



In December 2013, Kentucky was awarded a \$44 million dollar Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant from the United States Department of Education and the Administration of Children and Families. The grant is to ensure more high-needs children have access to high quality early care and education. The objectives are organized into seven projects. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) is the grantee for RTT-ELC. We have three main strategies to achieve school readiness throughout the Commonwealth:

1. Improving the quality of all early care and education programs,
2. Engaging families as their child's first and most important teacher, and
3. Enhancing our ability to measure the impact of our work by improved data collection and integration.

## Project Overview

An overview of each planned project strategy is included in this report. Subsequent quarterly reports will not include this overview. Quarterly Reports serve as a formal update to the Governor's Office and Cabinet Leadership on Kentucky's progress in RTT-ELC, project updates, significant accomplishments and challenges.

### CONTACTS

**Terry Tolan**  
Executive Director  
Governor's Office of  
Early Childhood

**Joe Roberts**  
Project Manager  
Governor's Office of  
Early Childhood

### 1 GRANT MANAGEMENT

The Governor's Office of Early Childhood, as the RTT-ELC grantee, is responsible for the successful completion of all project deliverables. This includes facilitation of collaboration across state agencies and state and local stakeholders to achieve shared goals. The GOEC is responsible for required project and fiscal monitoring, internal and external communications, and federal reporting. In Project 1, we also serve as the liaison between the Commonwealth and the Federal Project Officers.

### 2 REDESIGNING THE TIERED QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM

Kentucky will seek to shift the current rating system from voluntary to inclusive for all licensed and school based early learning and development programs that receive public funding, ensuring each program 1) meets a minimum level of quality, 2) pursues a process of continuous improvement and 3) has access to the necessary supports and technical assistance to achieve high levels of quality.

### 3 INTEGRATE EARLY CHILDHOOD STANDARDS

The expanded rating system will include all early learning and development programs that receive public funding and will support the growth of quality for educators by providing low-cost, standards-based training to all. The system will further ensure quality by providing incentives to participants who fully utilize and integrate the standards in their curriculum, instruction and assessment.

### 4 UNITED WAY BORN LEARNING® ACADEMIES

Kentucky will expand the United Way Born Learning® Academies by 150 schools statewide. This program is a Kentucky product, the result of a partnership between Toyota and United Way of Northern Kentucky. By 2017 there will be a total of 200 United Way Born Learning® Academies statewide, sponsored in part by Toyota and the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge.

### 5 KENTUCKY STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

Kentucky will implement the Strengthening Families Framework, a research-based, cost-effective strategy to increase family strengths, enhance child development and school readiness. It focuses on building six Protective Factors that will be embedded by state agencies and community partners that support families with young children.

### 6 RESPONSIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Enhance Kentucky's high quality system for early childhood professional learning to allow early childhood educators easy access to knowledge and skills that increase school readiness. Kentucky will expand and unify the training data systems that track the early childhood workforce and professional learning. Kentucky will also build a learning network for directors and administrators of early care and learning programs across the state, that builds capacity and creates a system of support for continuous improvement.

### 7 INTEGRATE DATA INTO KENTUCKY LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEM

The Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics (KCEWS), which houses Kentucky's Longitudinal Data System (LDS), has successfully linked education, post-secondary and workforce data together. Applicable early childhood data will be integrated into the existing LDS infrastructure. Once integrated, Kentucky will have a birth to workforce system.



## Kentucky All STARS Project Update

Status	Project Name
In Progress	Grant Management
In Progress	Expand Rating System/STARS Redesign
In Progress	Integrate Early Childhood Standards
In Progress	United Way Born Learning® Academies supported by KY All STARS
In Progress	Kentucky Strengthening Families
On Track	Responsive PD System and Unified Registry
On Track	Integrate Data into Longitudinal Data System

- **In Progress:** most steps have been completed or will be completed by the deadline
- **On Track:** significant deadlines will be met, but some intermediate deadlines may not
- **At Risk:** some intermediate and significant deadlines are delayed and may not be met

## Significant Accomplishments

### IMPROVING EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In the fourth quarter of 2015 Kentucky conducted a pilot of the KY All STARS tiered quality rating and improvement system. The pilot was designed to give the State data on the proposed standards of quality, how updated tools may be used to support program quality and examine what supports may be needed to help programs improve their quality.

- Pilot of KY All STARS completed December 31, 2015
- All Head Starts, State funded Pre-K and community based child care programs had the opportunity to participate
- 1,499 programs (54% of all programs) provided the State with data
- 65 programs were selected to receive intensive on-site visits
- Next step is to analyze the data to inform final program design

### SUPPORTING FAMILIES

Kentucky Strengthening Families supports professionals and families by providing opportunities to increase the use of protective factors and build resilience in families. In the fourth quarter of 2015, the leadership team focused on building high quality training opportunities for families and professionals across the state.

- Kentucky Strengthening Families online module released in late November. Eighty-nine people had taken the training by December 31, 2015
- Parent Café training provided to the members of the Kentucky Strengthening Families Leadership Team
- Twenty-eight people trained as facilitators of Parent Cafés for families. Two additional sessions scheduled for January

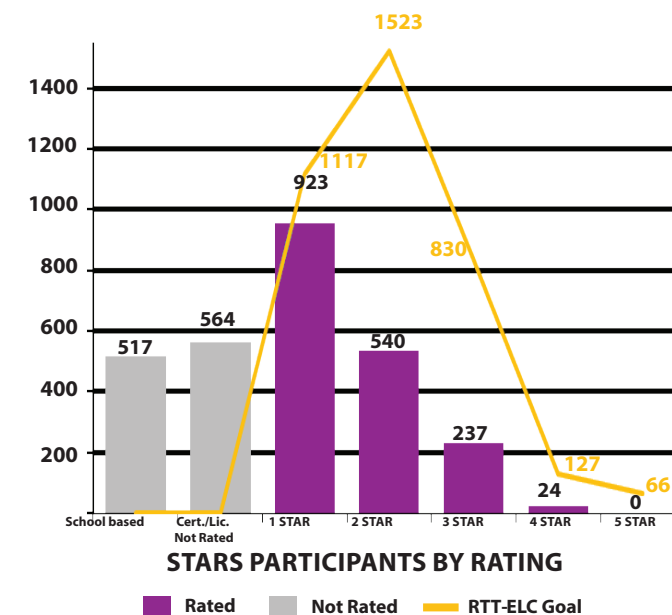
Race to the top Early Learning Challenge also provides support for families through the expansion of United Way Born Learning® Academies. The Academies provide educational opportunities to families to support their child’s development by treating each moment as a learning moment. In the 4th quarter of 2015, the request for proposals for the 2015-2016 BLAs was posted and 65 applications were received from school districts across the Commonwealth.

### ENHANCING DATA COLLECTION

Release of the Brigance Kindergarten Entry Screener data in December will allow for the release of the Early Childhood Profiles in Q1 of 2016

## Significant Challenges

Actual expenditures posted to the financial accounting system totaled \$2.8MM, or 26% of the budgeted \$10.7MM in calendar year 2015. However, an additional \$7.3MM has been obligated through signed contracts or MOUs. Together these represent 95% of the year 2 budget. The State will be required to submit a budget amendment to the Federal Government for unspent funds to be rolled over to year 3 of the grant. A plan is in place to utilize all grant funds by December 31, 2017.



In Kentucky’s 2013 RTT-ELC application, the state projected the levels programs would reach by the end of 2017. This chart details where programs are today relative to those projections.

## Success by the Numbers

