The District of Columbia
&
the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge

State Plan Overview
September 21, 2011

What is the Early Learning Challenge? Quality as Basis for Public Investment

This grant will allow the District to -

- Strengthen infrastructure (standards, assessment, data system)

- Support quality/accountability through a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

- Continue to build and develop a great early childhood workforce

- Address the needs of our most vulnerable children and their families

5 Areas that Must Be Addressed

1. ***Successful State Systems*** that include: demonstrated commitment to early learning and development; rationale for reform; aligned and coordinated system; and sustainable budget.

2. ***High-Quality, Accountable Programs*** with a statewide, validated QRIS and access to high quality programs for *children with high needs*.

3. ***Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children*** through early learning and development standards, comprehensive assessment system, screening and addressing health, behavioral and developmental needs and family engagement.

4. ***A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce*** that includes a clear ladder of knowledge and competencies and support for providers to move up that ladder.

5. ***Measuring Outcomes and Progress*** including kindergarten entry assessment and/or building an early learning data system.

Our Process and Our Approach

Executive Team

Deputy Mayors of Education & Health and Human Services	Agency Directors for OSSE, DCPS, PCSB, DOH, DHS, DMH, and CFSA

Project Management Team (Successful State Systems)

Project Manager (DME Staff) State Early Childhood and Development Coordinating Council member	Staff from each participating agency (DMHHS, OSSE, DCPS, PCSB, DOH, DHS, DMH, CFSA)

Working Groups

Promoting Early Learning Development Outcomes for Children	High Quality, Accountable Programs	A Great Early Childhood Workforce	Early Childhoo d Data Systems

Defining our Mission

Ensure that all District children enter kindergarten healthy and prepared to learn

In order to ensure a clear continuum of service provision, DC will integrate the existing services offered to young children and their families via inter-agency collaboration and strengthened connections between service providers

In order to ensure access to high-quality early care and education for all children birth to five, continue to build capacity for infant and toddler care

In order to ensure continuous quality improvement in all early care and education settings, provide adequate and equitable resources to childcare providers receiving public funds and create accountability mechanisms using the tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)

In order to understand the readiness of young children for school, assess all kindergarteners within the first months of school to gauge their cognitive and socio-emotional development, and health and mental health.

Status Update

Application deadline: October 19, 2011

- Key Projects:
  - Inter-agency collaboration and information sharing
  - Enhancing the existing QRIS program standards and inviting new types of EC programs to participate
  - Alignment of Early Learning Standards to the Common Core Standards
  - Creating a Workforce Competency Framework for EC educators and aligning professional development opportunities to support growth
  - Planning for the development of a District-wide Kindergarten Entry Assessment