**Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant Progress Update
August 2013**

Progress on Scope of Work Activities – Successes and Next Steps

Local Early Childhood Councils - Project 1

1.1.5 Present to the local councils representatives on all the Projects (1-10) in RTTT-ELC and how they impact at the local level and expectations for coordination and oversight of specific projects

- ✓ During the final Annie E. Casey leadership and training seminars, MSDE is updating local early childhood advisory council representatives on all 10 Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Projects and sharing the link: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/challenge

1.3.6 Support will be provided after all regions receive the Leadership Capacity Building, coordinated through MSDE i.e. attending local meetings and developing customized TA based on local need

- ✓ Customized TA continues to take place on a rolling basis based on local need and at the Leadership Capacity Building Seminars. MSDE lead representatives attend many meetings to support the work of the local councils.

Maryland EXCELS - Project 2

2.3.22 Conduct field test analysis and determine standards, required evidence, and process modifications as needed.

- ✓ Field test feedback is informing modifications to standards and online processes, required evidence and efficiencies within the system to optimize participant experience and increase the quality of information provided to families and the public.

2.3.33 Maryland EXCELS will be fully implemented for participation by all early education and learning programs after the pilot study and field test in 2012.

- ✓ Maryland EXCELS opened for statewide participation on July 1, 2013. There are currently 603 programs participating in Maryland's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. As of August 21, 2013, 73 programs have published ratings on the Maryland EXCELS website. Additional information on rated programs can be found by selecting the *Find a Program* button on the home page of the Maryland EXCELS website at http://www.marylandexcels.org/.

2.2.4 Conduct training for Quality Assurance and Licensing Specialist.

- ✓ Three additional Quality Assurance Specialists have been hired to serve Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Harford and Cecil Counties. Training conducted in August will enable specialists to provide technical assistance, training and outreach to

programs and providers. Maryland EXCELS information and updates will be provided to Licensing Specialists at the Statewide Licensing Meeting scheduled for October 1, 2013.

Coaching and Mentoring – Project 3

3.2.1 Establish a cross-sectional planning team to lead the planning and implementation of the Early Childhood Breakthrough Center.

  ✓ The members of the Cross Functional Team have been identified and the Team meets quarterly. The next meeting, scheduled for September 23, 2013 will share an example of the progress of a Breakthrough Center in 2012-2013.

3.4.2 Conduct pilot project, including evaluation, on the implementation of the Early Childhood Breakthrough Center in urban, suburban, and rural Title I attendance areas.

  ✓ The pilot was conducted and sites are continuing to implement Breakthrough Services statewide. Child Care Resource Center staff (CCRCs) continue to work with center and family child care sites so that the sites progress through the levels of MD EXCELS. The sites are in urban, suburban, and rural Title I school attendance areas.

  ✓ Breakthrough Center Customer Satisfaction Survey was completed in July. The respondents indicated that Breakthrough services were valuable; the staff was responsive to their needs; community resources were available; and the Center provided assistance with MD EXCELS.

3.5.1 Implement the Breakthrough quality capacity building process with 56 early learning and development programs.

  ✓ *Early Childhood Breakthrough Centers provided coaching, consulting, and capacity building to over 75 programs in 2012-2013 in all areas of Maryland.   Additional child care and family child care centers will be added in 2013-2014.*

3.8.4 Implement the two Judy Center satellites in accordance with the 12 Judy Center component standards

  ✓ The annual MSDE site monitoring visit was completed on May 13, 2013, at the Judy Center Satellite at Carmody Hills Elementary School in Capitol Heights. The annual MSDE site monitoring visit was completed on May 10, 2013, at the Judy Center Satellite at The Historic Samuel Coleridge Taylor Elementary School in Baltimore City. A team toured the sites and reviewed documentation to ensure compliance with the 12 Component Standards for all Judy Centers. Both new Judy Centers are progressing well.

3.11.5 Monitor the implementation of the professional development coaching and mentoring training program in the pilot jurisdictions, and the effectiveness of the training with public and private community-based providers of early learning and development programs.

- ✓ Allegany County engaged in planning with schools who will be receiving students in need of inclusive support and the receiving teachers who will need to be provided with coaching and video support. Other schools will have the coaches who will be available to support teachers at other sites. The principals have been brainstorming how to set up support and streamline transition issues.
- ✓ Carroll County completed their local Needs Assessment; looking at dates/times to schedule next planning meeting for local jurisdiction implementation.
- ✓ Planning for next steps in Frederick County – conference call scheduled for August 26.

Promoting Use of Early Learning Standards- Project 4

4.4.2 Establish a state work group to develop the Guide to Early Childhood Pedagogy (PreK to Grade 2).

- ✓ A statewide workgroup, in consultation with a national consultant, developed the content of the Guide based on early childhood research, Maryland standards and evidenced based practices. The draft guide was reviewed by statewide focus groups of over 90 educators. The responses from the focus groups have been analyzed and a revised draft is being completed. The videographer/photographer for the Guide is being selected. When completed, the Guide will be available in print and electronic formats on the web.

4.5.2 Identify programs and coordinate expansion of VIOLETS to selected classrooms in Title 1 Breakthrough Center Programs.

- ✓ VIOLETS was expanded to reach 30 additional classrooms in 2012-2013. This cohort has completed VIOLETS. The assessment data is being reviewed and a report is being compiled. Child care programs are completing the application process for selection to participate in the 2013-2014 cohort. The training for cohort participants will begin in fall 2013.

4.5.3 Assign coaches/mentors and assessors located in geographic regions to implement VIOLETS in 30 programs identified through Breakthrough Centers.

- ✓ Coaches/mentors and assessors provided support for the implementation of VIOLETS in 2012-2013. Coaches/mentors and assessors are being selected for the 2013-2014 implementation. Coaches/mentors and assessors training is scheduled for September 2013. VIOLETS will reach an additional 50 classrooms in 2013-2014.

Professional Development Maryland Model for School Readiness - Project 5

5.1.5 Implement enhanced and increased professional development involving early care and education providers

✓ There are 19 different series (each a 5 module series) that are either currently being offered or about to be offered (e.g. beginning in September). A third MMSR 2013 Training of Trainers that will be offered in October 2013, in Annapolis. There will be a "learning community" of MMSR 2013 Trainers that will commence in September and will meet regularly (sometimes in person, other times "virtually") as a way to discuss progress, share updates, discuss possible changes in response to participants' needs. An online survey of successful MMSR 2013 participants will be implemented in the fall of 2013 as a way to gain additional information from participants (in addition to the evaluations and assessments they complete as part of each module).

Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) – Project 6

6.2.4 - Develop items and tasks for the KEA and Pre-K/K formative assessments using experts and practitioner stakeholder groups in Ohio and Maryland

✓ The final report of findings obtained from data collected during the pilot test was submitted by WestEd to the Johns Hopkins University's Center for Technology Education (CTE) in July. Data gathered from the pilot test is being used to revise existing items and develop the remaining items to be field tested in November 2013. These items will go through a content review, and bias and sensitivity review process with experts in both states in September prior to the Field Test in November of 2013. Data gathered from the Field Test will be used to revise and finalize assessment items that will be included as part of the census administration in the fall of 2013.

6.2.9 - Conduct formal field test of the KEA and formative assessments in selected sites in Ohio and Maryland.

✓ Both Ohio and Maryland have finalized their sample for the field test of the remaining KEA items that will occur in the fall of 2013. In Maryland, the final sample, which is representative of Maryland demographics overall, was selected in June 2013. There are 80 teachers, from 28 schools and 16 counties that will participate in Maryland's Field Test, which will result in a sample of approximately 1800 children being assessed from Maryland Kindergarten classrooms. Teachers who are part of the Field Test participated in two days of professional development training on August 5th and 6th to prepare them to administer a portion of the KEA in the fall.

6.3.5 – Develop and implement training protocol for the cognitive interviews and the pilot and field tests

✓ The professional development training and protocol was finalized in Maryland in July 2013. Teachers who are part of the Field Test in Maryland participated in two days of professional development training on August 5th and 6th to prepare them to administer a portion of the KEA in the fall. There are 80 teachers, from 28 schools and 17 counties that will participate in Maryland's Field Test, which will result in a

sample of approximately 1800 children being assessed from Maryland Kindergarten classrooms.

6.4.1 - Conduct business analysis of existing Maryland technology and data infrastructure and identify needs for new infrastructure

✓ JHU-CTE has created documents with details regarding the data infrastructure that is being developed to support CAS. Both states have reviewed the specifications, and the development is moving forward. CIO's and LEA's have been provided with information on the requirements and specifications for the EC-CAS and were given a timeline for the development and implementation of the technology in July.

Child Development Innovations – Project 7

7.1.3 Develop clinical scripts and algorithms: gather materials/resources for distribution to pediatric PCPs

✓ To date 88 developmental/educational resources and 12 Early Childhood Mental Health resources from 23 counties across Maryland have been gathered. These resources will be used to assist pediatricians in helping and guiding families. In total we have 685 resources for children and families across the state. Many of these referral resources identify as serving very young children; however, they are not early childhood specific. We are working to continue to refine the reporting on all 685 referral sources.

7.4.2 Develop on-line (Social and Emotional Foundation of Early Learning) SEFEL training modules

✓ *The* online Infant and Toddler and Preschool training modules were approved for online learning. These modules will be posted to the site in September.

Family Engagement and Support – Project 8

8.2 Family Engagement Coalition: Customize to Maryland needs, the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework.

✓ Comments and revisions from the Family Engagement Coalition and other early childhood stakeholders have been completed and the draft Maryland Family Engagement Framework that addresses strategies to improve family engagement in Maryland, will soon be posted to the MSDE website and to a blog site for public comment.

8.10.2 Develop mechanism for Reach Out and Read state and local coalitions to interact with early childhood councils at regular intervals.

✓ The Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics is working individually with local early childhood advisory councils to develop how ROR will be a part of the early literacy function for each local council.

Workforce Competency and Leadership Development- Project 9

9.2.6 Conduct Early Childhood Leadership Academies

✓ The 2013 Early Learning Leadership Academy was held on August 9, 2013 for 230 participants made up of 30 Title I school teams from across the state and guests from LEAs and MSDE. The content of the sessions focused on developing knowledge of executive functioning, learning about resources that are available in the state to support early childhood programs, and developing relationships between child care and elementary school staff to support quality teaching and learning for these shared students. Evaluation feedback will be used to inform planning for the 2014 Academy.

Early Learning Data System – Project 10

10.1 Create the professional development grants and incentives module in the internal CCATS application

✓ On August 19, the agency received the following final documents from the eCCATS vendor: Project Management Plan Supplement, Initial Test Plan, Work Breakdown Structure, and a related work schedule, and Project Risk Register.

10.3 Design, develop, and implement the child care subsidy point-of-service (POS) system for pilot purposes.

✓ The agency is awaiting the eCCATS vendor's price proposal for building the changes specified in the functional requirements document submitted in June.

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