FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Governor’s Office of Early Childhood Receives $10.6 Million Federal Preschool Development Grant

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Jan. 9, 2019) - Gov. Matt Bevin today announced that the Commonwealth has been awarded a $10,620,000 federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Preschool Development Grant - Birth through Five (PDG B-5). Kentucky was one of six states to receive the highest funding amount.

This one-year grant to the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) focuses on planning, with the opportunity to apply for additional funding in 2019. The purpose of Kentucky’s PDG B-5 is to strengthen its comprehensive early childhood system to support all young children and their caregivers, with an emphasis on highly vulnerable children and children in rural or limited accessibility areas of the state.

“We are grateful to be one of only six states awarded the top funding amount through the ESSA Preschool Development Grant,” said Gov. Bevin. “This significant federal allocation will help Kentucky to continue strengthening our early childhood system.”
childhood education system. By enhancing our quality of resources and through expanded parental choice and engagement, especially among our most vulnerable children and families, we will continue our exciting progress.”

The Commonwealth will build upon its existing partnerships and relationships to improve the leveraging of resources across programs and agencies, build capacity of state and local leaders, communications, outreach, and engagement strategies to ensure all children receive timely, effective, and high-quality services.

Kentucky’s primary goal is to enhance and strengthen its early childhood system with activities and services in five areas, including:

1. Statewide needs assessment plan;
2. Statewide strategic plan, which will complement activities that began under the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant;
3. Maximizing parental choice and knowledge through the development and implementation of a statewide outreach and education campaign, support for local family engagement initiatives and development of statewide transition plans;
4. Sharing best practices across the early care and education spectrum, specifically to highly vulnerable children and families served through the Family First Prevention Services Act; and
5. Improving overall quality of early childhood care and education settings through training and technical assistance to early care and education professionals by building capacity across all activity areas through training technical assistance and staffing in Disabilities and Mental Health Trauma and Resiliency, Transitions and Infant/Toddler Quality.

“The Governor’s Office of Early Childhood is thrilled that Kentucky is a recipient of the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five and was funded $10,620,000. This brings forward so many opportunities for us to support the Commonwealth of Kentucky, by building a stronger foundation for children and will increase collaboration between state agencies and stakeholders to promote
stronger overall quality of early childhood care and education,” said GOEC Executive Director Linda Hampton.

Kentucky will develop the pipeline of early care and education professionals and will provide a career pathway for advancement and professional learning opportunities to maximize the current early care and education workforce. The GOEC will form a work group, under the oversight of the Professional Development Subcommittee and in collaboration with the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC), to study the customization and piloting of the Early Childhood Education Apprenticeship Program as a career pathway for high school students, within all early care and education settings.

In year one, the apprenticeship model and Child Care Development Specialist credential will be reviewed and modified as appropriate to meet the needs of high school students and participating early care and education sites. The work group also will design a pilot test, for implementation in the latter half of the potential four-year grant period.

“Receiving this funding is a testament to the success the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood has had creating countless opportunities and career pathways for Kentucky’s early childhood system, said Education and Workforce Development Cabinet Secretary Derrick K. Ramsey. “The Education and Workforce Development Cabinet is excited to collaborate with the GOEC to fulfil more of these pathways through the Registered Apprenticeship model. Through this model, high school students will have access to the needed training to better equip them for starting a career in early care and education avenues.”

The Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), which is a cross section of partners and stakeholders from across the state, was created by Governor’s executive order in July 2018. If includes representatives from the State’s cabinets, elected offices, congressional districts, and the private sector.
The ECAC and its sub-committees, along with inter-agency collaboration, will work together in order to aid and assist the children and families of Kentucky as it pertains to the PDG B-5.

For more information, visit the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood or the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet websites. Follow the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet on Facebook and Twitter for all the latest updates.

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