REQUEST FOR FUNDING
OECOSL RFF 19-002

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT PROGRAM

COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM
GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE: OCTOBER 5, 2018 AT 5PM EST
RFF DATE ISSUED: AUGUST 31, 2018

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I. INTRODUCTION

This is the second round of an early childhood education capacity building Request for Funding (RFF) issued by the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA), Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning (OECOSL). This RFF requests responses from county/community coalitions and/or eligible individual early childhood education providers interested in building their capacity to provide early childhood education programs by serving more children and/or increasing the quality of services provided. All county/community coalitions and/or individual early childhood education providers within the state of Indiana that meet the eligibility criteria in Section II.B may apply. **Early childhood education providers who received funding from OECOSL RFF 18-001 are not eligible to apply.**

A. BACKGROUND

House Enrolled Act (HEA) 1004 of the 2017 legislative session, signed into law by Governor Eric Holcomb on April 26, 2017, expanded the early education pilot program to provide grants to eligible children for qualified education services (“On-My-Way Pre-K Pilot Program”). The program funds qualified educational services delivered via accredited private schools, public schools, and community-based early education providers who have achieved Level 3 or Level 4 in Paths to QUALITY\(^1\), Indiana’s voluntary child care quality rating and improvement system that aims to improve child outcomes and increase parent engagement (Appendix A).

Additionally, HEA 1004 allows the awarding of grants for expansion plans for any existing eligible providers or potentially eligible providers serving eligible children (defined in Section II.D). These expansion grants are the focus of this RFF. After June 30, 2017, any provider that meets the requirements as an eligible provider under the statute (defined in Section II.B of this RFF) may receive grant funding. Funding may not exceed the total of twenty percent (20%) of the pilot funding during each State fiscal year. Since money in the pilot fund differs each fiscal year depending on the number of enrollees, the amount of grant funding available will differ each fiscal year. Further detail on activities funded by the grant can be found in Section II.D.

Based on data included in the Indiana Early Learning Advisory Committee (ELAC) Annual Report\(^2\), Indiana currently has 1,098 high quality early childhood education programs (high quality is defined as participation in Paths to QUALITY Level 3, Level 4, or nationally accredited by an approved accreditation body) who are serving just under 45,000 children. In nine counties (Clinton, Jasper, Newton, Pulaski, Rush, Starke, Sullivan, Warren, and Wells) there are not any high quality programs, and many counties only have a handful of designated programs.

This is the second early childhood capacity building Request for Funding. OECOSL RFF 18-001 was released in December 2017 and awarded in May 2018. OECOSL granted $1.6M to 17 applicants that serve 49 locations. Applicants who did not receive an award for OECOSL RFF 18-001 are encouraged to carefully review this Request for Funding before submitting an

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1 [http://in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/3731.htm](http://in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/3731.htm)
application and to consider enhancing their narrative related to the sustainability of proposed
grant activities and improvements, quality assurance, plans for building capacity, and the
relevancy of budget items to the applicant’s capacity building plan. Previous applicants are
strongly encouraged to review Attachment E for a list of key considerations for those re-applying
for funding via OECOSL RFF 19-002. New applicants may also find this document helpful and
are also encouraged to review it.

II. GRANT APPLICATION DETAILS

A. OBJECTIVES
The goal of this RFF is to solicit proposals from county/community coalitions and/or individual
early childhood education providers to:

- Increase the number of high quality early childhood education programs that serve
  eligible children and have achieved Level 3 or Level 4 in Paths to QUALITY
  and/or

- Expand capacity to serve more eligible children.

All applicants whether expanding seats or increasing their PTQ level must have a plan to
reach a PTQ Level 3 or 4 if they have not already attained this level3. As defined by HEA
1004, an eligible child is “at least four years of age and less than five years of age on August 1 of
the state fiscal year for which a grant is sought”, which applies to children who are currently four
or will turn four by August 1, 2019. FSSA will award county/community coalitions and/or
individual early childhood education providers a grant to support capacity building projects.
Applicants must be prepared to track and show improved program quality and/or capacity as a
result of the funding received. Applicants may plan on beginning their projects in the Spring
2019 (see Section II.J for the RFF timeline) and shall focus on having their activities completed
by the start of or during the 2019-2020 school year.

As this grant aims to promote community engagement in early childhood education, all
applicants are required to seek matching funds from local businesses or other stakeholders who
will benefit from the community improvement resulting from the increased capacity of local
early childhood education programs. If the applicant is a county/community coalition, this match
can come from within or outside the coalition, as long as the individual coalition members are
not providing the entire match. Applicants will receive priority points for having a local entity
match all or a portion of the grant provided by the State. More information on the priority points
received for grant matching can be found in Section III.E.

3 A non-public accredited school is not required to have a plan to reach a PTQ Level 3 or 4 but may elect
to reach a PTQ Level 3 or 4.
B. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS
To receive funding under this grant, an eligible early childhood education provider must provide services to eligible children (defined above in Section II.B) and meet one of the following criteria, as defined by HEA 1004. Applicants will be asked to affirm they meet or are trying to meet the following criteria in their application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant meets all the following:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Be one of the following who provides services to eligible children:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A public school, including a charter school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a child care center licensed under Indiana Code (IC) 12-17.2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a child care home licensed under IC 12-17.2-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• or a child care ministry registered under IC 12-17.2-6*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. That has achieved, or is trying to achieve, a Level 3 or Level 4 in Paths to QUALITY AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. That has achieved, or is trying to achieve, Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) eligibility4 AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Did NOT receive funding from OECOSL RFF 18-001.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note – The Applicant registered with OECOSL (church/religious organization) of the child care ministry must be the applicant for this grant under the same EIN registered with the State. The Applicant (church/religious organization) must be the entity with whom the State executes the resulting contract if awarded. Funds will be dispersed to the Applicant (church/religious organization) for use by the child care ministry.

OR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applicant meets all the following:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. A non-public school that provides qualified early education services to eligible children and is accredited by a national or regional accreditation agency that is recognized by the State Board of Education, or an accrediting agency approved by the Office of the Secretary AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. That has achieved, or is trying to achieve, Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) eligibility AND</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Did NOT receive funding from OECOSL RFF 18-001.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The State is seeking two types of applicants for this RFF: county/community coalitions or individual early childhood education providers. Applicants are encouraged to apply as a county/community coalition of stakeholders that includes one or more eligible or potentially eligible early childhood education provider(s) who would receive funding through this RFF. The intent is to receive one application from a county/community coalition detailing their plan to

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4 https://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/3900.htm
build capacity in their community. County/community coalitions should represent diverse stakeholders in the early childhood education system. For example, these county/community coalitions could be comprised of a local government entity, businesses, or for-profit/nonprofit organizations that have an established partnership with eligible or potentially eligible early childhood education providers. This may be a new or established community/county coalition. The county/community coalition must be able to sign a grant agreement with the State to administer funding if awarded (see Section II.F).

The State also will accept applications from individual early childhood education providers. If the provider’s community has an early childhood education coalition, the provider is encouraged to apply with the coalition. However, the State recognizes not all Indiana communities have coalitions. Child care ministries must apply under the church/religious organization registered with the State.

More than one application can be received from within a particular county/community. Coalition members or supporting entities like school districts may be included as stakeholders in more than one application. For instance, a community stakeholder may be a member of several coalitions. However, individual early childhood education providers receiving the grant funding for their capacity building projects (whether applying as part of a coalition or individually) may only appear on one application for a particular location, county, or project. Furthermore, individual early childhood education providers with multiple facilities should only submit one application describing the projects for all the locations for which funding is being requested except as follows: If an early childhood education provider operates in multiple counties, it may submit an individual application for one county and be a part of a county/community coalition for a separate and distinct project in a different county. Additionally, the early childhood education provider can also be a part of two county/community coalitions for separate and distinct projects in two different counties.

Important information regarding applicants and awardees of OECOSL RFF 18-001:

- Early childhood education providers who were awarded a funding resulting from OECOSL 18-001 are NOT eligible to apply to for RFF 19-002.
- Early childhood education providers who applied to OECOSL RFF 18-001 and were NOT awarded a grant are eligible to apply for RFF 19-002.
- County/community coalitions with early childhood education providers who were awarded via OECOSL RFF 18-001 shall NOT apply to RFF 19-002 on behalf of these awarded early childhood education providers.
- County/community coalitions who applied to OECOSL RFF 18-001 and had awarded early childhood education providers may apply on behalf of other eligible early childhood education providers who did not receive funding under OECOSL RFF 18-001 or were not previously included as part of the coalition application.

C. GRANT FUNDING
The capacity grant available in this RFF will follow a standard competitive grant model. The applicant will apply for the grant per the guidelines in this RFF. If selected, the applicant will receive a grant to implement the items agreed to in the proposal and eventual grant contract.
FSSA reserves the right to make all final award decisions and to award grants based on the quality of applications and available funding.

1. Grant Payments
Funds from the grant will be provided as a combination of reimbursements and upfront payment as allowed by Indiana Code. If the awarded grant amount is $50,000 or more, applicants can receive up to 1/6 (16.67%) of their total grant amount as an upfront payment. If the grant is under $50,000, applicants can receive up to 1/2 (50%) of their total grant amount as an upfront payment. In both scenarios, the remainder of the grant will be provided through reimbursements by the State.

If the applicant is an individual early childhood education provider, grant payments will be disbursed directly to the provider. If the applicant is a coalition, grant payments will be disbursed to the coalition. It is the coalition’s responsibility to distribute the funding to the early childhood education providers within the coalition. Please note, as explained in Section II.D, only eligible early childhood education providers may utilize grant funding to support capacity building projects. Coalitions shall not use grant funding for any other purposes, including supplementing coalition costs. All funding must be used by eligible early childhood education providers for eligible activities.

2. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
A key portion of the grant application will be measuring and monitoring outcomes to ensure that objectives are being met on behalf of the children who will benefit from this funding. As such, all applicants will be required to submit at least two Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which act as project goals that track the progress of their plans to increase capacity through serving more children or adding more qualified providers and demonstrate how the State can objectively measure the progress of the project. In general, the applicant’s KPIs must be measurable, attainable, and time-limited. Examples of acceptable KPIs include: We will expand the capacity of our early childhood education program by 10 children by July 1, 2019; or We will improve our Paths to QUALITY rating from Level 2 to a Level 3 by August 1, 2019. Applicants must submit their KPIs in their response to the Grant Funding/Match/KPIs question in the Technical Proposal (Section III.B.1.v). Although the KPIs need to be achieved by the early childhood education provider directly, if applying as a county/community coalition, members of the coalition must also take an active role in setting and supporting the achievement of the KPIs in order to promote community improvement.

3. Grant Match
Under IC 12-17.2-7.2-8, applicants for OECOSL funding are required to secure a monetary grant match from local businesses or other stakeholders who will benefit from the community improvement associated with this grant. This grant match must be at least 5% and can be up to 50% of the total amount of the total capacity building plan budget submitted in the Grant Budget Proposal in Attachment B.1 or B.2. The grant match requirement only applies to the total amount of grant funding requested from OECOSL. No grant match is required for projects funded by Early Learning Indiana (see Section II.D.3.) Failure to submit a grant match of at least 5% of your OECOSOL total budget
request will result in your proposal being disqualified. Each grant matching entity needs to demonstrate its understanding of the KPIs, the grant match amount to be provided, and its commitment to providing the match through a grant match commitment letter. A separate grant match commitment letter must be submitted by each entity providing a grant match. Additionally, the grant matching entity/entities must be listed on the Prospective Program Sites and Community Partner Form in Attachment A. Coalitions should disburse the grant match across all early childhood education providers included in their application.

IC 12-17.2-7.2-8 states the match must be paid from donations, gifts, grants, bequests and other funds received from a private entity or person, from the United States Government, or from other sources, excluding this grant or other state funding. Note that all match funding must be monetary in nature – no in-kind grant matches are allowed. Also, please note that no source of State of Indiana government funding may be used at the match. Per the Indiana Department of Education, this exclusion includes Title I funds. Finally, **OECOSL will not permit self-funding of the match**. This means applicants must demonstrate community partnership by securing a portion of the match from an outside entity or entities. The outside entity or entities shall not be the applicant, one of the early childhood education providers in a Coalition’s application, or anyone with an ownership stake in an early childhood education entity included in an application. Applicants shall not require parents/guardians to pay extra fees in order to fund the match. Further, school corporations and schools shall not fund the match from their operating budgets. Applicants who only self-match will be disqualified.

The total grant match amount will be subtracted from your total OECOSL grant budget to dictate the grant amount provided by the State. The number of priority points received for your grant match will be based on the percentage of the total grant amount matched. Grant matches of 5% will receive 1 priority point while grant matches of 50% will receive 5 priority points.

4. Early Learning Indiana Grant Match Assistance
Nonprofit applicants struggling to secure the 5% grant match minimum may request assistance from Early Learning Indiana. Interested applicants that contact Early Learning Indiana may be eligible to receive a grant match or an introduction to another entity that could provide a match. Early Learning Indiana has a request process for the grant match that is separate from the application for this grant and is available at this link provided below.

The grant match must be secured before a grant application is submitted, therefore interested applicants are encouraged to contact Early Learning Indiana as soon as possible to request assistance. Further, to receive match support from Early Learning Indiana, interested individual early education providers must prove they are a nonprofit and interested county/community coalitions must prove that each early childhood education provider(s) receiving the match support within the coalition is a nonprofit. Applicants should attempt to seek the required grant match within their community before reaching out to Early Learning Indiana and will be asked about their efforts to
secure a match. To request support from Early Learning Indiana, fill out a grant match request at this link: https://earlylearningindiana.typeform.com/to/ooQoqH.

For questions contact:

Natalie Brake, Director of Capacity-Building for Early Learning Indiana, at natalieb@earlylearningindiana.org or 317.636.9197 x292.

D. USE OF FUNDS
As required by HEA 1004, grant funds must be used to increase the capacity of early childhood education providers to serve more eligible children and/or increase the number of qualified early childhood education providers serving eligible children. As stated in Section I.B, an eligible child is “at least four years of age and less than five years of age on August 1 of the state fiscal year for which a grant is sought”, which applies to children who are currently four or will turn four by August 1, 2019.

Applicants are required to demonstrate in their application response how their use of grant funding will provide services to more eligible children and/or increase their Paths to QUALITY rating to a Level 3 or Level 4. The estimated number of new/expanded seats for eligible children and the estimated increase in PTQ level for each early childhood education provider that will arise from the grant funding must be documented on the Prospective Program Sites and Community Partner Form in Attachment A.

As outlined in IC 12-17.2-7.2-7.4(e), if the applicant fails to use the grant funds in accordance with the criteria described above or comply with the agreement entered into with the State, the applicant shall repay the total amount of the grant awarded.

1. Items Eligible for Funding
Use of grant funding shall be used to meet the Objectives of this RFF by increasing capacity and quality for eligible children and may include, but is not limited to, the following items:

- Personnel participating in the capacity building project
- Workforce investment including training and professional development for teaching staff (see II.D.2 for an important note about CDA training courses)
- Classroom materials that demonstrate increased outcomes for children or increased instructional practices for educators that can be tied to outcomes and KPIs in the application
- Evidence-based curriculum/instructional materials with professional development for teaching staff to utilize the curriculum
- Family engagement
- Marketing and communication engagement that can be shown to increase capacity or quality

Please note when selecting items to include in a proposed budget that grant applicants are required to demonstrate how the funding from their proposed project will increase capacity through increasing the number of eligible children who can be served or adding
more qualified providers serving eligible children AND improving quality by increasing the providers PTQ level. Grant applicants are also required to demonstrate how they will sustain the proposed project after the grant cycle is completed. Further detail regarding the requirements for describing the sustainability of an applicant’s capacity building project can be found in Section III.B.1.vi.

2. Items Ineligible for Funding
According to HEA 1004, the OECOSL grant funds shall not be used for the purchase of land, the purchase of a building, the construction of a building, or the expansion of a building.

Grant funds shall also not be used for the following items:

- Transportation or vehicle costs to help a child get to and from the facility
- Covering or deferring students’ tuition costs.
- Improvement of program attendance within a provider’s existing capacity
- Playground or other outdoor play equipment.
- Computers/ipads/laptops predominantly for student use
- CDA or other early childhood coursework for staff, including Associate’s or Bachelor’s Degree costs (see D.4 for instruction on how to apply for funding for TEACH).
- County/community coalition costs including coalition staffing or administrative fees
- Salaries of program/center directors or other administrative staff
- Field trips
- Accreditation fees (see D.II.4 for instructions on how to apply for funding for these expenses)
- Administration costs for obtaining licensure or CCDF eligibility
- Items needed to maintain a provider’s current PTQ level (e.g if an applicant has already achieved a PTQ level 3 or 4 the applicant shall not include expenses to maintain a PTQ level 3 or 4).
- Any other items deemed by OECOSL not to meet the Objective of this RFF

Further, it is the expectation of the State that the projects applied for through this grant are not receiving duplicate funding from another grant or donation source. While applicants can receive funding from different sources for different types of projects, the unique project submitted for this grant application may not be currently receiving funding from any other source.

OECOSL reserves the right to make all final funding decisions. The State will only issue as many grants as funding allows and reserves the right not to award all of the remaining grant funding available. The State also reserves the right to issue a partial award or no award. The State reserves the right to disqualify and not score incomplete proposals that do not provide all required application components or include ineligible funding items as detailed in this RFF. The State reserves the right not to award funding if the State believes it is duplicating funding the applicant has received within the past 18 months or is currently receiving elsewhere.
3. Additional Early Learning Indiana Funding
Nonprofit applicants interested in receiving funding for some items not allowable in this RFF by Indiana Code, such as the construction or expansion of an existing building owned or rented by an applicant, have the opportunity to apply for a limited pool of separate grant funding from Early Learning Indiana. Early Learning Indiana will consider individual requests from applicants for amounts up to $100,000. Early Learning Indiana will not fund requests to acquire land, or to purchase a building, or a playground. The request for the Early Learning Indiana funding is included as part of this grant application but will be evaluated and awarded separately from the OECOSL Early Childhood Education Capacity Building Grant projects.

While the application for the Early Learning Indiana funding is included in this OECOSL capacity building grant, all OECOSL capacity building projects must be able to stand alone from Early Learning Indiana funding. Early Learning Indiana funding should only be used as an additional supplement to an additional expansion opportunity. It is possible an applicant may receive OECOSL funding but not receive Early Learning Indiana funding. Early Learning Indiana funding will not be awarded to those entities who do not receive OECOSL funding. For example, an applicant could not state, “Unless Early Learning Indiana funds our project to build a new classroom, we will not be able to expand our capacity.”

Applicants interested in requesting Early Learning Indiana grant funding must prove they, or the early childhood education provider who would receive the funding, has nonprofit status by uploading their IRS 501(c)3 Determination Letter as detailed in Section III.A.4, and must also complete additional sections of the Grant Budget Proposal explaining the amount and necessity of these additional funds, as detailed in Section III.D. Examples of capacity building projects that may qualify for Early Learning Indiana funding, and do not qualify for OECOSL funding, include construction of walls, doors, windows, flooring, and/or restrooms within current classrooms or to create additional classrooms. No additional grant match by an external entity is required to receive Early Learning Indiana funding. The grant match component of this application will only apply to an applicant’s final OECOSL grant amount.

The Early Learning Indiana funding will be evaluated and awarded separately by Early Learning Indiana and their designees and the funding will be separate from the OECOSL grant. However, Early Learning Indiana will take into account the information provided in this application to make a final award. Applicants that apply for Early Learning Indiana funding but do not receive it may forfeit their OECOSL grant as well if they cannot complete their project as described in this application without the Early Learning Indiana funding.

Early Learning Indiana reserves the right to make all final award decisions for funding items not allowable in this RFF by Indiana Code and to award based on the quality of applications and available funding. Early Learning Indiana grant awards to applicants
who are coalitions will be disbursed to the coalition for distribution by the coalition to the appropriate individual early education providers.

4. Funding Sources for Other Disallowed Budget Items
While funding for certain items is not permitted in this RFF, OECOSL encourages early childhood education providers pursue teacher certification and center accreditation. There are existing resources for early childhood education providers to receive support for CDA certification and early childhood degree coursework through TEACH and separately to assist with accreditation costs. For this reason, the RFF funding will not be utilized as a duplicate fund source but to fund items not available elsewhere. Applicants may pursue more information regarding how to receive financial support for these items as follows:

- **Accreditation Fees**: [http://secure.iaeyc.org/programs-research/indiana-accreditation-project/](http://secure.iaeyc.org/programs-research/indiana-accreditation-project/)

E. LENGTH OF GRANT
All grants will last for one year starting from the grant’s effective date. At the end of the grant period, grant recipients will have the option to request a no-cost extension if additional activities remain that have not been completed after one year.

F. SAMPLE GRANT AGREEMENT
Applicants must agree to the terms and conditions of the Sample Grant Agreement in Attachment C. All grant recipients will be required to sign this grant agreement in order to receive funding. The entity that applies on behalf of the county/community coalitions must be able to sign and execute the grant agreement with the State to fund the projects awarded to the early childhood education providers in the coalition. The grant agreement outlines the State’s terms and conditions that must be followed by an awardee when receiving the grant. Each recipient’s proposal will also become a component of the grant agreement.

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to begin the process of completing necessary paperwork for contracting in the event the applicant is awarded. This will expedite the process for awardees. For those applicants who may have previously contracted with the State, the applicant should ensure the documentation and registrations are active and up-to-date and that the applicant is in good standing with the Department of Revenue and Department of Workforce Development. Required documentation for contracting with the State of Indiana includes the following items, and all three can be completed from this link [https://www.in.gov/idoa/2463.htm](https://www.in.gov/idoa/2463.htm):

- Registration with Indiana Department of Administration for a BidderID
- Completion of payment forms with the Auditor of State for a PeoplesoftID
- Registration with the Indiana Secretary of State (applicable to limited liability partnerships, limited partnerships, corporations, S-corporations, nonprofit corporations, and limited liability corporations; religious organizations are exempt)

G. PATHS TO QUALITY COACH INVOLVEMENT
All early childhood education providers who have a Paths to QUALITY Coach must involve their coach during the completion of the RFF. Coaches have received education from OECOSL to support RFF applicants. Further, an involvement letter from the applicant’s coach is required
to demonstrate the role the coach played in the application process. The letter shall describe the guidance the coach provided to help the applicant complete a quality application and the coach’s support of the applicant’s project. Coalitions must submit a coach involvement letter for each provider included in the application. The letter(s) must be uploaded to the online application platform in the General Applicant Information Section III.A.3.

H. GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS
Any interested applicant must submit a complete grant application no later than 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 5, 2018, to be eligible for award. Any applicant that does not submit a complete grant application on time will not be considered.

All components of the grant application should be submitted through Early Learning Indiana’s online application platform: [https://earlylearningin.submittable.com/submit](https://earlylearningin.submittable.com/submit). The OECOSL grant application on the Early Learning Indiana platform is labeled “OECOSL RFF 19-002 – Early Childhood Education Capacity Building Grant Program.” Applicants will be expected to answer all questions of the Technical Proposal as well as submit all forms associated with the application that are provided for download on the RFF website: [http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/5465.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/5465.htm).

To submit an application on the Early Learning Indiana online application platform, applicants will be required to create an account and choose the grant they are applying for (OECOSL RFF 19-002 - Early Childhood Education Capacity Building Grant Program). If an applicant already has an account on Early Learning Indiana’s online application platform, a new account is not required and the applicant may apply using their current log-on and password. Applicants will be asked to fill out each step of the application, including the General Applicant Information, Technical Proposal, and Grant Budget Proposal. Applicants will be asked to upload the additional forms, as detailed in the Grant Application Components table in Section II.I below. Once the applicant is satisfied with the application, it can be directly submitted on the platform. The applicant can also save any progress and return to the application at any time prior to submission. Once the applicant submits their application, the applicant will receive an automatic email from Early Learning Indiana to the email address linked to the applicant’s Early Learning Indiana account confirming the application has been submitted. If the applicant does not appear to have received the application, they should 1) confirm they selected the “submit” button in their application and 2) check all SPAM and promotions folders for the email address linked to the applicant’s Early Learning Indiana account. Once the application is submitted, the applicant should continue to monitor the email account for any additional notifications from the Early Learning Indiana platform. Please send all issues with or questions about the application or platform to Beth Barrett at OECOSLgrant@fssa.in.gov.

I. GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION COMPONENT OVERVIEW
As part of the grant application, the applicant must submit all Grant Application Components, which are listed in the following table. Instructions regarding how to complete each component are detailed in Section III.
Grant Application Components

General Applicant Information
- Basic Applicant Information
  - Involvement Letter from PTQ Coach (if applicable)
  - Early Learning Indiana Match or Funding Nonprofit Applicants: IRS 501(c)3 Determination Letter
- Prospective Program Sites and Community Partner Form (Attachment A)
- Must be signed by an authorized representative –
  - For coalitions: Executive Director/CEO or President of the Board of Directors
  - For individual providers: facility owner or program director

Technical Proposal
- Community Need and History
- Community Engagement
- Capacity Building Plan
- Quality Improvement and Assurance Plan
- Grant Funding/Match/KPIs –
  - Grant Match Commitment Letter(s) from Grant Matching Entity/Entities
- Sustainability Plan

Grant Budget Proposal
A completed Grant Budget Proposal (Attachment B.1 or B.2) must be uploaded and Grant Budget Narrative must be submitted. The applicant must describe other grant awards it has received within the past 18 months.

Additional Early Learning Indiana Funding Proposal
Nonprofits applying for additional Early Learning Indiana funding must complete this section.

Priority Points
1. Non-On My Way Pre-K Counties
2. Grant Funding Matching Amount
3. Letters of Support
4. Counties with Addiction Issues

J. GRANT APPLICATION TIME FRAME
The overall grant application timeline can be found in the table below. Applicants must submit their grant application by the proposal deadline to be eligible for receiving a grant. Further instructions on submitting a completed grant application can be found in Section II.H.
The timeline is subject to change. *Depending on how many applications OECOSL receives, the award date and grant effective date may change to allow for adequate time for evaluation.

To remain current with any updates to this timeline, it is recommended applicants check the following OECOSL website frequently where any amendments to this RFF will be posted: http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/5465.htm.

K. ONLINE APPLICATION PLATFORM INFORMATION SESSION
An optional online webinar will be held to walk applicants through how to use the Early Learning Indiana online application platform and answer any questions. This webinar will be held on September 11, 2018, at 1pm EST. The webinar can be accessed at this link: https://Indiana.AdobeConnect.com/infssa. All applicants should sign in as a guest using their name. The webinar audio will be part of the online program, so webinar participants will need to use speakers or headphones to hear the presentation. If applicants do not have access to audio via a computer, the applicant may listen via 1-240-454-0887 code 737 049 603. Participants will have the opportunity to submit questions during the webinar to be answered. Space is limited, and the State kindly requests only one computer per location be used to log-on to the webinar so all interested applicants may join.

Prior to the webinar, applicants can visit this link to test their connection and ensure all needed updates or add-ins are downloaded: https://admin.adobeconnect.com/common/help/en/support/meeting_test.htm. Applicants should not use a Citrix or Virtual Private Network (VPN) to join the webinar as these services will not be able to playback audio. For applicants who cannot attend, the webinar will be recorded and posted on the OECOSL website: http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/5465.htm.

L. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION QUESTIONS
All questions regarding the content of this RFF must be submitted to Beth Barrett at OECOSLgrant@fssa.in.gov by September 12, 2018 at 5pm. Please use the provided Question and Answer Response Template (Attachment D) to submit your questions. The State reserves the right not to address questions about the RFF submitted after the deadline.

The State will post a document with answers to applicant questions on the RFF website one week later on or around September 19, 2018. Applicants are encouraged to check the website for
amendments to the RFF when answers to applicants’ questions are posted: http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/5465.htm.

As stated in Section II.H, questions regarding the Early Learning Indiana platform may be submitted to Beth Barrett at any time and do not need to be submitted using the Q&A template. However, applicants are cautioned from holding these questions until immediately before the application is due as late applications will not be considered for funding.

M. AVAILABLE RESOURCES
Appslicants are encouraged to seek out resources and support in the development of their application proposal. Some possible resources to consider for assistance include:

- Your Paths to QUALITY Coach.
- Indiana Youth Institute offers free grant review assistance and help with collecting data for the proposal, but it must be submitted within a reasonable time. Information is available here: http://www.iyi.org/fundraising-grants/other-fundraising-resources.aspx.
- Indiana Association for Education of Young Children (AEYC): http://www.iaeyc.org/.
- Suggestions on possibilities to increase quality standards can be found in the NIEER Standards in Appendix B.

III. GRANT APPLICATION COMPONENTS
The section provides specific instructions related to each application component. Applicants must review the requirements for each component thoroughly. Attachment F provides a high-level check-list applicants may view and print to help each applicant ensure all required elements are submitted with the application.

A. GENERAL APPLICANT INFORMATION
Each respondent is required to provide the following background information. Applicants will provide this information directly in the Early Learning Indiana online application platform when submitting their application.

1. Respondent Information
   a. Applicant Type: Early Childhood Education Provider OR County/Community Coalition
   b. County
   c. Applicant Name5
   d. Title of Application

5 Child care ministries must apply under the church/religious organization registered with the State.
e. Single Point of Contact for all Communication Regarding the RFF
   1. Contact Name
   2. Contact Title
   3. Contact Phone
   4. Contact Email Address
   5. Contact Mailing Address

2. Grant Match Information
   a. Have you secured the outside entity/entities to provide the required grant match?

3. PTQ Coach Involvement Letter
   a. If you have a Paths to QUALITY Coach, please upload the coach’s involvement letter. Coalitions should provide a Paths to QUALITY Coach letter for each individual provider within their application. If you do not have a Paths to QUALITY Coach, please upload a statement explaining the circumstance.

4. Nonprofit Status
   a. Early Learning Indiana grant match or Early Learning Indiana grant funding applicants ONLY: You must upload an IRS 501(c)3 Determination Letter proving your nonprofit status. If you are not applying for an Early Learning Indiana match or funding, you do not need to upload anything.

5. Additional Form
   a. Please download, fill out, and upload the Prospective Program Sites and Community Partner Form (Attachment A). Applicants shall not make any modifications to the form and shall utilize the provided form to submit the requested data. Information in the Prospective Program Sites and Community Partner Form includes:
      1. Name(s) of Prospective Program Site(s)
      2. Current PTQ Level
      3. PTQ Level to Be Achieved with Grant Funding
      4. Number of Eligible Children Currently Served and Number of Eligible Children Who Will be Served with Grant Funding
      5. Ages of Other Children Currently Served
      6. Proof of Applicable Childcare Licensure or Registration
      7. Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Eligibility Status
      8. Community Partners
         i. All applicants must list any community partners in this form, as applicable.
         ii. County/community coalitions must also list all member entities of the coalition.

6. Signature of Authorized Representative
a. The authorized representative must provide an electronic signature certifying that the information contained in the application is correct and that the applicant agrees to the terms and conditions of the FSSA Sample Grant Contract (Attachment C).
   1. Designated Representative (Printed Name)
   2. Designated Representative Title
   3. Date

**B. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL**

**1. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL COMPONENTS**

The Technical Proposal narrative section is limited to the defined specific word count for each question. A submission may be less than the maximum word count so long as the questions are adequately answered. Please note applicants are expected to answer those questions with higher allotted word counts with more details and explanation than those with lower word counts. All sections outlined below must be addressed.

**i. Community Need and History**

(Word Count Limit: 600 words)

Provide a summary of your community’s overall “need” to expand the number of high quality programs and/or high quality seats available for eligible children. Describe the number of young children in your community and their needs related to early childhood education. Explain the gaps in your early childhood system that are not meeting the needs of your families with eligible children. Further describe how your community has been working together to improve high quality early childhood programs and why it is ready to receive a capacity grant.

You may reference these reports for information:

- IYI Kids Count County Profile: [http://datacenter.kidscout.org/data#IN/5/0/char/0](http://datacenter.kidscout.org/data#IN/5/0/char/0).

**ii. Community Engagement**

(Word Count Limit: 600 words)

If you are applying as a county/community coalition: Describe how your coalition is working to improve early learning programs and worked together to develop this application. Include a short explanation describing the role and involvement of the coalition in the community. Do not include the early childhood education providers you will be working with unless the providers also engage in community or countywide efforts.

If you are applying as an individual provider: List any organizations in your community that are committed to improving early childhood education and how you are working with your community to provide quality early childhood education.
Describe how your community will benefit from your project and meeting the Objectives of this grant.

iii. Capacity Building Plan
(Word Count Limit: 1000 words)

Describe your capacity building plan. Describe how your plan supports the Objectives in Section II.A and will improve capacity and quality for eligible children. Include a description of the activities for which you are seeking funding and how they will improve and expand your program. Answer the following points about your plans for capacity building:

- Explain your overall plan for increasing the number of high quality early childhood programs for eligible children in your community and/or increasing the quality of early childhood education in your community for eligible children. If you are a county/community coalition, describe how the early childhood programs included in your application will improve their capacity or quality.
- Explain how you will attain or plan to attain Paths to QUALITY Level 3 or 4. If you are applying for funding to attain a Level 3 or 4 or if you are applying for funding to expand seats, this plan should be executed during the grant period. (This question will be asked separately within the Early Learning Indiana platform within the Capacity Building Plan section).
- Describe the strategies you will employ to support the program(s) you have proposed.
- Describe any barriers you foresee to implementing your capacity building plan and how you may overcome them.
- Include a project plan and timeline for implementing the grant and reaching your program goals. The timeline should have key dates you plan to meet and the project plan should describe how you will reach these dates and complete the goals of your project. This may be provided as an uploaded file. The timeline will not count towards this section’s word limit.

iv. Quality Improvement and Assurance Plan
(Word Count Limit: 1000 words)

Describe your plan to improve the quality of your early childhood education program utilizing the funding you are requesting. Describe how you plan to improve your workforce, including more high quality lead and assistant teachers beyond the Paths to QUALITY workforce standards. Also include your plan for providing training on improving child outcomes by using an evidence-based curriculum and/or child assessments and increasing family knowledge about the importance of high quality early childhood education and being involved in the program. This includes your plan

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6 A non-public accredited school is not required to have a plan to reach a PTQ Level 3 or 4 but may elect to reach a PTQ Level 3 or 4. Please note this in your response.
to incentivize teachers and workers to receive training for higher qualifications or attracting those who already have them and how this will be sustained going forward. Describe how you plan to utilize IDOE Early Learning Foundations⁷ in your quality improvement initiatives. Finally, if you plan on introducing or maintaining any of the following criteria in your quality improvement plan, describe how you will do so:

- Implementing a quality, formalized curriculum that is evaluated for child level results. If you are proposing curriculum, provide detail on its evidence-based methods and how you will ensure professional development occurs to teach staff how to use the curriculum.
- Training on instructional practices that increase child outcomes.
- Increasing family engagement to better support successful child outcomes and transitions to kindergarten.
- Increasing parental choice in programs and setting types.

v. Grant Funding/Match/KPIs
(Word Count Limit: 1000 words)

Describe how you will ensure your grant funding is spent effectively and accurately.

Describe your grant match, including the entity/entities that will be providing it and how their participation demonstrates community engagement, the match amount, and how you are going to ensure these funds will be received. You must include a grant match commitment letter from each of the entity/entities providing a grant match. This letter must confirm the grant match amount and demonstrate understanding and support of the project goals. The letter must also include the name and contact information of the person/entity supplying the match. The letter of support will not count toward this section’s word limit.

Propose two measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) based on your project type that you will be expected to meet by the end of your grant to demonstrate how you are improving early childhood education capacity and quality. You must describe how your KPIs will ensure your funding increases early childhood education capacity and outcomes and how these will be measured.

vi. Sustainability Plan
(Word Count Limit: 1000 words)

Describe your plan to ensure the longevity and sustainability of your project beyond the grant period. Include detail regarding how you will ensure enrollment in the new, expanded high quality early childhood education programs. Describe how you will support the early childhood education programs to maintain their high quality status and ensure families enroll in these programs. If you have proposed personnel or other

reoccurring expenses, describe how you will sustain these expenses after the grant period ends and your funds have been expended. If you have proposed teacher training or methods for attracting teachers with higher qualifications, describe how this will be sustained. Sustainability shall not be dependent on receiving funding from any other OECOSL sources.

2. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL POINTS
A breakdown of the maximum points each section of the Technical Proposal can receive is outlined in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Maximum Points Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.</td>
<td>Community Need and History</td>
<td>10 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii.</td>
<td>Community Engagement</td>
<td>5 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii.</td>
<td>Capacity Building Plan</td>
<td>20 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv.</td>
<td>Quality Improvement and Assurance Plan</td>
<td>25 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.</td>
<td>Grant Funding/Match/KPIs</td>
<td>10 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi.</td>
<td>Sustainability Plan</td>
<td>20 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Technical Proposal Points:</strong></td>
<td><strong>90 Points</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. GRANT BUDGET PROPOSAL
This section provides instructions for the completion of the Grant Budget Proposal and the Grant Budget Narrative explaining the request for funds.

Allowable Expenses: Project funds must be used for activities that directly support the accomplishment of the project purpose, priorities, and expected outcomes. All expenditures must be consistent with applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and guidance. Please refer to Sections II.D.1-II.D.4 for more information on the allowed use of funds. Instructions for providing any costs related to the additional Early Learning Indiana funding are located in Section III.D.

1. Grant Budget Proposal: Select the appropriate Grant Budget Proposal form for the type of application you are submitting: early childhood education provider (Attachment B.1) or county/community coalition (Attachment B.2). Complete a detailed budget for the total grant amount you are requesting by submitting the associated Grant Budget Proposal. The Grant Budget Proposals are available in an Excel document file that can be downloaded from the OECOSL website: [http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/5465.htm](http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/5465.htm). The applicant shall fill out the yellow cells in this document (all other cells have been locked by OECOSL and applicants shall not try to modify them). County/community coalitions shall complete a budget tab for EACH early childhood education provider included in their coalition. The completed Grant Budget Proposal, including the amount of the grant match, shall be uploaded directly onto the online application platform. The grant amount requested will not be scored.
Applicants who do not submit their budget in the Grant Budget Proposal form will be disqualified. Applicants should not try to unlock the form and shall not make modifications to the locked template. Applicants who are having difficulty with the form should reach out to Beth Barrett at OECOSLgrant@fssa.in.gov for assistance well in advance of the application deadline.

2. Grant Budget Narrative (Word Count Limit: 600 words): Provide a narrative explaining how you created your budget and why the items in your budget will help you achieve the Objectives of this grant (Section II.A) and your capacity building plan. Your Grant Budget Narrative shall explain why the requested items and amounts were included and how they will expand capacity and increase quality. This shall be typed directly into the online application platform. The Grant Budget Narrative will be worth **10 points**.

3. Recent Grant Funding: Provide a brief response detailing any grant funding you have received in the past 18 months, who received the funding, what the funding was/is being used for, and how that grant funding differs from your current OECOSL RFF 19-002 request. This shall be typed directly into the online application platform. Applications who have not received any grant funding in the past 18 months may indicate this in the response field provided in the platform.

**D. ADDITIONAL EARLY LEARNING INDIANA FUNDING PROPOSAL**

Only nonprofits applying for additional Early Learning Indiana funding for items not allowable in this RFF by Indiana Code, such as the construction or expansion of a building, must complete this section. All other applicants are not required to complete this section. The Additional Early Learning Indiana Funding Proposal will be worth **0 points** towards the OECOSL grant evaluation. Instead, it will be used by Early Learning Indiana to make award decisions for the Early Learning Indiana funding. **All OECOSL capacity building projects must be able to operate without Early Learning Indiana funding for capital improvements.**

1. Early Learning Indiana Grant Narrative: Within the designated location in the online application platform, describe how the additional Early Learning Indiana funding will supplement your capacity building project goals. This narrative should include a description of how this funding will help address the needs of your community and how you will ensure this funding is spent effectively and accurately. You must also explain how you represented your costs, why this funding is necessary for your project goals, and how your project will still operate if you do not receive the additional Early Learning Indiana funding. All narrative regarding your request for Early Learning Indiana funding should be included in this section, and if you are a coalition applying on behalf of multiple early childhood education providers, narrative regarding the Early Learning Indiana requests for each provider should be included.

2. Early Learning Indiana Grant Budget Proposal: Using the “Additional Early Learning Indiana Funding” tab of the Grant Budget Proposal Excel, list the items for which you are requested funding and their associated dollar value. You must follow the instructions listed in the Grant Budget Proposal Excel file. If you are a coalition asking for Early Learning Indiana funding on behalf of several providers, list all costs as line
items in the “Additional Early Learning Indiana Funding” tab and specify in each description the individual early childhood education provider corresponding to each line item.

E. PRIORITY POINTS
Applicants are eligible to receive up to 20 additional priority points for meeting certain needs or goals as follows. Applicants will be asked to select from a list which of these criteria they meet on the online application platform.

1. Non-On My Way Pre-K Counties (10 points)
Applicants will receive priority points for representing a county that is not an On My Way Pre-K pilot county.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-On My Way Pre-K counties</td>
<td>10 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New On My Way Pre-K pilot counties (Bartholomew, DeKalb, Delaware, Elkhart, Floyd, Grant, Harrison, Howard, Kosciusko, Madison, Marshall, Monroe, St. Joseph, Tippecanoe, and Vigo)</td>
<td>5 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial On My Way Pre-K pilot counties (Allen, Jackson, Lake, Marion, and Vanderburgh)</td>
<td>0 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Grant Funding Matching Choice (up to 5 points)
Applicants will receive priority points for receiving higher percentages of match dollars from local entity/entities. This grant match must be at least 5% and up to 50% of the total amount of the total capacity building plan budget submitted in the Grant Budget Proposal in Attachment B.1 or B.2. Priority points will be awarded as a percent of the amount of funding being matched. For example, applications that have the maximum grant match (50%) will receive 5 priority points, while applications that have the minimum grant match (5%) will receive 0.5 priority points. Partial points will be awarded depending on the percent match. The grant match amount should be depicted in the Grant Budget Proposal.

3. Letters of Support (1 point per letter, maximum of 2 points)
In addition to the required grant match commitment letter and coach involvement letter outlined earlier in this RFF, applicants can receive priority points through submitting additional letters of support to demonstrate community partnerships. While there is no limit to the number of letters that can be submitted, each letter will be worth 1 priority point with a maximum of 2 points that can be received. Potential partners include a food sponsor, United Way, Community Foundation, CCR&R, or a business partner outside of the coalition.

4. Counties with Substance Use Disorder Issues (3 points)
Applicants will receive priority points for representing a county that has significant addiction issues. The list of eligible counties is as follows: Allen, Blackford, Boone, Clark, Dearborn, Delaware, Fayette, Franklin, Grant, Hancock, Harrison, Howard, Lake,

IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA
Proposals will be evaluated based upon the proven ability of the applicant to satisfy the requirements of the RFF. Each of the evaluation criteria categories is described below with a brief explanation of the basis for evaluation in that category. The points associated with each category are indicated following the category name (total maximum points = 120). If any one or more of the listed criteria on which the responses to this RFF will be evaluated are found to be inconsistent or incompatible with applicable federal laws, regulations, or policies, the specific criteria will be disregarded and the responses will be evaluated and scored without taking into account such criteria or disqualified altogether.

The State reserves the right to make all final award decisions, including selecting recipients based on the State’s evaluation, total evaluation score, and other factors to be determined by the State. The State may incorporate strategic considerations when making award decisions. The State will only issue as many grants as funding allows and reserves the right to issue a partial award or no award. Although the Early Learning Indiana funding is separate from the OECOSL grant and is not scored with this application, Early Learning Indiana reserves the right to make all final award decisions for its Early Learning Indiana funding based on the quality of applications and available funding. Finally, the State reserves the right to disqualify and not score incomplete proposals that do not provide all the required items as detailed in this RFF.

A. RFF EVALUATION CRITERIA

Step 1: Review for Mandatory Requirements and Complete Application
In this step, proposals will be evaluated to ensure that they adhere to all grant requirements, including applicant eligibility. Applicants must submit all information required by this RFF. Incomplete proposals may be disqualified. Further, all applications received after the deadline set forth in the RFF shall be disqualified.

Step 2: Qualitative Review (Technical and Grant Budget Proposals)
Complete proposals will be scored based on the specifications set forth in Section III.B and III.C. This scoring will have a maximum possible score of 100 points (90 Technical Proposal points and 10 Grant Budget Proposal points). Step 2 may include one or more rounds of grant proposal clarifications or discussions (oral and/or written) between the State and the applicant focused on the details of the Technical and/or Grant Budget Proposal. Note that Grant Budget Proposals will not be scored based on the grant funding amount requested. Grant Budget Proposals will be scored based on the narrative provided in the Grant Budget Narrative.

Step 3: Priority Points
Applicants may receive up to 20 priority points as outlined in Section III.E. The State will review the applicant’s responses to the priority points section and calculate the total priority points earned. Priority points will be added to the total points received for the Technical Proposal and Grant Budget Proposal to create a final score for each applicant.
Step 4: Award Recommendation and Notification
All proposals will be ranked on the basis of their scores. The committee responsible for reviewing the proposals will make grant award recommendations based upon the highest scoring applications. The State reserves the right to make all final award determinations and to determine the budget line items included in the award. FSSA intends to notify grant applicants of award when evaluations are completed.

B. APPLICATION POINTS
The following table demonstrates the maximum points available for each grant application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Maximum Points Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Adherence to Grant Requirements</td>
<td>Pass/Fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Technical Proposal</td>
<td>90 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Grant Budget Proposal</td>
<td>10 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Priority Points</td>
<td>20 Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points:</strong></td>
<td><strong>120 Points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A: INDIANA’S PATHS TO QUALITY™ RATING SYSTEM

Paths to QUALITY™ is Indiana’s framework for systemic, continuous quality improvement of early care and education. Paths to QUALITY™ is dedicated to supporting the well-being and success of all Indiana children through a statewide system that improves child development and age-appropriate learning experiences, promotes high quality child care, and supports and empowers parents as teachers and decision makers.

Level 4 – National Accreditation
Level 4 programs are the highest rated programs and have demonstrated a commitment to the highest level of professionalism in high quality child care—achievement of a nationally recognized accreditation. Level 4 programs are managed by a provider or director who has volunteered to provide mentoring to others in the field.

Level 3 – Planned Curriculum
Level 3 programs have demonstrated the knowledge and skill necessary for planning appropriate activities and opportunities that lead children toward school readiness. Level 3 programs have made a significant investment in the professional development of the staff, and they incorporate family and staff input into the program.
Level 2 – Learning Environments
Level 2 programs have demonstrated a commitment to improve program quality. They offer opportunities for children to advance their growth and development. Level 2 programs will have evidence of a consistent daily schedule, planned activities for children, and will provide relevant program information for families.

Level 1 – Health and Safety
Level 1 programs have demonstrated that they are operating in good standing and have been recognized by the state of Indiana as having met all required health and safety standards.

Paths to QUALITY™ Standards are available here:

- Unlicensed Registered Ministries http://www.in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/files/MinistriesPTQStandards.pdf
- Public Schools http://www.in.gov/fssa/pathstoquality/4926.htm

For more information about Paths to QUALITY™ please visit http://www.in.gov/fssa/2554.htm or http://www.childcareindiana.org
APPENDIX B: NIEER STANDARDS

The National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) conducts and communicates research to support high quality, effective early childhood education for all young children. Such education enhances their physical, cognitive, and social development, and subsequent success in school and later life.

For more information on the NIEER report on Early Education Research visit http://nieer-www1.rutgers.edu/

NIEER has identified ten national quality standards for early childhood programs:

1. Comprehensive Early Learning and Development Standards that are horizontally and vertically aligned, supported, and culturally sensitive
2. Support for Curriculum Implementation
3. Lead Teacher Degree (BA)
4. Lead Teacher Specialized Training in ECE/CD
5. Assistant Teacher Degree (CDA)
6. 15 hour/year of professional development, individualized plans professional development plans, and coaching for lead and assistant teachers
7. Maximum Class Size (20)
8. Staff-Child Ratio (1:10)
9. Screenings and Referrals
10. Continuous Quality Improvement System