



Kristie from Providence
Future Architect



Jean from Portsmouth
Future Artist



Charlie from Cranston
Future Marine Biologist



Tommy from Cranston
Future Fire Fighter



Breelyn from East Providence
Future Geologist



Lucas from Providence
Future Engineer

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR RHODE ISLAND'S FUTURE WORKFORCE.

Update to
General
Assembly



May 2015

Rhode Island's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

YEAR Three Update

In December 2011, Rhode Island was one of nine states awarded a grant from the \$500 million Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Fund, a competitive grant program jointly administered by the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. Rhode Island was awarded **\$50 million over four years** to improve the quality of early learning and development programs for Rhode Island's youngest children.



Exceed is the name for Rhode Island's cross departmental initiative to implement the work of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant. The name conveys the commitment of all of those in our state's early learning community who are working to help ensure that all of our young children have the opportunity to soar. Exceed is one of the key initiatives supporting the 2010-2015 strategic plan of the Rhode Island Early Learning Council which was formed in 2010 to advise on the development of sustainable, high-quality systems of early childhood education and care in Rhode Island.

Rhode Island's grant application focused on four main categories:

- developing high-quality, accountable, early childhood programs;
- promoting early learning and development outcomes for children;
- building a high-quality early childhood workforce; and
- measuring outcomes and the developmental progress of our state's youngest children.

Rhode Island's Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge state plan is administered by the lead agency, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), in partnership with four participating state agencies: the Department of Human Services, the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, the Department of Health, and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. The administration of this grant demonstrates an extraordinary amount of collaboration across these agencies.

During Year Three of the grant, Rhode Island realized the following key accomplishments:

Developing High-Quality, Accountable, Early Childhood Programs



- **75%** of all Rhode Island early care and education programs rated in BrightStars, the state's TQRIS;

**\$69,000
AWARDED** 

- **Awarded over \$69,000** to programs to offset the costs associated with completing a BrightStars application;

**\$2,475,000
AWARDED** 

- **Awarded \$2,475,000** in program quality improvement grants to support continuous quality improvement in 172 early care and education programs;


46 
15

- **Awarded 46 centers and 15 family child-care providers** \$571,614 in quality awards to early care and education programs to help programs maintain their high-quality star rating;

14 PEDIATRIC PRIMARY CARE PRACTICES IMPROVED

- Commissioned an early learning facility needs assessment to understand the overall condition of Rhode Island’s early learning facilities, with a particular focus on issues that presented barriers to meeting and maintaining licensing standards, and allocated \$700,000 for facilities grants; and
- Implemented **continuous quality improvement** in **14 pediatric primary care practices** to increase developmental screening rates.

Promoting Early Learning And Development Outcomes For Children

- Launched developmental screening campaign to inform families of the importance of developmental screening;
- Began to coordinate Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education services to build a single birth to five system to support 2,087 children with developmental delays and disabilities; and
- Implemented aligned program standards and clear steps to higher quality in early childhood programs.



Building A High-Quality Early Childhood Workforce

- Launched a new bachelor’s degree-Early Childhood Learning Prek-2- program at Rhode Island College to support the early learning workforce in obtaining post-secondary education credentials;

- Finalized Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (WKC) for post-secondary education and professional development providers;



- Established the Center for Early Learning Professionals to implement program improvement grants, develop professional development based on the WKC and provided technical assistance to help programs move up the tiers of the quality continuum; and
- Provided professional development aligned to the state’s Workforce Knowledge and Competencies (WKC) to over 2,500 members of the early care and education workforce.

Measuring Outcomes And The Developmental Progress Of Our State’s Youngest Children

- Integrated data systems to support increased developmental screening rates;
- Progress in development of the Early Care and Education Data System -includes a statewide child identifier to enable linkage between the Department of Health’s public health database, the Department of Human Services database, and the Department of Education’s Statewide Longitudinal Data System; and
- Participated in a federal Enhanced Assessment Grant multi-state consortium, lead by North Carolina, to develop a kindergarten entry profile.

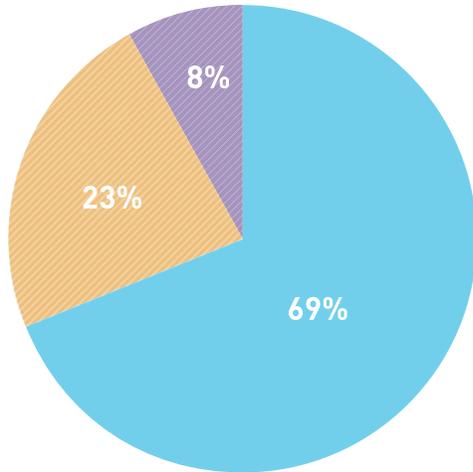


For more information on these projects please visit exceed.ri.gov.



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

How is the \$50M being spent?



69% – RTT-ELC grant funds will be used to support early learning programs, the early learning workforce, and primary care practices for Early Intervention: **\$34,695,135**

31% – RTT-ELC grant funds will be used for infrastructure, systems building, and to support state staff in the design and implementation the RTT-ELC initiatives: **\$15,304,865**

(Percentages are based on the currently US ED/HHS approved RTT-ELC budget)

69%: Supports To Early Learning Programs, The Early Learning Workforce, Primary Care Practices

- One-time incentive payments for all programs participating in BrightStars;
- Quality awards for early learning programs to off-set the costs associated with maintaining high-quality standards for licensed early learning centers and family child care homes serving children participating in CCAP with a BrightStars quality rating of 3, 4 or 5 additional bonus to programs for providing high-quality care to infants and toddlers within the CCAP program;
- Grants for licensed early learning programs seeking to make quality improvements to move up one or more levels within BrightStars or seeking RIDE CECE approval;

- Supports for the early learning workforce including expanded professional development opportunities, early learning and development standards training, technical assistance, child assessment;
- Access to Early Childhood college credits at CCRI, and T.E.A.C.H. scholarships in teacher preparation programs; and
- Supports for Early Intervention to improve formative assessment practices.

Technical assistance and supports to primary care practices to conduct developmental screening using standardized tools and implement evidence-based interventions.

8%: Consultants

- National experts, researchers, meeting facilitators/recorders to support early learning and development standards, kindergarten entry profile, and WKC frameworks development;
- Developmental screening campaign;
- KIDSNET; and
- External communication plan.

23%: State Support (RIDE, DHS, DOH, DCYF, EOHHS)

- For planning, development, and implementation of the state’s RTT-ELC plan including salary, fringe benefits, computers, office supplies and travel for 29.75 FTEs; and
- 13% indirect costs.

