

# Illinois Preschool Expansion Program Model Birth-to-Third Grade Continuity Conference 2018



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Early Childhood Development



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Tony Smith, Ph.D., State Superintendent of Education

# Preschool Development Grants



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# Preschool Development Grant

- \$226 million awarded in Year One, renewable for four years
- Administered by the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services
- Funding awarded to 18 states for either development or expansion



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# Preschool Expansion in Illinois



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# Illinois' Preschool Expansion

- In 2017 we began funding PFA-E programs with state money to match federal funds and increase total number of children served in this high quality model.



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# Head Start and Illinois' State Plan

- Head Start programs are a key part of Illinois' approved plan and an ideal foundation for a successful Expansion program
- 29 out of 40 Expansion compliance requirements generally align to the Head Start Performance Standards
- Head Start requirements for comprehensive services and parent engagement generally exceed Expansion requirements



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# Preschool for All: A Strong Foundation

Illinois' robust Preschool for All program provides a strong foundation for the Preschool Expansion model, including:

- Teacher qualifications and class size
- Curriculum and assessment
- Inclusion of children with special needs



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# Expansion Components



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# High-Quality Preschool Program



- Staff qualifications
- Professional development
- Salary parity
- Staff ratio and class size
- Full-day programming



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# High-Quality Preschool Program

- Inclusion and individualized supports
- Standards-aligned curricula
- Comprehensive services
- Continuous improvement



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# New Components



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# Eligibility and Priority

- Federal eligibility
  - 4 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>
  - 200 % < FPL
- Priority Populations
  - Children from homeless families
  - Children from families below 50% FPL
  - Children involved in the child welfare system
  - Children with IEPs
- Mandatory Weighted Eligibility Form



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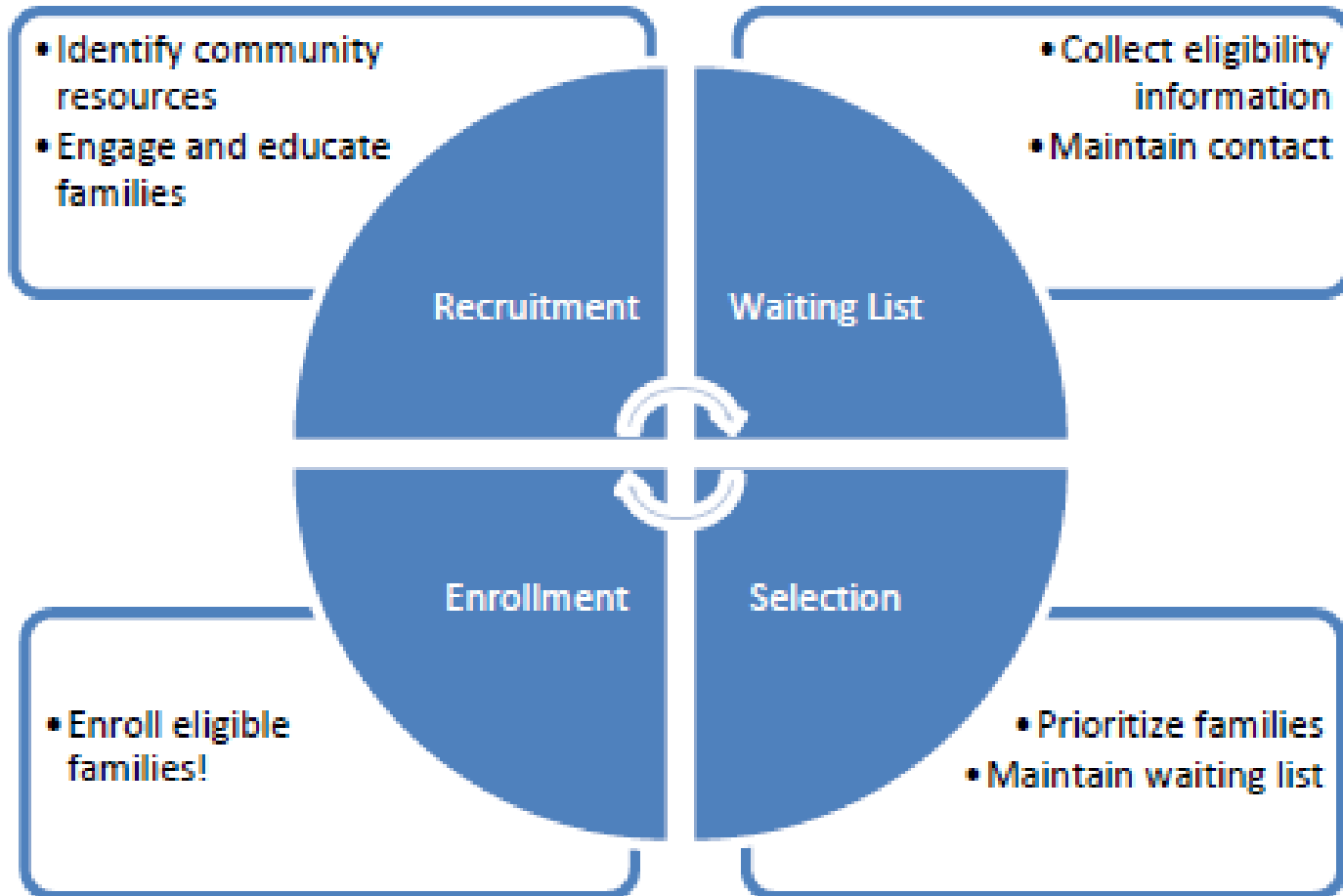
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# Recruitment Process



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# Full Day Services

- Full day programming and full school year (1<sup>st</sup> grade equivalent)
- Salary parity for teachers



# Key Staff

- Focus on administrative capacity and development of sustainable systems
- Program administrator
- Instructional leader
- Parent educator



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# Instructional Leader

- Qualifications
  - Bachelors in child development or early childhood education
  - Experience in early childhood field
  - Culturally and linguistically competent to the service area
- Professional Development
- Observation and coaching
- Instruction quality

# Family Educator

- Qualifications:
  - Experience in child development, ECE, Social Work or related field
  - Culturally and linguistically competent to the service area
- Parent engagement/ education
- Eligibility and recruitment
- Attendance
- Facilitating comprehensive services
- Connection to resources

# Family Support and Engagement

- Family Support
  - Family assessment
  - Resource referral
  - Goal setting
  - Follow-up and documentation
- Family Engagement
  - Parent Advisory Council
  - Family education opportunities



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# Comprehensive Services



- Medical and Dental Homes
- Mental Health Services
- Collaborative Partnerships



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# Supports to Programs

- Program support specialists assist programs in building systems and solving barriers to compliance
- Targeted professional development supports programs in meeting new expectations
- Online resources for program administrative team



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# Community Impact

Communities across Illinois have used the Preschool Development Grant – Expansion Grant as a catalyst for stronger community collaborations between:

- School districts and Head Start programs
- Early childhood programs within a community
- Programs serving families who are at-risk and early childhood programs



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# Next Steps



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# Learn More

Visit our Preschool Expansion website for additional information and resources, including:

- Archived webinars
- Upcoming professional development
- Sample job descriptions
- Tools and best practices

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Preschool-Development-Grant-Expansion-Grant.aspx>



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# Thank you for joining us today

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