



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR
HIGHER EDUCATION, EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS, AND
COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERSHIPS WORKING
TO IMPLEMENT INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINED PATHWAYS
DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF PENNSYLVANIA'S CURRENT
EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE**

**BUILDING CAPACITY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS
TO HELP ALL YOUNG CHILDREN LEARN AND DEVELOP**

ISSUING OFFICE:

Pennsylvania Department of Education
Office of Child Development and Early Learning
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**PART I
GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION**

1.1 Purpose

Children begin learning at birth, and they develop at a rapid pace in their early years. This provides a critical foundation for a life-long progress. The adults who provide for the care and education of young children bear a great responsibility for their health, educational development, and well-being. The Institute of Medicine (IOM)/National Research Council (NRC) were commissioned to explore the implications of the science of child development for the professionals who work with children from birth through age eight. In the resulting report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*,¹ the committee found that much is known about what professionals, who provide care and education for children, and what they need to know, be able to do, and what professional learning supports they require. However, that knowledge is not fully reflected in the current capacities and practices of the workforce, the settings in which they work, the policies and infrastructure that set qualifications and provide professional learning, and the government and other funders who support and oversee these systems.

The Innovative Programs for Pennsylvania's Early Childhood Workforce application guidelines are established to ensure that early care and education professionals have the requisite knowledge and skills required to help all young children learn and develop. As a result these, guidelines provide direction to partnerships as they submit applications focusing on building new innovative and sustained career-oriented *pathways* for current early childhood workers to earn the following early childhood education (ECE) industry-recognized credentials:

- A credit-bearing Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate;
- An associate's degree;
- A bachelor's degree; and/or
- A Pennsylvania ECE PreK-4 instructional certificate.

Pathways created under these guidelines are designed to develop the capacity for early childhood educators to help all young children learn across the age groups of birth to eight years old. Applications submitted in response to these guidelines are limited to partnerships aimed at nurturing

¹ *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation* a report by the National Academies of Sciences Engineering Medicines, April 1, 2015.

and sustaining high - quality cross-systems relationships among and between two-year and four-year institutions of higher education (IHEs) and Pennsylvania's early learning programs that:

1. Institutionalize changes in associate degree, bachelor degree, and early childhood teacher preparation certification programs that are more closely aligned with the knowledge, skills, and pedagogy required for early childhood workforce effectiveness that emerges as improved teaching and learning for Pennsylvania's young children; partnerships are expected to continue implementing innovations developed under these guidelines beyond the term of the grant award;
2. Culminate in high - quality supervisory experiences for Pennsylvania's early childhood workforce.
3. Identify "value added" contributions of partners that can be shared and scaled-up with other IHEs and early childhood centers;
4. Identify effective coaching strategies for higher education faculty, collaborating teachers, and center directors designed to improve the requisite knowledge, skills, and pedagogy required for succeeding in today's early childhood centers;
5. Build early learning programs and IHE capacity as they participate in specially-designed courses related to: Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System (SAS); Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood Infant and Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten; early childhood subject matter; developing knowledge and skills for educating young children whose primary language is not English, who are not part of the dominant culture, and children who have special needs; persistent challenging behaviors; effective coaching strategies; data driven decision making; and
6. Incorporate evidence-based ECE professional practices.

Partnerships are expected to continue implementing innovations developed under these guidelines beyond the term of the grant award. A written report consisting of both quantitative and qualitative information will be requested after the first year of program implementation.

Funded partnerships may be regional or state - wide and must include at least one two-year IHE and one four-year IHE, one state-funded professional development organization, and one early childhood learning center that has currently employed ECE educators who do not hold ECE workforce-related credentials. A listing of the eligible early childhood education centers is available at the following URL: [Compass](#).

1.2 Issuing Office

These application guidelines are issued for the commonwealth by the Department of Education, Office of Child Development and Early Learning, Telephone: (717) 265-8911; e-mail address: spolovac@pa.gov. All inquiries and questions should be addressed to: Susan Polojac, Director, Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge, Pennsylvania Department of Education, 333 Market Street, Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333. The Issuing Office is the sole point of contact in the Commonwealth for these guidelines.

1.3 Eligible Applicants

Eligible partnerships under these application guidelines are designed to meet Pennsylvania's early childhood workforce needs by equipping early childhood education professionals with the requisite knowledge, skills, and capacity to help all young children learn to higher standards. The Federal Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge funds will support partnership activities submitted in response to these guidelines. To submit a proposal under these guidelines, a partnership shall include at a minimum:

1. At least one early childhood program where its currently - employed ECE educators do not hold ECE workforce-related credentials. (A listing of eligible early childhood education programs is available at the following URL: [Compass](#)).
2. At least one, two-year IHE that offers early childhood development programs² that culminates in an associate's degree. Each two-year IHE must be eligible to participate in Pennsylvania's T.E.A.C.H.³ financial aid program at the time the application is submitted.
3. At least one, four-year IHE that offers early childhood development-related program that culminate in a bachelor's degree, and may or may not lead to a PreK-4 instructional certification.⁴ Each four-year IHE must be eligible to participate in Pennsylvania's T.E.A.C.H. financial aid program at the time application is submitted.

Additional partners may include:

1. Other educational agencies, including but not limited to, a local school district or career technology center with an ECE program of study; and
2. A Pennsylvania intermediate unit or non-profit cultural or educational organization; and
3. Teacher organizations; and
4. Early learning program associations or organizations; and
5. Business and community members; and/or
6. Professional development organizations.

Competitive applications submitted under these guidelines will help assist Pennsylvania IHE's and early learning programs:

1. Develop sustainable relationships that culminate in high quality practice-based/clinical experiences for Pennsylvania's current and future early childhood workforce; and
2. Integrate Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood Infant and Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten into their respective early childhood courses and degree programs (see [Early Learning Standards Infants and Toddlers](#) and [Early Learning Standards Prekindergarten](#)); and
3. Incorporate Pennsylvania's Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood and School – Age Professionals; and
4. Integrate PA-AIMH Infant Mental Health Competencies for Level 1 [The Pennsylvania Association for Infant Mental Health](#); and
5. Identify and implement effective coaching strategies for collaborating teachers, early learning program directors, and higher education faculty who “supervise” student teachers to improve retention and professional practice; and
6. Integrate change in early learning programs and in school settings that are more closely aligned with the knowledge, skills, and pedagogy required for early childhood educators to be effective in improving teaching and learning for Pennsylvania's young children.

Each partnership will designate an IHE as the lead organization that will be responsible for **all aspects of the project**, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Executing a contract or interagency agreement (IAA) with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on behalf of its partners;
2. Sub-contracting to provide resources and access to a network of experts who will deliver high - quality professional ECE knowledge and skills that incorporate:
 - Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System (SAS); and
 - Appropriate professional practice designed to enable all ECE to help all young children to higher levels; and

² The name of a degree program is inconsequential under these competitive guidelines.

³ Eligibility information for the T.E.A.C.H. financial aid is available at [T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Pennsylvania](#)

⁴ A PDE-approved PreK-4 instructional certification preparation must also comply with PreK-4 framework guidelines and other requirements related to approval of this preparation program.

- Pennsylvania’s Learning Standards for Early Childhood:
 - Infant and Toddlers, and
 - Pre-Kindergarten;
 - Pennsylvania’s Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood and School Age Professionals; and
 - Data - driven decision - making that enable current ECE workforce to use various types of data, including formative assessments to strengthen classroom instruction.
3. Establishing an implementation timeline and adhering to the timeline;
 4. Collaborating with all partners to implement planned activities that enables partners to achieve expected outcomes of this grant program;
 5. Monitoring and managing federal funds consistent with Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR);
 6. Maintaining records consistent with EDGAR and executed contract or interagency agreement (IAA);
 7. Notifying program office in writing of any programmatic or personnel changes;
 8. Submitting quarterly cash or hand financial reports;
 9. Submitting comprehensive quarterly progress reports;
 10. Participating in quarterly webinars, conference calls, or other activities established by the program office to share strategies/results with other funded partnerships;
 11. Submitting budget revisions when any major budget category changes by 20 percent or more; and
 12. Submitting all final financial and evaluation reports.

An IHE, early learning program, etc. may be a partner in more than one application submitted for funding.

Applications will not be accepted from applicants who are:

- Are not registered to participate in Pennsylvania’s T.E.A.C.H. program; or
- Are currently delinquent in filing reports either with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), OCDEL or Labor, Education and Community Services (LECS) Comptroller’s Office.

1.4 Scope

These guidelines contain (1) instructions governing the submission of applications and the information to be submitted; (2) requirements that must be met in order for a partnership to be eligible for consideration; (3) the selection process; and (4) evaluation criteria.

A grant award contract including standard contract terms and conditions, Riders A, B and C is available on the PDE website at:

http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/competitive_grants/7462/eligible_partnerships_program_-_higher_education/506824. Universities under the State System of Higher Education (State System) will be issued an IAA; a copy is also available on the above web site.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

Studies show that child – teacher interaction is one of the most important factors of supporting young children to developing academic success. Accordingly, what teachers know and are able to do is of critical importance. PDE launched its Standards Aligned System (SAS), a collaborative product of research and good practice that identifies six distinct elements which, if utilized together, provide schools and districts a common framework for continuous enhancement and improvement. Figure 1 below depicts the six distinct elements of Pennsylvania’s SAS:



Figure 1. Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned System (SAS)

New early childhood resources were recently added to [SAS](#); additional resources will be added in the near future.

It is estimated that between 14,000 and 16,000 individuals currently working in Pennsylvania early learning programs hold a high school diploma, or a General Educational Development (GED) diploma. Another 16,000 individuals have participated in professional development opportunities, but have not completed college coursework to earn college credit or degrees. The commonwealth has worked with two-year and four-year degree granting institutions of higher education to create and implement an articulation agreement specific to early childhood education. However, there is still a significant number of early childhood staff who have not earned an associate or bachelor degree.

Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) is a dual deputate of Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. OCDEL is focused on creating opportunities for the commonwealth's young children to develop and learn to their fullest potential. By developing an effective early childhood education system that includes high standards for programs and professionals, supports to meet these standards, accountability, and community engagement, OCDEL supports Pennsylvania's children, families, teachers, and communities in reaching this goal. By building a strong foundation for children, OCDEL's efforts today translate into a brighter future for tomorrow's citizens.

Keystone STARS is a program of Pennsylvania's Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL), that has four primary goals:

- To improve the quality of early care and education; and
- To support early care and education providers in meeting their quality improvement goals;
- To recognize programs for continuous quality improvement and meeting higher quality standards; and
- To provide families a way to choose the quality of care and education programs.

OCDEL's Keystone STARS Program supports all early care and education programs to improve program quality. OCDEL encourages programs to think about Keystone STARS Performance Standards as a tool to support continuous quality improvement (CQI) that impacts services to the children and families in care.

Early childhood educators work in a practice-based profession where they are responsible for helping all young children learn to high standards and support their healthy development; this

requires not only solid academic knowledge, but also strong clinical components⁵ and work ethic. By shifting to the knowledge, skills, and capacities to improve early childhood teaching and learning, the connection between associate and bachelor degree programs and an early childhood center-based experience strengthens. To make this change, two-year and four-year IHEs *must work in partnership* with early learning programs to ensure they are providing the requisite knowledge and strongest ECE-based experience possible to immerse current and future early childhood professionals in realistic classroom experiences.

Improving the quality of clinical experiences will help close the gap between theory and practice, and ensure that ECE professionals will be effective in meeting the needs of all children. In enhanced clinical preparation settings, future ECE professionals will have better opportunities to:

1. Integrate theory with practice; and
2. Develop and test classroom management and pedagogical skills; and
3. Perfect the use of evidence in making professional decisions about their practice; and
4. Understand and integrate the standards related to their profession; and
5. Collaborate and work closely with colleagues and students; and
6. Evaluate what they know and are able to do in the classroom; and
7. Analyze their teaching in a sustained, intense, early childhood education - embedded experience under the tutelage of effective ECE professionals, center directors, and higher education faculty.⁶

To ensure that IHE faculty, who supervise clinical experiences, cooperating teachers, and ECE program directors, have the appropriate knowledge and skills required of more rigorous, school-based clinical experiences. It may be necessary for all partners to participate together, learn together, and implement changes that will result in higher - quality, realistic school-based clinical experiences are available for Pennsylvania's early childhood educators. To prepare for a different type of clinical experience, it is essential that Pennsylvania's ECE programs provide their students with the knowledge and skills associated with:

- Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood Infants and Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten; and
- Children from backgrounds that are diverse in family structure, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, culture, and language; and
- Advancing the learning and development of children who are dual - language learners;
- Advancing the development and learning of children who have specialized developmental or learning needs, such as children with disabilities or learning delays, children experiencing chronic stress/adversity, and children who are gifted and talented; and
- Data - driven decision - making that enable current ECE workforce to use various types of data, including formative assessments, to strengthen classroom instruction.

Even though there is limited research devoted to identifying evidence-based ECE teacher preparation program features that are essential in developing skills and knowledge that foster learning and development in young children, research of the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute⁷ identifies the following three professional practice domains as the most often overlooked:

1. Addressing the needs of young children with disabilities and their families; and
2. Understanding and working effectively with infants and toddlers; and,
3. Building young children's competence and interest in content areas.

5 Marsha Levine, Jane Leibbrand, NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel Initiates a Mainstream Move to More Clinically Based Preparation Teachers, January 5, 2010, 1.

6 Ibid, 1-2.

7 The FPG Child Development Institute of The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is one of the nation's largest organization for studying young children and their families; it conducts research and provides outreach services. More information is available at <http://fpg.unc.edu>.

Each domain is critically important in the preparation of tomorrow's early childhood professionals; each domain is often under-emphasized in Early Childhood Teacher Education (ECTE) programs; however, evidence-based research in each domain is inadequate.⁸ Described below are numerous challenges in implementing evidence-based practices in ECTE programs, and problems in understanding the impact of ECE programs:

1. Accreditation of ECTE programs is voluntary, which has limited the benefits of state and national attempts at quality assurance.
2. There is a dearth of research about the barriers and facilitators for faculty in implementing high-quality college curricula that align with evidence-based practice.
3. Pre-service students in ECTE programs receive limited course work in key content areas, such as working with children with disabilities, infants and toddlers, and mathematics.
4. No system is in place to ensure the use of evidence-based approaches in preparing teachers. There are numerous published examples of beacons of excellence, promising IHE programs and approaches for preparing students to work with young children. However, rather than a nationwide system of evidence-based approaches for preparing teachers to enter the field, a cottage industry of path breaking initiatives exists.
5. There is little follow-up of pre-service students once they have entered the field. Missing are measures of teacher competence, the fidelity of implementation of effective practices by student teachers, and faculty use of emerging, evidence-based curricula.

Children begin learning at birth, and they develop and learn at a rapid pace in their early years. This provides a critical foundation for lifelong progress, and the adults who provide for the care and education of young children bear a great responsibility for their health, development, and education. The Institute of Medicine (IOM)/National Research Council (NRC) was commissioned to explore the implications of the science of child development for the professionals who work with children from birth through age eight. In the resulting report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*,⁹ the committee found that much is known about what professionals, who provide care and education for children need to know, and be able to do, and what professional learning supports they require. However, that knowledge is not fully reflected in the current capacities and practices of the workforce, the settings in which they work, the policies and infrastructure that set qualifications and provide professional learning, and the government, and other funders who support and oversee these systems. The IOM/NRC report proffers recommendations to build a workforce that is unified by the foundation of the science of child development and early learning and the shared knowledge and competencies that are needed to provide consistent, high-quality support for the development and early learning of children from birth through age eight. Presented below are a number of the IOM/NRC's recommendations related to workforce development. Additional topics extracted from the IOM/NRC report include:

- Strengthening competency-based requirements, including a supervised induction period; and
- Foundational knowledge and competencies needed by early childhood educators, including: core base knowledge, practices to help children learn, working with diverse populations of children, developing and using partnerships, and continuously improving the quality of practice.

Three IOM/NRC recommendations relevant for early childhood workforce development are:

Recommendation 1: *Strengthen competency-based qualification requirements for all care and education professionals working with children from birth through age eight.*

⁸ Horn, D., Hyson, M., & Winton, P. (2013). Research on early childhood teacher education: Evidence from three domains and recommendations for moving forward. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 34 (1) 95-112.

⁹ *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, a report by the National Academies of Sciences Engineering Medicines, April 1, 2015.

Recommendation 2: *Develop and implement comprehensive pathways and multi - year timelines at the individual, institutional, and policy levels for transitioning to a minimum bachelor’s degree qualification requirement, with specialized knowledge and competencies for all lead educators² working with children from birth through age 8.*

Recommendation 3: *Strengthen practice-based qualification requirements, including a supervised induction period for all lead educators working with children from birth through age eight.*

While there are numerous other themes that emanate from the IOM/NRC research, (see Requirements for Professional Practice, Foundational Knowledge and Competencies for All Adults with Professional Responsibilities for Young Children included in Appendix 2, Excerpts from The Institute of Medicine/National Research Council's *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*) that have bearing on ECE professional practice, the Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Education Practitioners appears most relevant to ensuring innovative pathways are developed under these guidelines to meet the needs of current and future ECE professionals.

Table 2. Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Education Practitioners¹⁰

1. Core Knowledge Base
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the developmental science that underlies important domains of early learning and child development, including cognitive development, specific content knowledge and skills, general learning competencies, socio-emotional development, and physical development and health. • Knowledge of how these domains interact to facilitate learning and development. • Knowledge of content and concepts that are important in early learning of major subject-matter areas, including language and literacy, mathematics, science, technology, engineering, arts, and social studies. • Knowledge of the learning trajectories (goals, developmental progressions, and instructional tasks and strategies) of how children learn and become proficient in each of the domains and specific subject-matter areas. • Knowledge of the science that elucidates the interactions among biological and environmental factors that influence children’s development and learning, including the positive effects of consistent, and nurturing interactions that facilitate development and learning, as well as the negative effects of chronic stress and exposure to trauma and that can impede development and learning. • Knowledge of principles for assessing children that are developmentally appropriate; culturally sensitive and relevant, reliable, and valid across a variety of populations, domains, and assessment purposes.
2. Practices to Help Children Learn
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to establish relationships and interactions with children that are nurturing and use positive language. • Ability to create and manage effective learning environments (physical space, materials, activities, classroom management). • Ability to consistently deploy productive routines, maintain a schedule, and make transitions brief and productive. All to increase predictability and learning opportunities and to maintain a sense of emotional calm in the learning environment. • Ability to use a repertory of instructional and care-giving practices and strategies, including implementing validated curricula that engage children through nurturing, responsive interactions and facilitate learning and development in all domains in ways that are appropriate for their stage of development.

¹⁰ Ibid.

- Ability to set appropriate individualized goals and objectives to advance young children's development and learning.
- Ability to use learning trajectories: a deep understanding of the content, knowledge of the way children think and learn about the content, and the ability to design and employ instructional tasks, curricula, and activities that effectively promote learning and development within and across domains and subject-matter areas.
- Ability to select, employ, and interpret a portfolio of both informal and formal assessment tools and strategies to use the results to understand individual children's developmental progression and determine whether needs are being met, and to use this information to individualize, adapt, and improve instructional practices.
- Ability to integrate and leverage different kinds of technologies in curricula and instructional practice to promote children's learning.
- Ability to promote positive social development and self-regulation while mitigating challenging behaviors in ways that reflect an understanding of the multiple biological and environmental factors that affect behavior.
- Ability to recognize the effects of factors from outside the practice setting (e.g., poverty, trauma, parental depression, experience of violence in the home or community) that affect children's learning and development, and to adjust practice to help children experiencing those effects.¹¹

3. Working with Diverse Populations of Children

- Ability to advance the learning and development of children from backgrounds that are diverse in family structure, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, culture, and language.
- Ability to advance the learning and development of children who are dual - language learners.
- Ability to advance the development and learning of children who have specialized developmental or learning needs, such as children with disabilities or learning delays, children experiencing chronic stress/adversity, and children who are gifted and talented. All early care and education professionals, not just those in specialized roles, need knowledge and basic competencies for working with these children.

4. Developing and Using Partnerships

- Ability to communicate and connect with families in a mutually respectful, reciprocal way, and can set goals with families and prepare them to engage in complementary behaviors and activities that will enhance development and early learning.
- Ability to recognize when behaviors and academic challenges may be a sign of an underlying need for referral for more comprehensive assessment, diagnosis, and support (e.g., mental health consultation, social services, family support services).
- Knowledge of professional roles and available services within care and education and in closely related sectors such as health and social services.
- Ability to access and effectively use available referral and resource systems.
- Ability to collaborate and communicate with professionals in other roles, disciplines, and sectors to facilitate mutual understanding and collective contributions to improving outcomes for children.

5. Continuously Improving the Quality of Practice

- Ability and motivation to access and engage in available professional learning resources to keep current with the science of development and early learning and with research on instructional and other practices.
- Knowledge and abilities for self-care to manage their own physical and mental health, including the effects of their own exposure to adversity, stress, and competencies that are important for all professionals who provide direct, regular care and education for young children to support development, foster early learning, and contribute to greater consistency along the birth through age eight continuum.

¹¹"Chapter 7 Knowledge and Competencies." Institute of Medicine and National Research Council. 2015. *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. doi: 10.17226/19401.

Table 3 establishes the expected outcomes for each partnership funded under these guidelines.

Table 3. Expected Outcomes for Funded Partnerships

<u>IHEs</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative and sustainable pathways that allow currently employed ECE professionals to earn ECE industry-recognized credentials (i.e., CDA, associate's or bachelor's degree, a Pennsylvania PreK-4 instructional certificate) and that reduce barriers to accessing such credentials. • Higher education faculty prepared to coach and supervise early learning professionals in appropriate student teaching settings. • Availability of high - quality ECE-based practice experiences through partnerships with community based early learning programs. • Program revisions that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Integrate Pennsylvania’s Standards for Early Learning Infants and Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten into early childhood development courses and degree programs; ○ Develop coaching strategies for higher education faculty that improve professional practice of ECE professionals; and ○ Incorporate effective teaching and learning practices in one or more core academic subjects; and ○ Enable currently employed ECE professionals to use various types of data, including formative assessments, to strengthen classroom instruction and make program improvements.
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Early Learning Programs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relationships with IHEs to ensure high – quality, practice-based experiences and ensure that future ECE practitioners graduate with the knowledge, skills, and pedagogy required for succeeding in today’s early childhood centers. • Better processes for selecting and matching collaborating supervising teachers with early childhood students. • Flexible release time for ECE staff to participate in an educational program leading to an ECE industry-recognized credential (i.e., CDA, an associate's or bachelor's degree, or a Pennsylvania ECE Prek-4 instructional certificate). • Local capacity developed to improve instruction by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using resources available in SAS; and ○ Ensuring curricula are aligned with Pennsylvania’s Early Learning Standards for Infants and Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten; and ○ Improving skill sets of lead early childhood educators and early learning program directors to encourage them to stay in the ECE profession; and ○ Using instructional coaching for improving ECE professional practices of all staff; and ○ Effective teaching and learning practices in one or more core academic subjects.

1.6 Funding Source

The purpose of Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge funds issued to states¹² by the U.S. Department of Education is to focus on improving early learning and development programs for young children by supporting states efforts to: (1) increase the number and percentage of low-income and disadvantaged children in each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who are enrolled in high-quality early learning programs; (2) design and implement an integrated system of high-quality early learning programs and services; and (3) ensure that any use of assessments conforms with the recommendations of the National Research Council's reports on early childhood.

¹² Race to the Top funds were awarded to states leading the way with ambitious yet achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling, and comprehensive early learning education reform.

(§1832(b)(1), Title VIII, Division B of P.L. 112-10, the Department of Defense and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011).

1.7 Essential Elements to Include in Each Application

Each application must demonstrate that it incorporates each of the following essential elements by translating them into instructional activities and appropriate action strategies connected to the individual partnership's *measurable* goals and objectives:

1. Implement a regional or state-wide partnership that includes at least one, two-year and four-year IHEs and eligible early childhood programs. Refer to Section 1.3 of these guidelines for a complete list of mandatory and optional partners.
2. With the input from all partners, decide how to assess the current knowledge and skills of early learning program's workforce to ensure new knowledge/skills are being learned, rather than re-learning skills they already exhibit in their professional practice.
3. Develop innovative and sustainable pathways to enable current early learning program for staff to participate in and earn an industry-recognized credential (i.e., CDA, an associate's or bachelor's degree, or a Pennsylvania ECE Prek-4 instructional certificate).
4. Incorporate competencies, knowledge, and skills outlined in Table 2. Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners if they are not evident in the professional experience and practice of center ECE workforce.
5. Integrate each of the following into ECE programs of study:
 - Pennsylvania's Learning Standards for Early Childhood Infants and Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten;
 - Develop coaching strategies for higher education faculty that improve professional practice of ECE professionals;
 - Incorporate effective teaching and learning practices in one or more core academic subjects; and
 - Enable currently employed ECE professionals to use various types of data, including formative assessments, to strengthen classroom instruction and make program improvements.
6. Directors implement a variety of continuing supports into their ECE programs and classrooms;
7. Identify ways each partner will institutionalize changes to foster high quality ECE practice-based, clinical experiences and improved ECE teaching and learning beyond the term of the grant program;
8. Design and implement a comprehensive accountability system that enables the lead IHE partner to submit comprehensive data and information relevant to measurable goals and objectives identified in the partnership proposal.

Implementation of innovative and sustained pathways designed under these guidelines will commence upon the expiration of the grant award issued by the commonwealth.

1.8 Type of Award

If awards are made, the standard grant award contract will be issued, except for universities under the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, which will be issued an Inter – Agency Agreement (IAA). Negotiations will be held with potential contractors to discuss funding levels as well as programmatic changes. Because the application narrative will be incorporated into the grant award contract or IAA, revisions will be required for the narrative to be acceptable to the commonwealth.

1.9 Amount of Awards

Approximately \$1.4 million is available to implement *multiple* regional and/or statewide partnerships.

Awards issued under these guidelines will be valid through December 31, 2017. However, if the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) grants a year-long, no cost extension, funding will be available through December 31, 2018. Funding is **contingent upon conditions such as the appropriation of funds by the USDE, approval of a no cost extension by the USDE, no change in priority emphasis by the USDE or OCDEL, and a fully executed contract/MOU.**

Each of the following expenditures will be disallowed from any contract or memoranda of understanding awarded:

1. Costs of instruction or tuition charges.¹³
2. Facilities rental or janitorial costs for any of the partners.
3. Cost of food and beverages.
4. Purchases of equipment. Under these application guidelines equipment is an instrument, machine, apparatus or set of articles that meets all of the following criteria:
 - a. Cost is \$5,000 or more per unit; and
 - b. It retains its original shape, appearance and character with use; and
 - c. It does not lose its identity through fabrication or incorporation into a different or more complex unit or substance; and
 - d. It is nonexpendable; i.e., if the item is damaged or some of its parts are lost or worn out, it is more feasible to repair the item than to replace it with an entirely new unit; and
 - e. Under normal conditions of use, including reasonable care and maintenance, it can be expected to serve its principal purpose for more than one 12-month fiscal period.
5. Capital expenditures.
6. Full-time personnel hired specifically for the project.
7. College or university fees such as, but not limited to academic fees, equipment fees, computer fees, community center fees, ID fees, health fees.
8. Per diem, lodging and mileage reimbursement rates consistent with prevailing state limits available at [General Service Administration Per Diem](#).
9. Indirect costs not to exceed 8%.
10. Grant funds cannot be used to pay the salary of a project director who does not spend at least 20% of his/her time involved in instructional activities.

Regardless of the cost, computer software is categorized as "Supplies and Materials."

1.10 Project Expiration Date

Contracts awarded or memoranda of understanding issued under these application guidelines will expire on, or before December 31, 2017, or December 31, 2018 if a year-long no cost extension is granted by USDE.

1.11 Rejection of Applications

The commonwealth reserves the right to reject any and all applications received as a result of these guidelines and to negotiate separately with successful grant recipients. Applications will not be accepted from applicants (1) where IHE partners are not authorized to participate in TEACH financial aid; (2) who are currently delinquent in filing reports either with PDE, OCDEL or LECS Comptroller's

¹³ Tuition for all currently employed early childhood educators will be paid by T.E.A.C.H. financial aid; implementation of innovative pathway will commence upon the expiration of the grant agreement issued by the commonwealth.

Office; (3) if applications are not completed according to specifications contained in Part II, Application Requirements; and (4) if they are not submitted by the established filing deadline of **5:00 P.M. September 29, 2017**.

1.12 Incurring Costs

The commonwealth is not liable for any costs incurred by applicants or successful grant recipients prior to the effective date of any contract or IAA.

1.13 Pre-Proposal Conference

A pre-proposal conference will be conducted via a webinar scheduled for 9:00 A.M. until noon on August 4, 2017. The purpose of this conference is (1) to clarify the guidelines; (2) to emphasize portions of the guidelines considered especially important; and (3) to answer questions. Questions must be forwarded in writing by July 28, 2017 to the Issuing Office to insure that sufficient analysis can be made before an answer is supplied during the webinar. The Issuing Office has prepared a pre-printed form entitled Pre-Proposal Conference Questions Stemming from Higher Education, Early Child Care and Community-based Partnerships Working to Implement Innovative and Sustained Pathways Designed Specifically to Meet the Needs of Pennsylvania's Current Early Childhood Workforce guidelines (PDE-4658), which is available on the Department of Education's website at:

http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/competitive_grants/7462/eligible_partnerships_program_-_higher_education/506824), for applicants to submit their questions. Applicants will have an opportunity to pose additional **written** questions during the webinar. The webinar will be recorded for anyone who cannot participate. The recording will be available on the website as soon as possible.

1.14 Amendment to the Guidelines

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of the application guidelines, an amendment will be posted to the PDE's website.

1.15 Response Date

To be considered for funding, all applications must be completed in the form and manner specified in Part II, Application Requirements, no later than **5:00 P.M., September 29, 2017**.

Applicants are asked to notify the Issuing Office by **September 1, 2017** of their intent to submit an application by completing and mailing the "Notification of Intent to Submit an Application to Participate in Pennsylvania's *Higher Education, Early Child Care and Community-based Partnerships Working to Implement Innovative and Sustained Pathways Designed Specifically to Meet the Needs of Pennsylvania's Current Early Childhood Workforce*" (PDE-4658A), which is available on the Department of Education's website at

http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/competitive_grants/7462/eligible_partnerships_program_-_higher_education/506824). There is no obligation to submit a final application even though a notification form is submitted.

1.16 Economy of Preparation

Applications should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise, and detailed description of the project's goals, objective and activities that will be provided under this competition. Part II, Application Information, describes the items to be addressed by each application section. Proofread responses carefully; points will be deducted for grammatical, typographical, and syntactical errors.

1.17 Prime Contractor Responsibilities

Contractors¹⁴ will be required to assume responsibility for all goals, objectives and activities outlined in their application. Additionally, each contractor **must have all funds committed and obligated by December 31, 2017 or December 31, 2018, if a year-long no cost extension is granted by the USDE.** The sole point of contact for each contract or MOU will be the project director for the lead IHE, also known as the contractor.

After a contract is awarded or an MOU is issued, contractors are obligated to file the following reports:

REPORT	DUE DATE(S)	FILED WITH
Reconciliation of Cash on Hand (PDE-2030)	10 days after each calendar quarter once payment begins	LECS Comptroller's Office (Electronic submission)
Final Completion Report (PDE-2032)	90 days after grant expires or after all funds have been obligated	OCDEL
Audit Information ¹⁵	Nine months after expiration of contract/Interagency Agreement	Bureau of Audits and OCDEL
Progress Report (PDE-3810E)	Due at the end of each calendar quarter after the project begins	OCDEL
Program Evaluation (PDE-3810)	30 days after project ends	OCDEL

For auditing purposes, project staff will also need to maintain time and effort sheets or similar reporting mechanisms to document time devoted to project activities.

1.18 Disclosure of Application Contents

All material submitted becomes the property of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Applications submitted to the commonwealth may be reviewed and evaluated by any person other than competing applicants at the discretion of the commonwealth. The commonwealth has the right to use any or all ideas presented in any response to these guidelines. Selection or rejection of the application does not affect this right.

1.19 Notification and Evaluators' Comments

Each applicant will be notified in writing about the status of the application. In addition, copies of each evaluator's written evaluation will be provided.

1.20 News Releases

News releases and/or press statements pertaining to contracts awarded or memoranda of understanding issued under these application guidelines cannot be made without written authorization from the Issuing Office and must conform to the guidelines provided by the Issuing Office.

¹⁴ Under these guidelines, the contractor is the lead IHE partner designated in the application.

¹⁵ Entities that expend \$500,000 or more in total federal awards during the fiscal year are required to have an audit in accordance with OMB Circular A-133. Entities that expend less than \$500,000 in total federal awards during the fiscal year are exempt from the single audit requirements (Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996), but they are required to maintain records, which can be audited.

1.21 Commonwealth Participation

The program officer for these guidelines is: Susan Polojac, Director, Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant in the Department of Education. Ms. Polojac is available to provide technical assistance to applicants up to the filing deadline and to contractors after awards are made. Ms. Polojac also has the responsibility to ensure activities submitted under each application are permissible under the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge funds.

1.22 Terms of Payment

Funds may not be spent prior to the effective date of the grant award contract or IAA. Moreover, 10% of the total contract or IAA will be withheld by the commonwealth and will not be released unless the contractor satisfies all mandatory reporting obligations. The remaining balance will be prorated over the term of the contract or IAA. Payments will begin when the contractor's file has been activated by LECS Comptroller's Office. Depending on when a contractor's account is activated, up to three months of payments may be issued for the contractor's payment schedule to be up-to-date.

The commonwealth has converted to an Automated Clearing House (ACH) System to disburse federal payments processed through the Federal Subsidies Section. Funds will be deposited into a designated ACH account rather than being disbursed by check.

Payments under the contract or IAA will continue as long as the contractor continues to submit quarterly Reconciliation of Cash on Hand forms (PDE-2030) and the funds on-hand are within the cash management guidelines established by EDGAR.

1.23 Important Dates

The following dates generally reflect the evaluation process and are targets **subject to change by the Department:**

Task	Date
Guidelines Released	June 30, 2017
Submission of Written Questions for Pre-Proposal Conference	July 28, 2017
Pre-Proposal Conference	August 4, 2017
Letter of Intent Due	September 1, 2017
Competitive Partnership Applications Due	September 29, 2017
Application Review and Scoring by Review Panel	October 2-6, 2017
All Applicants Notified	October 30, 2017
Meeting with Each Grant Recipient	November 1-3, 2017
Grant Award Contracts Prepared and Returned to PDE	December 1, 2017
Race to the Top Funds Expire	December 31, 2017
Year-long, No Cost Extension Issued by US Department of Education	December 31, 2018

Task	Date
Submission of Quarterly Evaluation Reports to OCDEL	March 31, 2018, June 30, 2018, September 29, 2018 and December 31, 2018
Participation in Quarterly Telephone Calls	March 31, 2018, June 30, 2018, September 29, 2018 and December 31, 2018
Grant Close Out	March 31, 2018 (90 days after funds expire)
Submission of OMB Circular A-133 Audit Report	May 1, 2018

1.24 General Conditions

The commonwealth's standard terms and conditions are an integral part of each grant award contract. For State System universities, the IAA represents the understandings of the agencies involved.

1.25 Procedures for Filing Allegations of Procedural Violations

The following procedures govern the filing of allegations of procedural violation against OCDEL:

1. A signed letter of the complaint citing specific allegations of wrong-doing must be received by Suzann Morris, Deputy Secretary, Office of Child Development and Early Learning, no later than 30 days from the mailing date of the funding decision.
2. The Deputy Secretary's Office forwards the allegations to Tracey Campanini, Chief of Staff, OCDEL.
3. Tracey Campanini will investigate allegations of violation.
4. Upon receipt of the allegations, Tracey Campanini will acknowledge receipt of correspondence and will indicate an investigation will ensue, culminating in a written response to the allegations mailed within 20 days of the date the letter was received in Tracey Campanini's Office.
5. The written response shall include the following: the name of the party raising the allegation of procedural violation, the nature of the allegations, the recommended resolution and the reasons for the recommendation.
6. The complainant may appeal the recommended resolution to the Secretary of Education pursuant to 1 Pennsylvania Code, §35.20.

Part II

APPLICATION INFORMATION

All eligible applicants must submit copies of the following in a PDF format:

1. Cover Page;
2. Project Abstract – Rider B (PDE-3118);
3. Agreement for Higher Education - Early Childhood Center Partnerships (PDE-3668);
4. Acronym Definition Page and Explanations of Projects Referenced in Narrative;
5. Budget Projection (PDE-3113G);
6. Draft evaluation instruments to measure effectiveness of goals, objectives, activities, and expected outcomes; and
7. Proposal Narrative, which includes the following sequence of sections:
 - a. Executive Summary;
 - b. Local Needs Assessment/Cooperative Planning;
 - c. Instructional Program/Program Results;
 - d. Evaluation;
 - e. Dissemination of Project Information;
 - f. Cost and Price Analysis.

Each application must contain the following information submitted in the format and sequence described below:

1. Cover Page, which lists application contents and page numbers.

2. Certification that each IHE is Authorized to Participate in T.E.A.C.H. Financial Assistance

3. Project Abstract - Rider B (PDE-3118). This section gathers information related to the specific project, its measurable goals, objectives, and activities. This form asks questions related to who will lead the partnership activities, funding level, anticipated starting and ending dates, anticipated number of early childhood educators who will attend program when it is implemented after December 31, 2018. In addition to listing all partners (IHEs, eligible ECE centers, etc.) the abstract includes a table that connects project activities to project goals and individual objectives. Each partnership must include as one of its measurable goals or objectives the number of ECE practitioners and type of industry-recognized ECE credential to be earned, i.e., CDA, associate's or bachelor's degree or a Pennsylvania ECE PreK-4 instructional certificate.

4. Agreement to Participate in a Higher Education, Early Child Care and Community-based Partnerships Working to Implement Innovative Programs Designed Specifically to Meet the Needs of Pennsylvania's Current Early Childhood Workforce program (PDE-3668). A signed agreement is required from each partner that describes the roles and responsibilities of each partner. Letters of endorsement do not fulfill this requirement.

5. Acronym Definition Page and Explanations of Projects Referenced in Narrative. Present a comprehensive description of all acronyms and projects references in narrative.

6. Two-Year Budget Projection for Competitive Application prepared on form PDE-3113G or a similar format.

7. Draft copies of evaluation instruments to measure effectiveness of the tasks to be undertaken to design an innovative pathway for current ECE professionals to participate and earn an industry-recognized ECE credential (i.e., CDA, associate's or bachelor's degree or a Pennsylvania ECE PreK-4 instructional certificate).

7. **Application Narrative** containing the following sections:

- a. Executive Summary
- b. Local Needs Assessment/Cooperative Planning
- c. Instructional Program/Program Results
- d. Plan of Action
- e. Evaluation
- f. Dissemination of Project Information
- g. Cost and Price Analysis

The Application Narrative is limited to 20 double-spaced pages, prepared in 12 point, Arial font.

The application must respond to all requirements in this part of the guidelines. Any other information thought to be relevant, but not required by a section, should be provided as an appendix to the application. **Material contained in appendices may not be fully considered by external evaluators.**

When writing a narrative, follow the prescribed sequence below for each section; each section need not start on a new page; be sure to include detailed descriptions and action strategies associated with each section of the application.

1. **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.** (a) State the goal of the regional/statewide partnership (refer to item #6 in the Project Abstract). (b) **List measurable objectives (refer to item #6 in the Project Abstract), standards or benchmarks to determine effectiveness of the program and summarize the early childhood academic program, academic supports (refer to item #6 in the Project Abstract) to be provided,** delivery strategies, and the steps IHEs and ECE centers will take to ensure program is accessible to today's current ECE workforce. (c) List anticipated project outcomes--including (1) the anticipated number of potential ECE practitioners who have expressed interest in enrolling in the program after December 31, 2018, cooperating early childhood teachers, center directors, student teachers, and higher education coaches (i.e., supervising faculty) from each partner; and (2) the anticipated partner benefits.

2. **LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT/COOPERATIVE PLANNING.** This section of the application documents current, local needs of each eligible early childhood centers' workforce. Partnerships will: (a) Describe how the ECE center is eligible to participate as a partner; (c) Describe demographics of children enrolled in ECE center; (b) Describe the educational experiences of ECE staff in each ECE center involved in the partnership; (c) Describe what each partner has done to integrate Pennsylvania's Early Learning Standards for Early Childhood Infant and Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten into curricula and ECE program of study. (d) Identify how current ECE use resources from Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned Systems in their daily practice. (e) Describe other local conditions that substantiate the need for the partners to participate in the development of practice-based courses that will improve their abilities to help young children learn to higher levels, for example the rate of turnover of ECE staff. (f) Describe the collaborative process that will be used to develop an innovative and sustainable ECE pathway that meets not only the needs of current workforce, but also ensures that the pathway incorporates knowledge and skills associated with the professional practice of ECE practitioners.

3. **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM/PROGRAM RESULTS.** This section focuses on the ECE program of study and anticipated results. (a) Develop an implementation timeline for each activity associated with developing an innovative pathway for current ECE workforce; use the measurable objectives and activities listed in item #6 of Project Abstract (PDE-3118), include the duration of each activity, and the name and title of individual(s) responsible for overseeing the activity. (b) Describe how the partnership will ensure that current ECE practitioners will not be required to relearn knowledge and competencies they already exhibit in their job. (c) Describe how the partnership will ensure that the requisite **Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Education Practitioners** outlined in Table 2 of these guidelines will form the keystone of the innovative pathway. (d) Describe how each

of the following will be integrated into redesigned ECE programs of study:

- Integrate Pennsylvania's Standards for Early Learning Infants and Toddlers and Pre-Kindergarten into early childhood development courses and degree programs;
- Develop coaching strategies for higher education faculty that improve professional practice of ECE professionals; and
- Incorporate effective teaching and learning practices in one or more core academic subjects; and
- Enable currently employed ECE professionals to use various types of data, including formative assessments to strengthen classroom instruction and make program improvements.

(e) Summarize expected outcomes: these are the benefits provided to current and future ECE workforce, cooperating ECE teachers, other ECE teachers, center directors, students, higher education faculty, student teachers, IHEs, and other partners as a result of the activities outlined in the application (see Table 3. Expected Outcomes for Funded Partnerships). (f) Since partnerships are designing innovative and sustained pathways to meet the educational needs of today's ECE workforce, describe the incentives and flexibilities that will be incorporated to allow currently employed ECE workers to participate in these programs. (g) Describe the supports and retention strategies that will be implemented when current ECE workers enroll, especially since one goal/objective is for current ECE to earn an industry-recognized credential (i.e., CDA, associate's or bachelor's degree or a Pennsylvania ECE PreK-4 instructional certificate).

4. **PLAN OF ACTION.** *The focus of this section is process.* (a) Describe the plan in terms of essential elements 1-7 outlined in 1.7 of these guidelines. (b) Describe evidence-based ECE pedagogical methods that will be incorporated into ECE programs of study. (c) Present a staffing plan—including the names and roles of individuals from each partner-- and an organizational chart, including names of individuals and the partner they represent. (d) Describe how partnership anticipates improving practice-based, clinical sites for future ECE practitioners. (e) Describe why the partnership has the capacity to design an innovative and sustained pathway that culminates in an industry-recognized ECE credential (i.e., CDA, an associate's or bachelor's degree or Pennsylvania's ECE PreK-4 instructional certificate). (f) Describe why the partnership has the capacity to strengthen the professional practice of current ECE workforce, accomplish stated goals, objectives and expected outcomes, including the qualifications of the lead IHE's project director to administer a regional/ statewide partnership grant. Note: since syllabi will be finalized during the term of the grant, partnerships will be required to submit syllabi when the grant award expires.

5. **EVALUATION.** *An external evaluator is not required by these guidelines.* This section identifies benchmarks for each goal, objective, activity and expected outcome. Each partnership will identify (1) methods that will be used to report status and results to its partners and (2) how it will work with partners to understand and use key project results for continuous program improvement.

- a. Design a plan that measures the effectiveness of identify key strategies and component parts that are deemed essential for keeping all partners working toward the common goal of developing an innovative and sustained pathway that culminates in an industry-recognized ECE credential (i.e., a CDA, an associate's or bachelor's degree or a Pennsylvania ECE PreK-4 instructional certificate).
- b. Establish rigorous standards or benchmarks that will be used to determine the effectiveness of the partnership's efforts to develop and innovative pathway, incorporate appropriate strategies and flexibilities to retain and encourage ECE practitioners to complete and earn an industry-recognized ECE credential.
- c. Provide draft copies of evaluation instruments that will be implemented (either in current form or with revisions).
- d. Identify the individual who will be responsible for the overall evaluation and describe his/her experience with evaluations of this nature.

- e. Describe the feedback loop that will be implemented for continuous program improvement to occur.
- f. Describe how evaluation results will be reported to partners.

6. **DISSEMINATION OF PROJECT INFORMATION.** (a) Illustrate how the partnership's processes for designing an innovative and sustainable ECE pathway can be replicated by other partners. (b) Identify components of the partnership that will be essential for others to replicate. (c) Design a plan that includes distribution channels that will be used to distribute a description of program processes and information.

7. **COST AND PRICE ANALYSIS.** This section adds meaning to the budget figures included on the budget form accompanying the partnership application. It explains how each budgeted item supports program goals, objectives, and activities. (a) Describe the cost effectiveness of the budget. (b) Connect each expenditure to relevant project goal(s), objective(s), activity(ies), and expected outcomes (see item #6 of Project Abstract). (c) Explain how the budget will be monitored to ensure each partner's expenditures are consistent with the budget. (d) Describe the institutional procedures that are in place regarding administering a grant of this nature, include procedures for contracting or procuring services of others. Partnerships are asked to complete a realistic, cost effective and detailed budget for project years one and two (if a one-year, no cost extension is approved by the USDE) related to the following six expenditure categories: (1) Salaries, (2) Fringe Benefits, (3) Purchased Professional and Technical Services, (4) Other Purchased Services, (5) Supplies and Materials, and (6) Indirect Costs (limited to 8%). Carefully check all budget figures and calculations and verify that funding levels on the Project Abstract-Rider B match the totals reported on the budget projection form.

9. **BUDGET PROJECTION FOR COMPETITIVE APPLICATION.** Complete columns for Years 1 and 2 for this competition. *A partnership should not request or budget more than a total of \$400,000 across years 1 and 2.* (a) Prepare a **realistic, cost effective** two-year financial plan using the following **6 categories to itemize** expenses anticipated for designing an innovative ECE pathway: (1) Salaries, (2) Fringe Benefits, (3) Purchased Professional and Technical Services, (4) Other Purchased Services, (5) Supplies and Materials, and (6) Indirect Costs (limited to 8% maximum). (b) A sample two-year budget is available on PDE's web site at: http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/competitive_grants/7462/eligible_partnerships_program_-_higher_education/506824. Carefully check all budget figures and calculations and verify that funding level reported on the Project Abstract-Rider B is the same as the total on the budget projection form.

Common Application Shortcomings

Partnerships should avoid the following common application shortcomings as they respond to application questions:

- Applications lack sufficient detail and raise more questions than they answer;
- Needs assessment data are not local and current;
- Key concepts are not developed into appropriate action strategies;
- Application information is poorly organized and, therefore, difficult to follow and understand;
- Instructional activities seldom build on existing partnerships;
- Application information is inconsistent from one section to another;
- Budgets are not cost effective;
- Budgets contain calculation errors; and
- Applications contain typographical, grammatical and/or syntactical errors.

PART III

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Each part of the application has been assigned a point value for numerically rating and ranking applications. Point values for each part of the application are below; the **maximum** point value any application may receive is 250.

PARTS OF APPLICATION	POINTS
Cover Page, which lists application contents and page numbers	0
Certification that each IHE is Authorized to Participate in TEACH Financial Aid Program	10
Project Abstract - Rider B	0
Agreement to Participate in a Higher Education, Early Child Care and Community-based Partnerships Working to Implement Innovative and Sustained Pathways Designed Specifically to Meet the Needs of Pennsylvania's Current Early Childhood Workforce (PDE-3668)	0
Acronym Definition Page and Explanations of Projects Referenced in Application	0
Budget Projection	20
<u>Narrative</u>	
• Executive Summary	10
• Local Needs Assessment/Cooperative Planning	20
• Instructional Program/Program Results	25
• Plan of Action	30
• Dissemination of Project Information	20
• Evaluation, including copies of draft evaluation instruments	25
• Cost and Price Analysis	10
Subtotal	140
SPECIAL AREA POINTS	POINTS
Points will be awarded on an all or nothing basis for each category below:	
• Demonstrate essential changes will be integrated in future ECE practiced-based, clinical experiences.	20
• Demonstrate the partners have the capacity to implement an innovative ECE pathway that culminates in current ECE practitioners earning a CDA, an associate's or bachelor's degree or Pennsylvania ECE PreK-4 instructional certificate.	20
• Demonstrate ECE program of study incorporates requisite knowledge and competencies recommended by IOM/NRC (see pages 10-12), along with the knowledge and skills that are Pennsylvania-specific (see 5a-e on page 13).	20
• Demonstrate current and future ECE practitioners who complete the innovative pathway will have the professional knowledge to enable all young children to learn to higher levels.	20
Subtotal - Special Bonus Points	80
Total Maximum Points	250

A panel of independent reviewers will review applications. Total points will be awarded on the basis of overall strength; detailed descriptions provided, and responsiveness to the Higher Education, Early Child Care and Community-based Partnerships Working to Implement Innovative and Sustained Pathways Designed Specifically to Meet the Needs of Pennsylvania's Current Early Childhood Workforce guidelines. Scores will be recorded and statistically analyzed to determine which applications will be funded based. Before funding recommendations are forwarded to the

Secretary of Education and the program manager will review applications identified for funding to verify that they are consistent with Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge requirements and guidance from USDE. Partnerships will be distributed across the commonwealth. The number of partnerships funded will be limited by the amount of funds available.