Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant Update

LFC/LESC
August 25, 2014

State of New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

New Mexico Public Education Department

Overview

- New Mexico received a Phase 2 $25 M Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant in 2012 with a supplemental award in 2013
  - New Mexico's grant support projects in PED, CYFD and DOH
- RTT-ELC funds are targeted to focus on improving early learning and development programs for young children by supporting State efforts

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Overview

- The key projects included in New Mexico's RTT-ELC grant are:

1. Develop & Implement FOCUS, New Mexico's newly revised Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS)
2. Establish Early Childhood Investment Zones by identifying and prioritizing communities where children are at greatest risk
3. Support early childhood educators with scholarships and additional training opportunities
4. Use the kindergarten rubrics in the *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines* as the criteria for a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to be used in all New Mexico public schools
5. Build a unified early learning data system that will provide educators, families and policy-makers with better information regarding early childhood outcomes and school readiness

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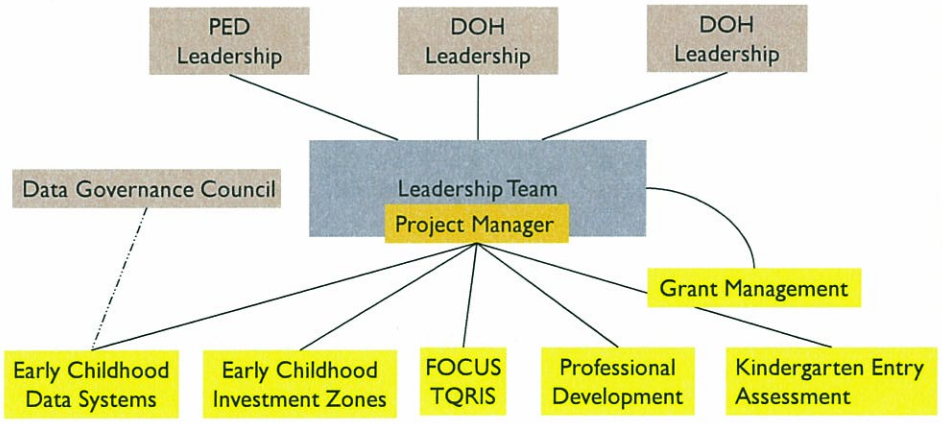
Overview

- NM RTT-ELC Structure



FOCUS

FOCUS – Across the Early Childhood System

- Identified the key elements for FOCUS – TQRIS that will be implemented across the early childhood system (Child Care, PreK, Part C, 619, Early/Head Start, Home Visiting)
  - FOCUS leads are meeting with each sector to provide guidance and alignment
- The Continuous Quality Improvement process implementation has begun the planning stage across sectors of the state early childhood system
- Standards and competencies for consultation, technical assistance and training are being aligned and coordinated with involvement of stake holders for each of the sectors within the early childhood system
- Cross training will begin during the month of September in the areas of shared FOCUS criteria, Continuous Quality Improvement process and Training-Consultation Support

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FOCUS

FOCUS – CYFD

- Three Cohorts of FOCUS TQRIS Pilot programs are currently operational (about 150 programs ranging from Center-Based, PreK, Family Child Care, Head Start and Tribal programs)
  - Fourth Cohort has been identified and will begin within the next month
- Criteria has been revised to emphasize Full Participation of each child, development of 2+ Criteria (for programs starting the Quality pathway), and clarification about the Continuous Quality Improvement process
- Child Trends has begun the validation and verification process for the TQRIS and is gathering the information for the validation of New Mexico's Assessment System and Curriculum planning
- Continuous methods for input in the criteria and process in place for pilot participants through meetings, consultation and online

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FOCUS

FOCUS-PED

- Develop FOCUS criteria and a TQRIS which includes monitoring tools with protocols and incentives for use in PED PreK and IDEA 619 Special Education
  - Design, develop and implement the FOCUS and TQRIS pilot process in PED PreK and IDEA 619 programs and conduct statewide implementation
- Timeline:
  - **March 2014** – FOCUS information shared with PreK Program Coordinators
  - **April 2014** – Contracted with UNM Center for Development and Disabilities to begin the development of FOCUS criteria and TQRIS and implementation process for use in PED PreK and IDEA 619 programs
  - **July 2014** – Review of current FOCUS criteria and PreK Program Standards and crosswalk completion
  - **January 2015** – Begin pilot phase of FOCUS with 4 PED PreK and IDEA 619 school sites
  - **July 2015** – Evaluate pilot experiences and make modifications
  - **September 2015** – Begin phase-in of additional PED PreK and IDEA 619 programs
  - **December 2016** –Evaluate the statewide implementation of PED PreK IDEA 619 FOCUS and TQRIS

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FOCUS

FOCUS- DOH Family Infant and Toddlers (FIT)

- Contract in place with consultants to develop FOCUS criteria and a TQRIS, which includes monitoring tools with protocols for Part C Early Intervention programs
- Work with stakeholders has started to review the general criteria and determine the process for integration into the FIT system
- Concepts for FOCUS have been shared with the Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)
- The FOCUS RTT FIT staff member was hired and has fully integrated to the project

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Investment Zones

- Training in investment zone communities has taken place to begin the process of capacity building
- Programs from Early Childhood Investment Zones have been selected (Family Child Care, Centers), with enhanced support through training and consultation
- Consultants have been identified to work with communities and implement leadership-based community organization in communities

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Professional Development

- TEACH Scholarships have been implemented to assist
  - Family Infant Toddler/Part C
  - Consultation staff
  - Home Visiting practitioners
- Higher Education Institutes
  - Conducted learning Institutes to Higher Education faculty and adjunct faculty on the Early Learning Guidelines, FOCUS principles and Curriculum
- Reflective Practices
  - Developed systems to incorporate reflective practices into the consultation and training process

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Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA)

- Develop a valid and reliable KEA tool based on the current New Mexico PreK Observational Assessment that will assess essential domains of a child's school readiness including:
  - Language and literacy development
  - Cognition and general knowledge
  - Approaches toward learning
  - Physical well-being and development
  - Social and emotional development
- Design to be administered within the first 30 days of the kindergarten school year via teacher observation of students

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Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA)

Timeline	
April 2014	Contract with WestEd via RFP process to validate the New Mexico Kindergarten KEA
April – October 2014	Phase I Implementation •Validation •Pilot Testing with approximately 50 kindergarten classrooms
November 2014 – October 2015	Phase II Implementation •Modifications •Field Testing with 50% of school districts
November 2015 – April 2016	Phase III Implementation •Data Analysis •Reporting
Fall 2016	State-wide KEA implementation with 100% of school districts

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Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA)

- NMSA 22-13-1 B. states "All kindergarten through third grade classes shall provide daily instruction in reading and language arts skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics and comprehension, and in mathematics. Students in kindergarten and first grades shall be screened and monitored for progress in reading and language arts skills, and students in second grade shall take diagnostic tests on reading and language arts skills"
- Rule revision in Spring 2014 ensures that both statutory and RTT-ELC requirements are met:
  - Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, all students in kindergarten must be administered the New Mexico Kindergarten Entry Assessment provided by the Public Education Department. Kindergarten entry assessment data must be reported through the Department's data collection reporting system no later than October 1 of each school year

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Data Systems

- RTT-ELC includes significant work across all 3 agencies related to early childhood data:
  - Provide current information of children in their programs
  - Provide families with the information they need to make informed choices
  - Track young children's development; measure the quality of early learning programs
  - Assess young children as they enter kindergarten
  - Follow students through early childhood through grade school
- All confidential data will be protected and only aggregate reports will be available as the grant moves forward

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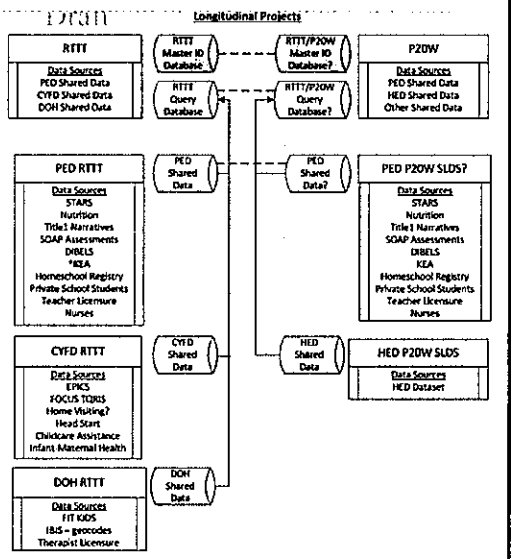
Data Systems -Key Performance Measures

- A data warehouse and reporting mechanism will be established in order to make policy decisions and track the efficacy of early learning programs as evidenced by the longitudinal tracking of child outcomes.



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Data Systems: Key Questions

- Are children, birth to age 5, on track to succeed when they enter school and beyond?
- Which children have access to high-quality early care and education programs?
- Is the quality of programs improving?
- What are the characteristics of effective programs?
- How prepared is the early care and education workforce to provide effective education and care for all children?
- What policies and investments lead to a skilled and stable early care and education workforce?

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Data Systems: EPICS

- Enterprise Provider Information and Constituent Services (EPICS)
  - An enterprise web-based system to meet the needs of all CYFD program areas and their clients
  - EPICS is a multi-year, phased project with a current budget of $10.5 million

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Data Systems: EPICS

- **EPICS Phase 1 – Provider Management**
  - Completed
  - Production Implementation – November 2013
- **EPICS Phase 2 – Client Management**
  - Completed
  - Production Implementation – August 2014
- **EPICS Phase 3 – Service Management**
  - FY14 C-2 Request – Fully Funded $3,454.2
  - Development In Progress – 35% complete
  - Timeline FY14-FY15
- **EPICS Phase 3 – Race to the Top**
  - Federal Grant - $4,700.0
  - Focus on Child Care Services from FACTS and Pre-K
  - Development In Progress – 25% complete
  - Timeline FY14-FY17
- **EPICS Phase 4/Phase 5**
  - Future C-2 Funding Requests
  - Will address remaining FACTS functionality

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Data Systems: EPICS

- **EPICS Phase 3 Race to the Top**

  FY14-FY17 Federal Grant - $4,700.0
- **Accomplishments (FY14) – Child Care Replacement (FACTS)**
  - Professional Services Contracts in place
  - Contractors trained
  - Implemented 2 Iterations
- **Planned (FY15/FY16) – Child Care Replacement (FACTS)**
  - Additional 5 Iterations
  - Race to the Top Components/PED
  - Production Implementation – October 2016
- **Planned (FY17) – Pre-K**
  - 2 Iterations
  - Production Implementation - October 2017

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