

Preschool Development Grant Renewal Grant Proposal Summary

The following summarizes WI's proposal for three additional years of Preschool Development Grant (PDG) funding. The proposal was submitted in November 2020 and is undergoing federal consideration.

Under the leadership and vision of Wisconsin's Governor, WI is uniquely positioned to make meaningful and lasting improvements to its Birth to 5 (B-5) early childhood state system (ECSS). Building off its initial Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG) – which served as a catalyst to mobilize stakeholders, build new allies, engage in a thorough needs assessment (NA), and develop a strategic plan (SP) – WI has developed a comprehensive road map to further connect and expand services and supports for WI's youngest, most vulnerable and underserved children and families. The PDG Renewal Grant (PDG-R) will help WI advance its priorities as identified in its SP focused on addressing the pervasive challenges around equity, access, affordability, quality, and bolstering the ECE workforce to ultimately improve the well-being and optimal development of young children through an interconnected B-5 mixed delivery early care and education (ECE) system.

During PDG, WI's NA and SP emphasized the need to support ECE and specifically child care, which reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the immediate need to stabilize the field. With PDG-R, WI plans to build off this important work to develop a more holistic NA and SP reflective of the cross-sector ECSS, which will be updated every two years to align with the state's biennial budget cycle. By leveraging momentum for systems change at the state level and supporting local partnerships for more family-responsive services, the PDG-R will expedite WI's efforts to develop an equitable ECSS that meets the needs of families and prepares the next generation of children to succeed and thrive.

With PDG-R funds, WI will invest in efforts to expand parental knowledge about ECE options available to them – including IDEA Part C and B services – as well as the creation of a new Equity Advisory Council (EAC) focused on strengthening family and provider feedback loops to ensure WI's ECE system is more equitable and family-centered. WI will also utilize PDG-R funds to bolster evidence-based best practices to support the ECE workforce including expanding cross-sector professional development opportunities focused on trauma and inclusion and with a practice-based coaching emphasis, and to fund a new Workforce Grant opportunity for local public-private strategies to increase compensation and create new pathways for recruitment into the ECE workforce. Finally, WI will continue to support quality improvement efforts by expanding comprehensive health consultation and outreach to ECE programs; and through Community Innovation Grants, seed money to leverage collective impact to pilot or scale up existing best practices or programs, while braiding local child-centered efforts and funding streams. At the end of this grant period, WI will have more equitable early childhood state and local systems that are designed to improve outcomes for the children who need it most.

