seeks to reduce duplication of effort and better use limited resources by building collaboration between government agencies, providers and community based organizations. DESE is well-positioned to achieve implementation of best practices by building upon strong, established inter-agency collaborations present through the leadership of the MHSSCO. MHSSCO has been serving as the link between state agencies and regional and community-based organizations since 1997.

Unique Identifier

DESE will undertake a unique identifier pilot program to match the Department Client Number (DCN) with the Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS) number using a probabilistic match analysis that will provide a blueprint for developing trend data. In doing this, DESE will identify the number of children who are either in existing programs or who are awaiting services without duplication. This identifier will help Missouri make connections between resources and areas of greatest need. Additionally, the unique identifier permits new levels of evaluation regarding impact of quality ECCE programming on academic performance over time, such as test scores, attendance, graduation rates, and more. Over time the collaboration between state agencies enables more efficient alignment of resources, coordinates promotion of best practices, and lays a solid foundation for sustainable statewide system.

Quality Assurance Report

The development of the Quality Assurance Report (QAR) system, based on existing state quality rating and improvement systems, presents a unique opportunity for Missouri to create systems to increase family engagement and empowerment. QAR will put new information in the hands of families that will enable informed decision-making and stimulate providers to respond to family expectations. Moreover, QAR will guide investments in professional development, on-going learning and technical assistance programs throughout the state by focusing on skills and policies that will elevate the quality scores of the program. It is expected that QAR will drive new collaborations between various State agencies and partners. The QAR pilot will encourage continuous quality improvement of Missouri's ECCE programs, reduce duplication of effort, and increase efficiency by providing a central location for policies, procedures, assessments, and regulations relevant to multiple state agencies. A key feature of QAR is the explicit reduction in competing or conflicting policies promoted by multiple state agencies. Missouri has worked wisely in the past to minimize such problems for ECCE program providers, but QAR substantially advances this collaboration.

One of the cornerstone elements of the pilot will be family and community engagement, identifying how ECCE programs inform and interact with families about the program and the children's daily experiences as well as providing education about meaningful ways for families to use their expertise as the child's first teacher. The QAR will also provide families with information about ECCE programs that will increase their consumer literacy, knowledge and empowerment. STMO funding will be used to strengthen DESE's QAR efforts to better recognize and promote the unique developmental needs of infants and toddlers, communicate with families regarding routines such as the assignment of primary caregivers and continuity of

care and partnerships with the state IDEA, Part C. DESE expects the QAR system will house many of the programs and resources described in Activities Three and Four, such as resources on the Family Engagement Workgroup, policy and procedures for supporting children and families during transitions within and out of their programs, information on social gatherings like the Parent Cafés, and professional development and technical assistance resources. Decision-making about identification of key features of the QAR system will be based on needs assessment information and the final strategic plan.

Family Engagement

To promote continuity of the Parent Café model implemented under Project LAUNCH, DESE will form a collaboration of the various programs currently utilizing this best practices model, including MHSCCO and local areas who are currently sustaining the project. This collaboration will allow for the expansion of opportunities for ECCE providers, families and programs to take part in the training while also reducing duplication of effort and increasing efficiency and program quality. Additionally, sharing best practices around the Parent Café model will expand the reach of the program and will enable DESE to offer statewide technical assistance to local community based organizations. A cadre of certified trainers is already established, and they will implement the two-day training to interested organizations and groups throughout the state. Each training group requires a greater number of parent trainees versus practitioners, thus perpetuating the best practice of having parent facilitators lead all Parent Café events. The training includes a half-day on the Protective Factors Framework, the Strong Parents, Strong Children model used by the CTF.

Trauma Training

Trauma can have long term consequences on childhood development and can disproportionately affect vulnerable populations such as the economically disadvantaged, racial or ethnic minorities, or the developmentally disabled. There have been multiple collaborative efforts in Missouri in recent years to more fully integrate trauma awareness training into ECCE programs and providers, health departments and non-profits. STMO will allocate funding to expand coordination of these efforts into a statewide trauma learning collaborative which will implement best practices tailored for the ECCE setting. For example, DESE will collaborate with DSS to advance the Trauma Smart model, which was developed by Crittenton Children's Center of St. Luke's Health System in Kansas City, Missouri. The model is built upon evidence recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network to be effective in helping children and the adults who care for them address the negative impact of early exposure to violence and trauma. The heart of the model employs classroom coaching and individualized trauma-focused intervention. Trauma Smart initially supported training in preschools and later expanded to elementary schools. Under the current funding opportunity, DESE will work with DSS to expand Trauma Smart in the direction of younger children and their providers and families.

In addition to the work of DSS, MHSSCO worked with Missouri Head Start Association (MHSA) and DMH to host a trauma learning collaborative in 2017. Seven teams from Missouri programs participated in the 18 month program offered under the leadership of DMH and Head Start using the Missouri Model to guide programs toward recognition as *trauma-informed*. The initial two-day training provided core information such as the impact trauma has on brain development and functioning, how to create relationships that are the basis for supporting self-

regulation, supporting staff, and how to examine policies and practices from the trauma-sensitive lens. Each organization developed a 90-day plan to guide their work and monthly webinar dialogues were held to continue the learning and focus on practical implementation strategies.

Participating programs in Pettis County, Missouri convened a roundtable discussion regarding trauma with community members. This convening resulted in a new shared understanding of trauma and its impact and assisted in a coordinated effort among partners to mitigate effects of trauma. The learning collaborative and the Pettis County experience will serve as the model for expansion of trauma-informed programming across Missouri, including training, technical assistance, and community discussion facilitation needs.

With support from Head Start and DMH, DESE will invite Missouri programs that participated in the Head Start trauma learning collaborative to implement the Trauma Smart for young children. These sites will serve as a pilot program for scaling the Trauma Smart program to hundreds of school districts across Missouri. Successful components of the learning collaborative, such as the Pettis County roundtable, will also be implemented to more fully involve families and communities in the planning and training efforts.

Workforce

Developing a strong, connected and educated ECCE workforce is a priority for DESE and its partners. Families' need for infant/toddler care currently exceeds the supply, and this problem is magnified in rural areas and during non-traditional working hours, limiting parental choice. Missouri, like other states, struggle with a shortage of available infant/toddler care, with 20,426 spaces for this age group in licensed and licensed-exempt care. While there are a number of factors that come into play, ensuring the infant/toddler caregivers have the skills and knowledge needed to provide quality care is a critical piece, as children's brain development is

most rapid in the first three years of life. STMO therefore sees this as an area of opportunity with the potential for strong impact and will be intentional in leveraging PDG B-5 funding to support this population in acquiring educational qualifications and competencies that will increase the overall quantity and quality of the workforce. This support will be accomplished in a variety of ways:

1. Developing a Missouri Career Lattice for ECCE will help to visualize the diverse careers available to ECCE workforce in Missouri. The Career Lattice is seen as being more innovative and applicable to today's changing workforce than the traditional Career Ladder framework. The Career Lattice framework allows for visualization of lateral and diagonal career progression, mirroring the flexibility, versatility and customization required in the modern workforce.
2. With funding support from STMO, DSS will provide funding for ECCE personnel to complete a Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate. The CDA scholarship program, funded through the CCDF, will place a specific emphasis on infant/toddler teachers. The CDA scholarship program provides opportunities for providers to increase quality ECCE facilities by enabling ECCE personnel to gain educational qualifications.
3. The T.E.A.C.H. Missouri (Teacher Education And Compensation Helps) educational scholarship program, which was previously funded by the Missouri Preschool Program, is well-established and widely-recognized in Missouri. This scholarship is part of a nationwide effort to increase quality in ECCE by increasing the educational qualifications of teachers in the field. Missouri is one of 25 states offering this program. The strong infrastructure can quickly increase the number of infant-toddler

teachers working towards program accreditation. T.E.A.C.H. Missouri scholarships will be used to support early learning professionals as they move through the higher education system.

Activity Five: Improving Overall Quality

Timeline and Process

The needs assessment and strategic planning process is scheduled for completion by month nine of the grant period. Activity Five will begin thereafter and last for three months. Proposed activities described herein are based on DESE's knowledge and assessment of current needs; information from the needs assessment, including findings from the QAR pilot program, will inform further development of specific actions occurring under Activity Five. Planning and preparation during months one through nine will allow DESE to initiate its quality improvement activities promptly at Month Nine.

Without having conducted a comprehensive needs assessment, improving ECCE quality in the state requires a multipronged approach with creative strategies that build upon strengths and maximize funding. At this time, the logic model and timeline point to state-identified priority areas for quality improvement based on current knowledge with each quality improvement activity described in further detail below.

Training and Professional Development

In ECCE, professional development is a critical contributor to building capacity for quality improvements across the system. New or expanded professional development programming, aligned with identified needs, will be introduced by month ten using the Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals (Kansas and Missouri) as a foundation. Missouri is building upon a solid infrastructure of professional development

opportunities supported by DSS through the CCDF State Plan. The CCDF State Plan currently includes health and safety training, social-emotional, and behavioral health training. Initiatives already planned to begin in FFY20 include infant toddler specialist network, mental health consultation and trauma training for the ECCE workforce. To build upon state training, CCDF discretionary funds will be used to support individuals employed in ECCE facilities or individual ECCE providers receiving child care subsidy in completing a Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate to increase the skill level of educators in the classroom. Additionally, in an effort to offer CCDF required training at no cost, DSS will continue to partner with Local Public Health Departments, who currently contract with DHSS to provide public health training for ECCE providers, to offer First Aid and CPR training to ECCE providers contracted or registered to receive subsidy payments to ensure accessibility to lifesaving training and techniques. Finally, as a part of professional development, Missouri will work to distribute the birth to kindergarten entry early guidelines, Missouri Early Learning Goals, in order to increase awareness across ECCE programs regarding best practices to ensure children are ready and able to succeed in their educational environment.

Family Engagement and QAR

As an additional quality improvement approach, DESE anticipates launching a strategy to improve the quality and authenticity of family engagement. The approach will be built upon meaningful involvement and engagement of families and a highly-participative, inquiry-based method to cultivate solutions from ECCE teachers, administrators, and families. The approach will encourage development and testing of new, innovative strategies and supports for family engagement, including use of the QAR information and a focus on building partnerships between families and ECCE providers.

The QAR pilot will provide rich information about ECCE programs across the state. DESE will use this information to prioritize those providers prime for technical assistance and professional development opportunities. A plan for scaling up technical assistance will be developed to meet the needs of the lowest quartile of providers.

The state will also focus on obtaining data from the QAR pilot, at which time programs will have the opportunity to present their assessment information, along with the program's continuous quality improvement plan, to families, prior to DESE publicly disseminating this information. Program assessments will help identify additional areas of knowledge and support indicated for staff and administration in the areas of leadership, program management, implementation of authentic assessment for young children, or use of formative assessments to develop learning opportunity plans for individual children and the class as a whole. Program and individual staff technical assistance and/or coaching will be made available for these needs.

Alignment with CCDF

In order for quality improvement efforts to be successful, Missouri will work to strategically use funding around aligned priorities. For example, the budget for the DSS CCDF State Plan submitted for 2019-2021 includes quality programming that is aligned with the goals of STMO. A portion of the CCDF funding is focused on improving the professional development framework for the ECCE workforce. To improve the quality and reduce the cost of training for ECCE providers, DSS will be investing in quality online trainings for ECCE providers and their employees in specific areas of health and safety. In order to provide the required training at no cost, funding has been allocated to purchase a minimum of 30 online, on-demand, interactive trainings that include pre- and post-test and a user survey. The trainings will

be placed on the Missouri Workshop Calendar that currently houses professional development trainings for ECCE providers.

The CCDF Reauthorization Act of 2014 promotes improving the quality of ECCE services. ECCE facilities that are accredited provide a higher quality of ECCE services by requiring specific educational levels for staff and utilizing a proven curriculum for all ages. DSS will be supporting CCDF providers interested in pursuing accreditation for the first time by offering one-time funding to support programs through the accreditation process.

SECTION TWO: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND MANAGEMENT

With the recent addition of prekindergarten funding to Missouri's foundation formula for school districts and charter schools, the explicit support of the Governor for investment in ECCE infrastructure and resources, and the robust focus on infant and toddler care and home visiting across the state, Missouri and its state agencies are well-prepared and suited for an influx of funding to expand out critical systemic supports to ECCE across the state.

Lead Applicant

DESE

As the lead applicant, DESE will serve as the agency overseeing the work outlined herein. Jo Anne Ralston, Early Learning Coordinator, will serve as project lead. With 35 years of experience in education and child services, Jo Anne began her career as an educator in Waynesville, Missouri, and has served the state of Missouri for the past 21 years, both within DHSS and now DESE, focused on early childhood learning. Previously the Director of Curriculum for Early Learning, Ms. Ralston has led the Early Learning Section at DESE for the

past four years, and oversees all programming including MPP, PAT and efforts around prekindergarten expansion at the state and local level.

Complementing Jo Anne at DESE is Michael Harris, Senior Policy Advisor. Serving as liaison between the Department, the Governor's office and the state legislature, and responsible for advising the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education, and the executive leadership team on legislative and budget proposals impacting the Department. Michael's leadership role in DESE has been key to the strong support of early childhood initiatives from the Governor's office, as well as legislative support key to the influx of newly appropriated foundation formula funding.

Inter-agency Support

ECIT

A primary team responsible for oversight and implementation of key activities, most essentially Activity One, and under the leadership of Ms. Ralston, is the Early Childhood Interagency Team (ECIT). This ad hoc group was originally convened in 1996 when the Kaufmann Foundation in Kansas City, Missouri and the Danforth Foundation in St. Louis, Missouri pooled funding to bring disparate state agencies together in an effort to decrease inefficiencies and fragmentation. The statewide and interagency investment and collaboration integral to the formation of this team remains core strength in their work today. When Missouri Preschool Program (MPP) was established in statute in 1998, this team led the process and implementation, and then disbanded briefly following that time. The team voluntarily reconvened in 2015, recognizing fragmentation was inhibiting the ability to move ECCE forward, particularly with the statutory prohibition on developing a quality rating system that existed from 2012-2016. With the charge to uphold and implement the core competencies for

early childhood, ECIT permits collaboration across strategies that affect whole child health. One example includes an opportunity that DHSS has to provide input on CCDF trainings administered by DSS-including trauma informed training and Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC), a certificate curriculum for geared to subsidy providers to ensure they meet training approval requirements for participants. ECIT members also collaborate deeply on awareness and messaging campaigns coming from the state to ensure consistent communication to constituents. Current membership of ECIT includes the following members: Jo Anne Ralston, Early Learning Coordinator-DESE; Cindy Burks, Program Administrator, Early Childhood Section-DSS; Sue Porting, Section Administrator, Section for Child Care Regulation-DHSS; Dr. Sharmini Rogers, Administrator, Section for Healthy Families and Youth-DHSS; Dr. Laine Young Walker, Chief Medical Director, Children's Services-DMH and Stacey Wright, Director-Missouri Head Start State Collaboration Office.

DSS

In addition to their role on the ECIT, DSS will be a key partner in all activities in STMO. As the Lead Agency of the federal CCDF, DSS maintains and updates the CCDF State Plan, as well as all programming and training for core competencies administered under these funds. While this department has not conducted a comprehensive needs assessment, they do maintain data for children served through child care subsidy, abuse and neglect, licensed and license exempt capacity, and Medicaid data, as Missouri Medicaid is housed at DSS. Program Administrator for Early Childhood Section, and ECIT member, Cindy Burks has a 20 year history at DSS, serving as the primary administrator for CCDF funds, as well as for the required community input sessions and associated State Plan produced every three years.

DHSS

Another integral state agency is the DHSS, who is responsible for all child care and early childhood education licensing (See Section Three), as well as administration of MIECHV and Title V federal dollars. The integration of the expertise of Sue Porting regarding regulation and Dr. Sharmini Rogers regarding maternal and child health will inform all activities herein. Their role on the ECIT team will ensure collaboration from DHSS on the needs assessment and strategic planning processes, and their proximity to providers and families ensures the capacity of this interagency team to support Activities Three, Four and Five. Dr. Rogers' vast knowledge of the home visiting landscape, as well as her responsibilities for the federal MIECHV and Title V needs assessments, will permit STMO activities to be aligned to and supported by these contiguous programs. Additionally, DHSS serves as the home agency for all Local Public Health Departments (LPHD) around the state, and their accompanying WIC clinics and programming. This collaboration affords Missouri the opportunity to leverage these LPHDs in all 114 counties as an additional resource for information dissemination and stakeholder input.

DMH

DMH has been an integral partner in ECCE, as the agency who developed the social-emotional training for providers currently administered by DSS and funded through CCDF. They will continue to lead efforts around increased access to trauma training across the state as the need is further identified and addressed through this project.

Missouri Head Start State Collaboration Office

MHSSCO serves a partner critical to Missouri's mission to increase family engagement, education, voice, and choice. Director Stacey Wright leads this office for the past 13 years and has served Head Start since 1997. Ms. Wright's expertise in building early childhood systems

and increasing access to comprehensive services and support for children from low income families, from birth through elementary school, will provide Missouri not only depth of experience but a critical link to all Head Start programming across the state. As recognized leaders in family engagement, cultural competency, and transitions, Head Start is an invaluable partner to the STMO initiative.

CBEC

Finally, the CBEC is a statutorily-established, independent, and diverse state board charged with reviewing and advising the state of Missouri on ECCE. They are responsible for writing and maintaining the state's Strategic Plan. CBEC is also designated as the State Advisory Council per the 2007 Head Start requirement. This board provides an ideally suited, funded and respected body to support and implement the STMO activities. Membership includes but is not limited to the following members: a representative from the governor's office; a representative from each of the following departments: Health and Senior Services, Mental Health, Social Services, and Elementary and Secondary Education; a representative of the judiciary; a representative of the family and community trust board (FACT); a representative from the Head Start program; nine members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate who are representatives of the groups, such as business, philanthropy, civic groups, faith-based organizations, parent groups, advocacy organizations, early childhood service providers, and other stakeholders.

Other statewide child serving agencies previously engaged in the application process and critical to implementation of SSMO can be found in table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Statewide Child Serving Agencies

<i>Statewide Child serving Agencies</i>	<i>Focus Area</i>
Ozarks Area Community Action Corporation	Non-profit, poverty focus
Missouri Head Start Association	HS collaborative agency
University of Missouri	State University
Turn the Page KC	Non-profit, literacy focus
University of Missouri-Kansas City	State University
United 4 Children	Non-profit, ECCE focus
Parents as Teachers National Center	Non-profit, PAT headquarters
LUME Institute	Non-profit, ECCE training focus, St. Louis based

SECTION THREE: STATE BIRTH TO KINDERGARTEN ENTRY MIXED DELIVERY SYSTEM DESCRIPTION AND VISION

The Landscape of Missouri’s Early Childhood Educational System

The current landscape of ECCE in Missouri’s mixed delivery system varies between and within the three state assigned categories of licensed, license exempt and exempt centers.

Table 3.1 Licensing Type

<i>Licensing Type</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Licensed	Family Child Care Home: child care program where care is given by a person licensed as a family day care home provider to no more than 10 children not related to the provider for any part of the 24 hour day
	Group Child Care Home: child care program where care is given by a person licensed as a group day care home provider for eleven but not more than 20 children not related to the child care provider;
	Child Care Center: a child care program which is defined as being conducted in a location other than the provider’s permanent residence, or separate from the provider’s living quarters, where care is provided for children not related to the child care provider for any part of the 24 hour day
License Exempt	Child care program that is not required by statute to be licensed, but is required to be inspected pursuant to Missouri (MO) statute which include nursery schools and child care programs operated by a religious organization
Exempt	Programs that qualify for a statutory exemption for licensure and are not required to be inspected or regulated. These include: an individual providing care to four or fewer children who are not related to them, a school system that operates a child care program, a business that provides care as a convenience for its customers or employees for no more than 4 hour per day, a summer camp, any private or religious organization elementary or secondary school, and religious organization academic preschool or kindergarten

Missouri boasts a diverse range of state and nationally accredited ECCE centers both in the private and public setting. DESE values the diverse teaching philosophies of ECCE and

recognizes multiple accrediting bodies to allow ECCE programs alignment between indicators and program mission. Missouri Accreditation of Programs for Children and Youth (MOA) is the state's most prominent accreditor. MOA holds early ECCE facilities to standards around health, safety and quality and allows for both license exempt and exempt programs to be accredited.

Oftentimes, accredited settings have the capacity to support the unique needs for the holistic

Vision:

Provide all infants, toddlers and preschool aged children in Missouri equitable access to an early childhood education system where all children are safe, healthy, empowered, and supported to reach their full potential.

healthy growth of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. These programs can ensure school readiness and create strong foundations both developmentally and emotionally for children and families

with continued success in the educational system and create positive experiences for caregivers.

However; this opportunity is not afforded equally to all children. At a given time, there are approximately 290,000 children eligible for ECCE in the state and there is only the capacity to serve 172,000 or about half of those infants and toddlers in our licensed and licensed exempt facilities. Enrollment data validated by DESE shows that 47,045 children receive ECCE programming through DESE. This data is limited, as the licensing status of the programming is unknown. Without having conducted a formal birth to kindergarten entry needs assessment, it is unknown how many of the 172,000 children use stay-at-home caregivers or the extent to which licensed ECCE shortage impacts Missouri families. However, current data has demonstrated that Missouri suffers from ECCE deserts and due to the limited number of affordable options; families will use providers that do not have ECCE or are substandard with regard to health and safety. Research has also demonstrated ECCE is the backbone for a thriving state and economy as it allows our workers to work and children to be educated, which is why our vision focuses on

providing all young children equitable access to quality ECCE. To carry out this vision a keener understanding of the landscape will be obtained through assessment. Linkages between all ECCE programs that focus on quality of programs and workforce will be enhanced or developed. Through those linkages best practices will be shared and quality improvement will be fostered, and Missouri will ensure family education and choice is centered in this system.

Table 3.2 Overview of Missouri Funding Sources

<i>State</i>	<i>Federal</i>	<i>Foundation and Local</i>
Missouri Preschool Program (MPP) (State dollars from tobacco settlement)	Title I (can be used for preschool-ESSA)	Private Foundations
Foundation Formula (appropriated by legislature, public school foundation formula funding)	Head Start Federal Funding (ACF-OHS)	Saint Louis City Public Schools-using property tax
ECCE Special Education Funds (IDEA, Part C B-3)	ECCE Special Education Funds (IDEA, Part C B-3)	Children’s Services Fund (publically funded regional sources, STL, KC, Columbia)
ECCE Special Education Funds (IDEA, Part B 3-21)	ECCE Special Education Funds (IDEA, Part B 3-21)	
Parents as Teachers (foundation formula & tobacco settlement funds)	EHS Federal (ADF-OHS)	
Children’s Trust Fund (dedicated funding from state license fees and tax)	EHS/CC Partnership (ACF, OHS)	
Early Head Start through DSS: mix of federal and state funds	MIECHV, HHS	
Subsidy from DSS: mix of federal and state Child Care Subsidy for low income families	Title V (Maternal Child Block Grant, HHS)	
	Early Head Start through DSS: mix of federal and state funds	
	Subsidy from DSS: mix of federal and state Child Care Subsidy for low income families	

While all funding sources ensure the success of ECCE in Missouri, the 2018-2019 school year, was the first year that all districts and charter schools were able to claim a portion of their prekindergarten students in the Foundation Formulation, enabling programs to be better equipped for supporting high risk kids.

Strategies for Leveraging Missouri Resources

To be a national leader in ECCE, having families, partners, and community stakeholders at the table are essential to creating a sustainable and equitable ECCE system. DESE will leverage our community in a variety of ways to ensure that diverse voices and opinions will be incorporated. Missouri has laid the ground work in a variety of ways to start engaging with these stakeholders, first with the creation of the QAR three year pilot. The pilot program, established in statute for DESE in collaboration with MHSSCO, DHSS, DMH, DSS, aims to create a voluntary early learning quality assurance report developed based on evidence-based practices. This QAR is voluntary for all early learning providers that are center-based or home-based and are providing services for children from any ages from birth to kindergarten, and will include information regarding staff qualifications, instructional quality, professional development, health and safety standards, parent engagement, and community engagement. (See Section One)

DESE in collaboration with MHSSCO and other ECIT members are currently in the process of executing a State-level Memorandum of Understand (MOU) focused on partnerships with early intervention, special education and MHSSCO with the explicit focus on the development of local agreements that are tailored to meet the unique needs of programs, necessary partnerships, and the values shared by of each collaborator. DESE and collaborators have intentionally left room to create other focus areas and from there communities and local needs can be identified in order to execute the vision.

CBEC will revise the Strategic Plan in conjunction with the Early Childhood Comprehensive Services group which includes local teams of stakeholders. Section One, Activity One details how the needs assessment will be informing the revisions of the Strategic Plan. Further outreach will be conducted by hosting regional focus groups in order to gather additional input (See Section One, Activity Two).

Increasing Collaboration with Birth to Kindergarten Entry Funding

STMO will allow the state to convene the appropriate stakeholders at various phases in order to build upon our strengths, increase collaboration, and share best-practices of our state priorities as well the priorities of quality, coordination, alignment, efficiency, and transitions. This will be done in an effort to reduce duplicity and create a leading efficient ECCE program in Missouri, ultimately increasing access, fostering more equitable outcomes, while informing families' choices of quality ECCE. There will be multiple entry points soliciting family and provider feedback during this process (See Sections One and Two), and throughout the qualitative input phase the state will be focusing on opportunities for improvement in quality, coordination, alignment, efficiency of programs and improved transitions. With the first ever comprehensive needs assessment, Missouri will have the opportunity to refine and measure their strategic plan in way that not only captures stakeholder voice, but identifies and quantifies the most vulnerable populations across the state. Key collaborations across state agencies, as well as with child serving non-profits and community partners will be leveraged to ensure maximum participation of the community.

Aligning for Improved Outcomes

Statewide, known gaps include a birth to kindergarten entry needs assessment as well as an established QAR. Even without these tools, there are known gaps in Missouri for children birth to kindergarten entry especially children that: have a demonstrated developmental delay (short of the enrollment eligibility for First Steps), are over 138 percent of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL), are Medicaid and or CHIP members, are eligible for Medicaid but have not received Early Periodic Screening Diagnosis Treatment (EPSDT), live in child care deserts or areas

where there are not sufficient child care centers, receive free and reduced price lunch, and face geographic challenges in rural, urban, and suburban settings.

Additionally, the state faces various alignment issues that are a result of disparate quality definitions and multiple funding and accreditation streams mentioned above. With varying standards and program requirements, educators may find themselves accommodating a variety of oftentimes redundant monitoring sessions. The state will obtain a better understanding of Missouri's urgent ECCE issues with a two pronged approach by way of a statewide needs assessment with an analysis of funding requirements as well as the implementation of a QAR pilot. These two instruments will allow Missouri to effectively and sustainably address each of these gaps as well as uncover unknown gaps that currently exist.

Missouri's Need for Comprehensive Data

Missouri currently uses a variety of needs assessments, but none that are comprehensive. Due to lack of information, only upon the completion of the needs assessment can DESE and partners begin to prioritize populations. As mentioned above in Section One, Activity One, current gaps are evident, but the needs assessment will allow us to prioritize and plan effectively and efficiently for the most sustainable outcomes. (See Section Six).

SECTION FOUR: TIMELINE

Project Task		DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Revise Needs Assessment														
	Contract with state university system													
	Analyze, synthesize, develop measures for the needs assessment with ECIT													
	Determine what new data elements are needed													
	Host Community Listening Sessions statewide to provide input to the needs assessment													
	Analyze data from the needs assessment to inform the strategic planning process													
	Disseminate information to stakeholders													
Develop Strategic Plan														
	Contract with state university system													
	Review needs assessment results													
	Facilitate regional strategic planning sessions													
	Revise strategic plan													
Maximize Parental Choice and Knowledge														
	Host Family Leadership training and workgroups													
	Train Parent Café facilitators													
	Conduct statewide Parent Cafés													
	Collaborate with home visiting groups to create innovative service delivery													
	Administer Parent Language Use Surveys													
Share Best Practices														
	Implement a QAR database													
	Complete reliability training for ECERS and CLASS assessors													
	Create improvement strategies for programs in QAR pilot													
	Pilot probabilistic matching identifiers													
	Select and train early childhood professionals in the Missouri Model trauma training													
	Provide tiered trauma training													
	Contract with state university system to develop career lattice with stakeholder input													

Project Task		DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
	Host group facilitation of career lattice development													
	Contract with TEACH Missouri for TEACH scholarships													
Improve Overall Quality														
	Provide technical assistance to programs in QAR pilot													
Program Performance Evaluation														
	Contract with state university system													
	Conduct program performance evaluation													
	Create and print social media campaigns													

SECTION FIVE: PROGRAM PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PLAN

While evaluation is a distinct strength of DESE, DESE is tapping expertise and experience of nationally-known evaluation leaders and researchers who are affiliated with universities, early childhood non-profit organizations and other government agencies in Missouri. The proposed process for evaluation planning provides DESE and its partners with clear, feasible metrics to assess progress toward strategic goals in all five activity areas, feedback from parents and families, and information to enhance the organizational capacity of the mixed delivery system. DESE is committed to using some of the best practices from the field of dissemination and improvement science to feed evaluation results into statewide program planning and elevate provider-level quality. DESE's long-term goal is to earn Missouri a national reputation for the use of continuous quality improvement methods as a force for driving innovation and accelerating adoption of evidence-based practices across ECCE programs.

Key Management Roles

Angie Riner-Mooney, DESE Coordinator of Business Systems, will serve as Lead Evaluator for DESE. She is a skilled data manager and analyst, handling multiple streams of data across many inter-governmental platforms as part of her daily duties. A research analyst from DHSS will provide support for data synthesis, analysis and reporting; a data coordinator from DSS will support data collection efforts. As the Lead Evaluator, Ms. Mooney will oversee the evaluation process and coordinate performance measure reporting. She will also manage the contracted professional services provided by evaluation consultants, delegating duties to assure timely completion of all evaluation activities.

Consultants

DESE has identified three groups as key partners for professional evaluation services. DESE's affiliation with all groups enables engagement of highly-qualified and dedicated people in the design of rigorous evaluation across many settings, including education providers, multi-stakeholder coalitions, and government agencies. All groups are affiliated with Missouri public universities which permit cost-based contracting per inter-governmental agency procurement policies. Locating evaluation capacity across the state (St. Louis, Columbia and Kansas City) expands DESE's access to methodological expertise and technical assistance for data collection, sampling, measurement, and analysis.

- *University of Missouri – St. Louis: Center for Policy and Program Evaluation* (CPPE) is an interdisciplinary group of researchers and evaluators affiliated with the graduate program in Public Policy Administration. Faculty and staff conduct and share research on early childhood education programs, public housing, educational system collaboration, health promotion, and more. CPPE staff has led data collection, scrubbing, analysis and reporting across many evaluation projects. CPPE is led by Mark Travel, PhD.
- *University of Missouri – Kansas City: Berkley Child and Family Development Center* works collaboratively with local and statewide organizations to provide technical assistance and program evaluation support. Faculty and staff at Berkley bring to this project specific expertise in early childhood education curriculum, parent/family engagement, and workforce development. Berkley is led by Polly Prendergast, MA.
- *Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis (OSED) at the University of Missouri – Columbia* employs a team of specialized statisticians and data scientists to support academic and program evaluation projects in Missouri and other states. OSED

manages a data warehouse of all pharmacy, medical, hospital and dental claims for Medicaid (aka, MOHealthNet), a powerful data asset for analyzing health status and needs of young children. OSEDA operates under the direction of Wayne Mayfield, PhD, a counseling psychologist with substantial experience in early childhood programming. Dr. Mayfield co-authored the *Kansas City Pre-K Landscape Study* (December 2016).

Data Management

DESE will collect and manage data that permits timely reporting of performance outcomes. The Lead Evaluator will prepare a *Data Management Plan* that addresses each metric for process, cost and program implementation reporting. DESE will use a secure, cloud-based system for collecting and storing data gathered from surveys, interviews/focus groups, provider site visits, database extractions (e.g., license directories) and other sources.

Navigating Obstacles

The Lead Evaluator will host weekly conference calls with project leadership to describe obstacles and propose solutions to improve successful implementation of the program performance evaluation plan. The weekly conference calls will also share wins and provide positive reinforcement to project partners. By using a web-based project management system, the Lead Evaluator facilitates open communication about obstacles across many stakeholders and reduces cycle time for change. This systematic approach to barrier identification is an important tool for mitigating a variety of project risks, especially data availability and quality.

Metrics to Examine Process, Cost and Program Implementation Reporting

DESE is prepared to complete required reporting of performance under the grant six months or less after the funding period ends. Per the FOA, there are eight required areas for reporting, as described in Table 5.1. Table 5.1 describes some proposed methods and metrics for each reporting area. Some methods described assume that work beyond Year 1 will occur.

Table 5.1 Post-Award Reporting Requirements

Reporting Area	Metrics	Method
A) COST REPORTING cost reports describe, in detail, how and to what extent ...	A.1> Consolidated financial statements A.2> Activity-specific financial statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly expenditure reports submitted by all contractors
B) IMPACT OF STRATEGIC PLAN / strategies undertaken at state, local and program level to implement recommendations in the strategic plan	B.1> Summary assessment of activity level and progress for each strategy recommendation described in the strategic plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual survey of stakeholders to measure progress toward the strategic plan's recommended strategies and activities • Fishbowl technique to gather examples
C.i.) NEW PARTNERSHIPS / new partnerships among Head Start providers, state and local ...	C.i.1> Count of (and description of) new partnerships established during grant period C.ii.2> Likert scale rating to measure the extent to which strategic plan activities contributed to new partnership formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual inventory of partnerships via stakeholder survey • Social network analysis using data from annual inventory (sociogram) • Structured interviews with members of CBEC
C.ii.) IMPACT OF NEW PARTNERSHIPS / how new partnerships improve coordination and delivery of services	C.ii.1> Qualitative assessment of new partnerships established during grant period C.ii.2> Likert scale rating of new partnership impact on key activity areas: (a) parent/family engagement, (b) workforce development, (c) training, (d) policy advocacy, (e) quality assurance, (f) health care access, and (g) mental health and social-emotional development C.ii.3> Case studies of selected examples of the impact of new partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual inventory of partnerships via stakeholder survey • Social network analysis using data from annual inventory (sociogram) • Structured interviews with representatives of organizations involved in new partnerships (as identified per Reporting Area C.i.) and CBEC
D) LINK TO CCDBGGA 2014 REPORT / how info informed activities or contributed to coordination and collaboration among programs and funding sources	Pending study of CCDBGGA 2014 subsection 13 report, if applicable	
E) LEVERAGED FUNDING / how funded activities have contributed to blending or braiding of other public and private funding;	E.1> Count of (and description of) strategic plan activities that have been supported by public and private sources of funding E.2> Dollars of funding from public and private sources spent by government agencies and provider organizations to support implementation of recommended strategies per the strategic plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of financial health via annual stakeholder survey • Social network analysis examining source of funds using data from annual inventory assessment of financial health • Structured interviews with members of CBEC

<i>Reporting Area</i>	<i>Metrics</i>	<i>Method</i>
	E.3> Case studies of selected examples of blending or braiding of public and private funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured interviews with funders of early childhood education programming in Missouri
F) DISSEMINATION TO FAMILIES / how information about available existing programs for children from birth to kindergarten entry was disseminated to parents and families, and how involvement by parents and family was improved	F.1> Number of families accessing services provided by child care resource and referral agencies F.2> Percentage of parents reporting awareness of available programs that support parental choice F.3> Case studies of selected examples of improvements to parent and family involvement F.4> Count of (and description of) parent/family involvement in activities that led to needs assessment and strategic plan F.5> Qualitative assessment of multiple channels used to disseminate information to parents/families about existing programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of early childhood program directors to study activities and results of parent/family involvement • Focus groups with parents and families to assess distribution of information about existing programs • Inventory of parent and family involvement in planning activities supported by grant • Market research study to measure parent/family awareness of available programs that support parental choice • Structured interviews with CBEC
G) SHARING BEST PRACTICES / information concerning best practices in regards to ECCE programs and the coordination of such programs	G.1> Count of (and description of) best practices recommended for sharing across key activity areas: (a) parent/family engagement, (b) workforce development, (c) training, (d) policy advocacy, (e) quality assurance, (f) health care access, and (g) mental health and social-emotional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey of early childhood program directors to identify best practices • Focus groups with parents and families to identify best practices • Structured interviews with CBEC

The lettering references content from FOA section *Post-Award State Reporting Requirements*.

Refining the Proposed Logic Model and Identifying Process Indicators and Outcomes

Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC)

DESE will form an Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) with members who have expertise in early childhood education, public health, policy advocacy, workforce training, social work, evaluation methods, data management, and quality improvement processes. The three key roles of the EAC are to: guide DESE and partners in collaborative evaluation planning, support effective project management (e.g., on-time deliverables), and assure evaluation feeds continuous quality improvement across activity areas. Table 5.2 lists invited members of the EAC; others may be added, as needed. The EAC will include two parents as part of a broader

strategy to bring the parent/family voice into all program planning, including evaluation priorities and activities. Many EAC members are nationally-known leaders or federally-funded researchers/program managers with expertise in early childhood education.

Table 5.2 Evaluation Advisory Committee

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role / Organization</i>	<i>Areas of Expertise</i>
TBD Family Member	Parent/family representative	parent/family needs, urban communities
TBD Family Member	Parent/family representative	parent/family needs, rural communities
Angie Koetting	Data Supervisor, DESE Section for Early Learning	quality rating and improvement systems, data management, cost accounting
Eric Armbrrecht, PhD	Associate Professor, Saint Louis University Center for Health Outcomes Research Lead Evaluator, Missouri Asthma Prevention and Control Program	quality improvement, evaluation methods, public health, statistical analysis
Margo Heger Smith, M.Ed	Director of Programs, Lume Institute for Early Childhood	communications, data management, intervention evaluation, training
Caroline Stemmons	Head Start State Collaboration Office	Head Start, data collection
Wayne Mayfield, PhD	Director, OSEDA	health equity, claims data analysis, evaluation methods
Paula Neth	Vice President, For the Family Conservancy Board Vice President, Child Care Aware	early childhood education, needs assessment
Michael Harris	Senior Policy Advisor, DESE	policy, stakeholder engagement
Robin Phillips	CEO, Child Care Aware Missouri	training, parent engagement, quality rating and improvement system, provider recruitment
Angie Riner-Mooney (Lead Evaluator)	DESE	data management, project management

Refining the Logic Model

As the CBEC finalizes the strategic plan, the EAC will be tasked with refining the logic model displayed in Section 6. A professional group facilitator with logic model expertise will assist the EAC using a review worksheet and facilitated discussion, tools recommended in Taylor-Powell and Henert’s *Developing A Logic Model: Teaching and Training Guide* (University of Wisconsin Extension, 2008). The goal for the EAC is to make changes to the logic model so it represents the highest meaningful benefit of value to the public, communicates causal relationships (or dependencies) among program elements, clearly separates outputs from

outcomes, reflects realistic access to resources, and aligns fully with the strategic plan. Every effort will be made to move rapidly through this process without compromising product quality or stakeholder consensus-building. The refined logic model will provide much-needed boundaries for the detailed development of measurable process indicators and outcomes, as described below.

Metrics

Building from the refined logic model, the Lead Evaluator and consultant will construct a set of metrics to assess progress across the program. The set will include process indicators and outcomes that map to the activities, outputs and outcomes of the logic model. The Lead Evaluator will present a preliminary set of metrics to the EAC for feedback. The final set of metrics will be operationalized by the Lead Evaluator who will test data systems for reliable collection and reporting of the selected metrics.

Alignment of Existing and New Data Systems with Proposed Metrics

Strategic Evaluation Planning (SEP) Process

With the strategic plan and refined logic model in place, DESE will employ a strategic evaluation planning process as described in the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's *Learning and Growing Through Evaluation*. While built for public health programming, the method is suitable for any situation where there is a need for prioritization of evaluation activities and corresponding allocation of limited resources (e.g., measurement development, original data collection, data mining, statistical analysis). DESE will focus on prioritizing among many possible evaluation activities so it can focus efforts in areas that will advance knowledge about new interventions/programs and provide data that can drive quality improvement. The EAC will host open forums with staff from all partner organizations to build a shared

understanding of goals, gather input on evaluation priorities, and define data sources for proposed process indicators and outcomes. DESE and its partners have learned from experience that evaluation project success is improved substantially when time and attention is invested upfront with stakeholders who will be collecting data, implementing interventions, and driving system change.

Data Sourcing Analysis

Focusing on evaluation activities that were prioritized by the EAC, the Lead Evaluator will provide a detailed description of data sources for all metrics linked to the logic model. Gaps in data sources will be identified and reported to the EAC as well as other project stakeholders.

New Data Sources and Data Systems

The Lead Evaluator, in coordination with the consultants, will provide recommendations to the EAC for any metrics that require new sources of data to satisfy reporting on process and implementation progress. The recommendations will include cost estimates and assessments of feasibility. A plan for revising/upgrading Missouri's data system will be prepared by the Lead Evaluator; a special task force may be convened for this task. Refer to Section 1.1 for a description of existing data sources.

Appropriate Methodologies to Inform Continuous Improvement

Answering Evaluation Questions and Delivering Measurable Results

Each evaluation question in the strategic evaluation plan will be assigned a project manager, selected by the Lead Evaluator, who will be tasked with ensuring program staff/partners are trained in evaluation protocols. Planning for individual evaluation projects (i.e., projects that address specific evaluation questions) will follow a standard seven-part template using the public-domain Rainbow Framework (BetterEvaluation.org). Quarterly

project assessments will be completed by project managers to assess progress across six domains: data collection, quality assurance, progress tracking, quality improvement recommendations, dissemination of results, and linkage to the logic model. This structured approach using quarterly assessments provides a mechanism for DESE to manage risks (or challenges) that could impede successful implementation. The EAC will meet quarterly to review progress and challenges.

Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement

Two members of the EAC will be designated co-leaders of the DESE continuous improvement (CI) initiative. Working in partnership with the Lead Evaluator and consultants, they will be responsible for holding project managers accountable for preparing quality improvement recommendations and assuring parent/family input informs all decision-making. Modeled after best practices at many corporations, DESE will dedicate leadership to process streamlining, barrier removal, and facilitating organizational culture supports for ongoing improvement. During the first six months all key staff affiliated with grant-funded activities will receive orientation training that introduces a continuous improvement framework and practical tools; a mix of in-person and webinar-format training will be used.

Evaluation Advisory Committee Reviews Data Source Quality, Completeness and Utility

The EAC will be convened quarterly to review analyses from data sources and recommend programming adjustments. EAC will also review the completeness and utility of data from available sources annually and provide recommendations to DESE leadership. The Lead Evaluator and consultants will conduct periodic spot samples (aka, data audits) to assess gaps and errors in data; this simple activity improves data integrity and minimizes failure risk of evaluation projects, especially those which depend on feeds from established databases.

Updating the Strategic Evaluation Planning (SEP)

Each year DESE will re-open the strategic evaluation planning process to re-prioritize evaluation activities and corresponding allocation of resources. This approach helps to assure evaluation activities align with current needs and keeps partners engaged in the use of evaluation findings to inform the next steps in program planning.

Incorporates Findings from Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

In addition to strong, well-qualified personnel leading evaluation efforts, two other key features of DESE strengthen its ability to incorporate findings from the needs assessment and strategic plan: (1) strategic evaluation planning process and (2) unifying framework for evaluation plan design. First, as described previously in this section, DESE will employ a strategic evaluation planning process. As the EAC prioritizes evaluation activities and corresponding allocation of limited resources, the needs assessment will be used to inform and check decision-making that focuses efforts in certain program areas. Emphasis will be placed on needs prioritized by families, as captured in the needs assessment. Second, DESE will use the Rainbow Framework (BetterEvaluation.org) to organize its evaluation methods and processes and communicate evaluation activities with many stakeholders. This framework organizes planning under seven common evaluation tasks: manage, define, frame, describe, understand causes, synthesize, and report. Working through the first three steps of this framework (manage, define, and frame) requires reflection on and linkage to findings from both the needs assessment and the strategic plan. Moreover, use of the Rainbow Framework provides DESE and its partners with a shared vocabulary for communicating about evaluation project design.

Preliminary Evaluation Questions and Methods

Refinement of the logic model and SEP process will firmly establish DESE’s evaluation questions and methods for Year One. However, advance planning by DESE has identified possible evaluation questions, types of evaluation, performance measures, and data sources for all selected strategies. DESE is confident that its evaluation experts and data sources (established and new) can address the overarching evaluation questions described in the FOA. Table 5.3 describes possible evaluation questions for each of the activity areas. Some questions assume project activities would continue beyond the grant period.

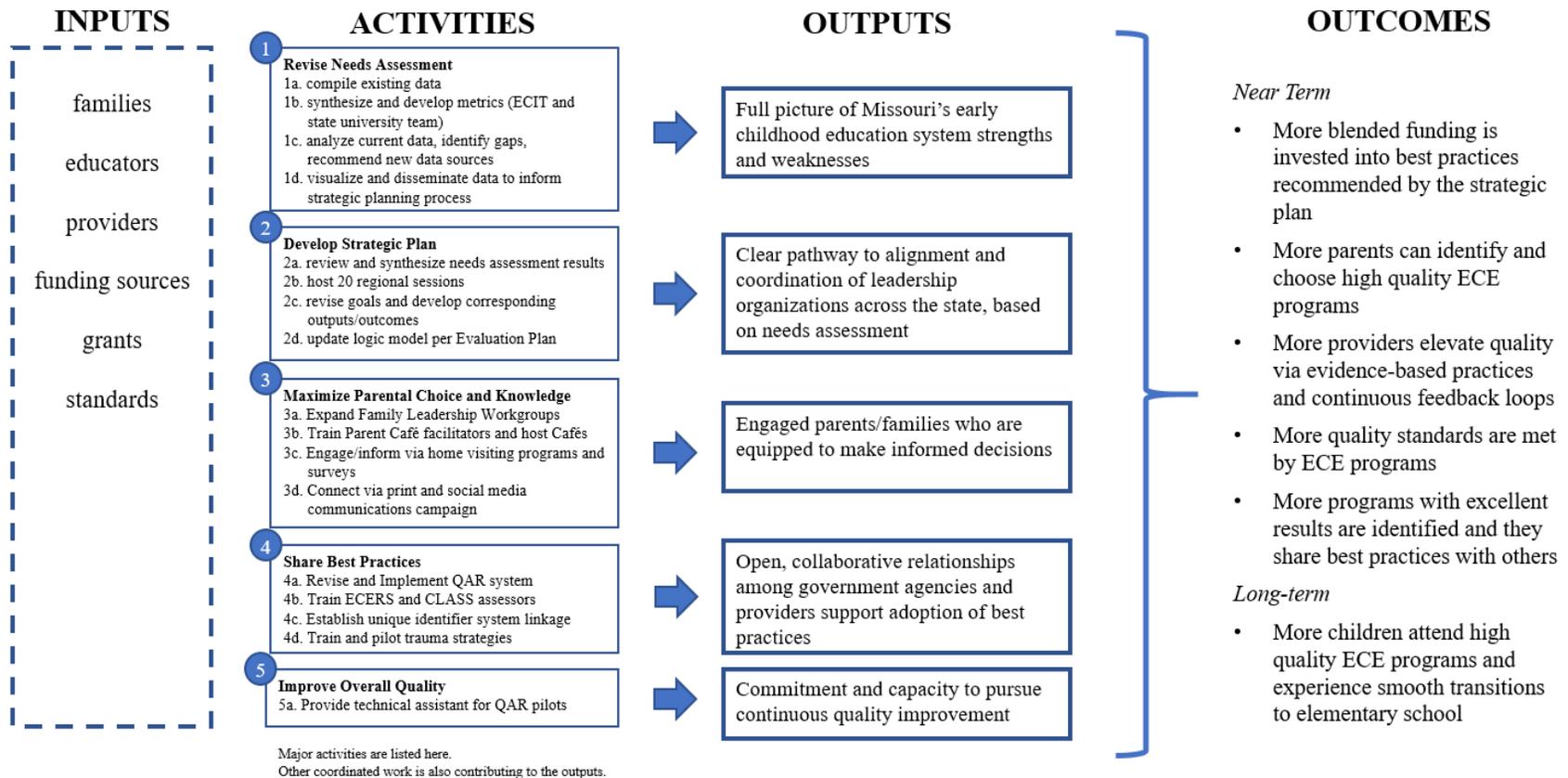
Table 5.3 Evaluation Questions for Each Activity Area

<i>Activity Area</i>	<i>Possible Evaluation Question</i>	<i>Evaluation type</i>
One	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what degree is the voice of the parent/family present in the needs assessment? What gaps are identified when synthesizing information from established needs assessments? 	Process
Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did DESE implement its plan for an inclusive, consensus-building strategic planning process? Was the strategic planning process completed on-time, with clear linkage to the needs assessment? How was the prior strategic plan enhanced through this project? How many people participated in listening sessions across the state? How was their input incorporated into the final strategic plan? 	Formative, Process
Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did the Family Engagement Workgroup result in increased family engagement and knowledge? How well was the PFCE Framework applied to solution design for better parent/family engagement? Are parents/families more aware of resources to inform early childhood education choices? 	Outcome
Four	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the QAR system established? What is the reach of the QAR system? Did the unique identifier pilot project successfully match DCN and MOSIS numbers? What was the reach of Parent Cafes? What evidence supports their successful impact on informed decision-making by parents/families? What was the level of skill acquisition among participants in trainings for Trauma Smart and other targeted training activity based on the needs assessment? 	Process, Outcome
Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent does professional development impact the QAR factors for a provider? How has family/parent engagement changed as a result of project activities? What new approaches for family/parent engagement have been identified through the project? 	Process, Outcome

* reference letter-number code corresponds to FOA-defined performance measure

SECTION SIX: LOGIC MODEL

VISION: *to provide all infants, toddlers, and preschool aged children in Missouri equitable access to an early childhood education system where all children are safe, healthy, empowered, and supported to reach their full potential*



SECTION SEVEN: SUSTAINABILITY

Missouri has recently dedicated additional supports towards ECCE which enable the activities detailed in this funding opportunity to be sustainable past the end of the funding cycle. Forward momentum has especially been gained due to Foundation Formula funding allotted to prekindergarten students for the first time, as well as having the prohibition on quality rating and improvement systems lifted. This allows for the development of the QAR system which forms a cornerstone of the current funding initiative. Although it will require a heavy influx of funding support at the front end of development, this system will be sustainable once it has been launched with minimum support. DESE also has the backing of the state legislature as well as the executive branch, who continues to be supportive of efforts to raise the quality of ECCE programs and initiatives. This positive forward momentum will be sustainable because STMO will allow the state to build infrastructure to support the continuation of programmatic efforts after the STMO funding has ended.

DESE has focused on long-term sustainability as one of the key tenets of the Needs Assessment and a core component of the activities and programs to be carried out over the lifetime of STMO funding. DESE has emphasized activities that will not require continual influxes of funding in order to be effective, instead focusing on building infrastructure, reducing duplication, and establishing collaboration between programs, providers, and state agencies to encourage sustainability. The main focus of STMO funding will be in the Needs Assessment and updating the Strategic Plan. In order to use STMO resources most effectively, remaining funding will support the building of infrastructure, such as the QAR and data sources that, once established, will require little support beyond maintenance. Additionally, the assessment, coordination, and network mapping of home visitor organizations and programs, which will

identify sources, gaps, and current overlaps and duplication of effort across the state, will need little additional support beyond periodic updating. Also key to the sustainability of the STMO initiative is the well-established inter-agency relationships that are ongoing at the state level. DSS, through the CCDF, will support sustainability through its professional development programs through the CCDF Plan for Missouri. Other partners such as MHSSCO and Parents as Teachers will continue to play a large part in the dissemination and sustainability of the program as well.

The evaluation plan will also play an important role in program sustainability, as results from evaluation efforts will allow DESE to identify the most effective interventions and areas most receptive to progress. This will enable decisions to be made regarding which programs to target for prioritization if support is limited after the conclusion of the grant cycle. The communication and dissemination plan will be another vital asset that will be a part of the investment of STMO funds. Communicating program progress and accomplishments to providers, programs, the public, as well as legislature and the Governor's office, is an important component of the sustainability approach.

The Strategic Plan for Missouri will be revised and updated based on the results of the Needs Assessment to be an up-to-date reflection on the needs and path forward for Missouri ECCE programs. Because a strategic plan is already established, the personnel and capital needed to effectively implement it are already in place and the funding opportunity will allow for this implementation to occur. The strategic plan will also be sustainable going forward because it is already housed within the CBEC, which is permanently established in state statute. DESE is therefore well equipped to sustain the strategic plan in terms of people, capital, and

infrastructure, and the funding they receive will ensure that the strategic plan truly reflects the positive direction, needs, and opportunities in early childhood education.

The state, including the governor's office and the legislature, are committed to a long-term plan for developing Missouri's workforce. To capitalize on this support and momentum, DESE will collaborate with the Department of Economic Development (DED) in supporting the Early Childhood workforce as well as workforce development efforts for vulnerable or disadvantaged families who work with the programs and providers targeted by STMO. The collaboration between DESE and the DED will help solidify return on investment and sustainability for the projects support by this funding opportunity.

SECTION EIGHT: BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Detailed costs have been provided for each of the five required activities for the Preschool Development Grant including travel, technical assistance and evaluation of the project. State staff time will be provided as an in-kind expense separate from the federal request to support the implementation of the grant.

Personnel (projected for the 12 month grant period)

Project Lead – Early Learning Coordinator – DESE

The Project Lead will provide oversight of each activity phase as well as supervise the contractual relationships and coordinate the Community Listening Sessions.

Project Advisors – DESE

The Project Advisors will assist the Project Lead with budgetary and communications support as well as serve as the ECIT liaison.

ECIT Team – Designees from DHSS, DMH, DSS and MHSSCO

The ECIT team will provide interagency support and technical assistance to maximize coordination among the various state agencies.

Position	Department	Annual Salary	Level of Effort	In-Kind Value
Project Lead	DESE	\$61,000	70%	\$42,700
Project Advisors	DESE	\$139,000	35%	\$48,900
ECIT Team Member	DHSS	\$80,000	35%	\$28,000
ECIT Team Member	DSS	\$80,000	35%	\$28,000
ECIT Team Member	DMH	\$68,000	35%	\$23,800
ECIT Team Member	MHSSCO	\$59,000	35%	\$20,650

Activity One: Revise Needs Assessment

Purpose	Grant Resources	Personnel Resources	Total Budget
Personnel	\$0	\$53,050	\$53,050
Contractual	\$400,000	\$0	\$400,000
Travel	\$24,600	\$0	\$24,600
Indirect	\$21,655	\$0	\$21,655
TOTAL	\$446,255	\$53,050	\$499,305

Contractual

DESE requests \$400,000 to contract with a partner in the state university system to analyze and synthesize existing data and determine what new data elements are needed for a more comprehensive needs assessment. The partner will facilitate 20 Community Listening Sessions and use this information to inform the strategic planning process and disseminate information to stakeholders.

Travel

DESE requests \$24,600 to conduct a total of 20 Community Listening Sessions to capture qualitative stakeholder data from parents and the community-at-large.

Purpose	Unit Cost	Item	Personnel	Cost
Community Listening Sessions	\$4,920	20 meetings – travel and meeting space	5	\$24,600

Indirect

Indirect cost rates for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government are calculated at the approved FY19 unrestricted rate of 5.1 percent per USED agreement signed in July 2018. \$424,600 (Contractual and Travel) X 5.1 percent = \$21,655 (Indirect).

Activity Two: Develop Strategic Plan

Purpose	Grant Resources	Personnel Resources	Total Budget
Personnel	\$0	\$40,900	\$40,900
Contractual	\$650,000	\$0	\$650,000
Travel	\$24,600	\$0	\$24,600
Indirect	\$34,405	\$0	\$34,305
TOTAL	\$709,005	\$40,900	\$749,905

Contractual

DESE requests \$650,000 to contract with a partner in the state university system to write a strategic plan that prioritizes the needs outlined in the state’s current plan and measure individual short and long-term outcomes. The services will include working with ECIT and CBEC to review new assessment results, facilitate additional Community Listening Sessions and use the information to develop a revised strategic plan.

Travel

DESE requests \$24,600 to conduct a total of 20 facilitated listening sessions to gather feedback on the state’s current strategic plan to combine with the findings from the needs assessment.

Purpose	Unit Cost	Item	Personnel	Cost
Community Listening Sessions	\$4,920	20 meetings –travel and meeting space	5	\$24,600

Indirect

Indirect cost rates for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government are calculated at the approved FY19 unrestricted rate of 5.1 percent per USED agreement signed in July 2018. \$674,600 (Contractual and Travel) X 5.1 percent = \$34,405 (Indirect).

Activity Three: Maximize Parental Choice and Knowledge

Purpose	Grant Resources	Personnel Resources	Total Budget
Personnel	\$0	\$32,700	\$32,700
Contractual	\$1,900,000	\$0	\$1,900,000
Indirect	\$96,900	\$0	\$96,900
TOTAL	\$1,996,900	\$32,700	\$2,029,600

Contractual

DESE requests \$100,000 to expand capacity for Family Leadership Workgroups using existing groups; \$200,000 to train 20 facilitators in the Parent Café model that will be used by the Family Leadership Workgroup; \$1,000,000 to host 20 Parent Cafés, conduct recruitment and outreach and hold four quarterly meetings; \$500,000 to launch a pilot aimed at innovating referrals and service delivery methods for home visiting programs; and \$100,000 to administer a Parent Language Use Survey for families with preschool age children through the local school districts.

Indirect

Indirect cost rates for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government are calculated at the approved FY19 unrestricted rate of 5.1 percent per USED agreement signed in July 2018. \$1,900,000 (Contractual) X 5.1 percent = \$96,900 (Indirect).

Activity Four: Share Best Practices

Purpose	Grant Resources	Personnel Resources	Total Budget
Personnel	\$0	\$32,700	\$32,700
Contractual	\$3,600,000	\$0	\$3,600,000
Indirect	\$183,600	\$0	\$183,600
TOTAL	\$3,783,600	\$32,700	\$3,816,300

Contractual

DESE requests \$150,000 to contract for the revision and implementation of a quality assurance database system; \$250,000 for ECERS training and established reliability of 15 assessors; \$250,000 for CLASS training for 15 assessors; \$1,000,000 for technical assistance, coaching and consultation towards improvement strategies for the programs within the Quality Assurance pilot; \$200,000 to establish a probabilistic match analysis for existing unique identifying data; \$500,000 for training 200 early childhood professionals in the Missouri Model for trauma strategies; \$250,000 for training 100 early childhood professionals in tiered trauma strategies; \$250,000 to contract with a partner in the state university system for a consultant to facilitate career lattice development to include writing services and focus group facilitation; and \$750,000 for 150 T.E.A.C.H. Missouri scholarships.

Indirect

Indirect cost rates for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government are calculated at the approved FY19 unrestricted rate of 5.1 percent per USED agreement signed in July 2018. \$3,600,000 (Contractual) X 5.1 percent = \$183,600 (Indirect).

Activity Five: Improve Overall Quality

Purpose	Grant Resources	Personnel Resources	Total Budget
Personnel	\$0	\$32,700	\$32,700
Other	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000
Indirect	\$25,500	\$0	\$25,500
TOTAL	\$525,500	\$32,700	\$558,200

Other

DESE requests \$500,000 to provide program and individual technical staff assistance to support leadership, program management, formative assessments and other improvement strategies to meet the needs of a targeted quartile of providers and/or programs in the Quality Assurance Report pilot.

Indirect

Indirect cost rates for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government are calculated at the approved FY19 unrestricted rate of 5.1 percent per USED agreement signed in July 2018. \$500,000 (Contractual) X 5.1 percent = \$25,500 (Indirect).

Program Performance Evaluation

Purpose	Grant Resources	Match Funding	Total Budget
In-Kind State Match	\$0	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Contractual	\$1,650,000	\$0	\$1,650,000
Travel	\$15,000	\$0	\$15,000
Indirect	\$84,915	\$0	\$84,915
TOTAL	\$1,749,915	\$3,000,000	\$4,749,915

In-Kind State Match

In 2018, the Missouri General Assembly passed a budget for FY19 which was subsequently signed by the Governor that fully-funded the state aid calculation for PK-12 public education. This appropriation included additional funds for early childhood education. For purposes of fulfilling the obligations of this grant, DESE will claim \$3,000,000 of the new Pre-K funding as a match equaling 33% of the overall grant budget.

Contractual

DESE will serve as Lead Evaluator, DHSS will provide support for data synthesis, analysis and reporting, and DSS will support data collection for evaluation planning. DESE requests \$650,000 to partner with a state university system for expertise in program methodology, data

collection, sampling, measurement, analysis and project management. DESE requests \$200,000 for technical assistance to support the overall grant project; \$300,000 for a consultant to manage a program performance evaluation planning process; and \$500,000 to create and print a social media campaign to support the work of the project.

Travel

The grant requires at least four individuals to attend a three day PDG B-5 grantee meeting in Washington, D.C.

Purpose	Unit Cost	Item	Personnel	Cost
Required Grantee Travel	\$3,000	Airfare, hotel and lodging in Washington, D.C.	5	\$15,000

Indirect

Indirect cost rates for use on grants, contracts and other agreements with the Federal Government are calculated at the approved FY19 unrestricted rate of 5.1 percent per USED agreement signed in July 2018. \$1,665,000 (Contractual and Travel) X 5.1 percent = \$84,915 (Indirect).

Budget Summary

All Grant Related Activities

Purpose	Grant Resources	Personnel Resources	Match Funding	Total Budget
Personnel	\$0	\$192,050	\$0	\$192,050
Contractual	\$8,700,000	\$0	\$0	\$8,700,000
Travel	\$64,200	\$0	\$0	\$64,200
Indirect	\$446,975	\$0	\$0	\$446,975
In-Kind Match	\$0	\$0	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
TOTAL	\$9,211,175	\$192,050	\$3,000,000	\$12,403,225

DESE is requesting \$9,211,175 in federal funds to implement Stronger Together Missouri to allow the state to invest in infrastructure and systems building for an equitable early care and education system for infants, toddlers and preschool aged children and their families.

Missouri will match this request with \$3,000,000 from the increase in new state spending on Pre-K included in the foundation formula for FY19 which represents 33% of federal grant request. The state will also provide \$192,050, via in-kind contribution. In total, the budget reflects \$12,403,225 towards early care and education investments.