



## Preschool Development Grant

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## Grant Overview

Minnesota's Preschool Development Birth through Five (PDG B-5) grant and related activities support the overall goal to more efficiently align and coordinate our systems in order to ease navigation for families.

### *Vision*

*By focusing on children facing racial, geographic, and economic inequities, children in Minnesota will be born healthy and able to thrive within their families and communities.*



*On-going bi-directional communication*



## 1 Gather input: Include the voices of a wide variety of

- Family voice
- American Indian Tribal Nations
- People of color
- Voices of other people impacted by inequities in race, geography or wealth



## 2 Analyze & Interpret

stakeholder input



## 3 Collaborate

to develop strategic plan



## 4 Check In

Does this reflect your values?



## 5 Synthesize

Strategic Plan Feedback



## 6 Finalize

Strategic Plan



## 7 Share

Strategic Plan

**Inclusive and Responsive Practices, Programs & Policies**

*On-going bi-directional communication*



# Community Engagement Findings

- **People want this to be successful**
- **Skepticism about translating action steps into reality**
- **Not having childcare, especially infant care**
- **Support for care and education workforce:** worthy wage, supports to meet requirements/guidelines
- **Need for mutual trust:** a system that trusts providers and parents, and parents and providers that trust the system
- **Eligibility issues:** income eligibility “cliff,” middle income difficulty in access, different eligibility requirements
- **Service navigation support for parents (e.g., hub, navigator):** Need for navigators and the system is too complex
- **Tailored supports needed for:** families with children with disabilities, parents with criminal backgrounds, male caregivers
- **Transportation, Stable Housing, Health Care, Employment**
- **Culturally specific services** and local nuance matters
- **Communication needed:** parents not knowing about resources





# Preschool Development Grant 2020-2022 Strategic Plan Summary



**"There are so many hoops. You have to tell them about your entire life before you can access just a little bit of help. I only go for help when I really, really need it."**

Parents, Minneapolis

**"Look at employment strategies holistically, taking mental health, addiction, and living situations into account and providing assistance where needed."**

Providers, Duluth

**"Create the system to work for individuals, families, and communities; not making the individuals, families, and communities bend to the system."**

Participant from Leech Lake Tribal Nation

**"Trauma informed care is missing. [We] need more people trained in trauma informed care."**

Community Needs Assessment Respondent



**"Again, it comes to trust – there is not trust for communities of color and indigenous communities."**

Public Meeting, New Hope

**"Strengthen relationships between Somali community and school with lessons from the Somali community who speaks the language and can be a strong language and cultural translator."**

Somali Parents, St. Paul

**"I hear so many people who connect with a job, but the hours do not work for their child care, their vehicle is not reliable, they do not have the right clothes."**

Providers, Otter Tail County

**"A lot of these intersect, and you can't have one without the other."**

Child Care Providers, Minneapolis





# Preschool Development Grant Activities Support OLA Recommendations

**Recommendation: The Legislature should consider aligning funding and eligibility requirements of certain early childhood programs to make them more understandable and efficient.**

A cross-agency workgroup (MDH, DHS, MDE and MMB) convened throughout 2019 to explore eligibility and service coordination, as well as a universal identification number.

Recommendations from the workgroup, include:

- There needs to be technology investment to securely coordinate eligibility and services;
- A common application/in-take form should be pursued, as mentioned in the OLA report;
- Ongoing legal support to ensure privacy and security; and
- Ongoing community engagement.

*“ [There is] No one to go to that knows all the programs available for families. Everybody has partial knowledge of available programs. Even social workers don’t know all of the programs available through the county.” – Parents, Mountain Iron*

**Recommendation: MDE, MDH, and DHS should jointly identify what is needed to use a universal identification number for children participating in early childhood programs.**

The recommendation of the workgroup is to not pursue a universal identification number but instead leverage technology to uniquely identify children, such as the Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System and Shared Master Index (DHS).

*“[We need] One application for several services, because several programs, several applications takes lots of time.” – American Indian Parents, Prairie Island Indian Community*



**Recommendation:** The Legislature should consider requiring assessments of children's school readiness as they complete certain early childhood programs; it should consider assessments for children entering kindergarten. It should also direct MDE, MDH, and DHS to plan a comprehensive evaluation of early childhood programs' impacts.

- The PDG built capacity of the state to implement a statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment by investing in a cadre of trainers statewide on assessment tools.
- Through the grant, significant progress has been made to coordinate evaluation between early childhood care and education by partnering with Title V (MDH), the MMB Results Team, Family First Prevention Act (DHS) and others.

*“ONE person, a social worker, who was able to be honest with helped me tap into the needed services and resources of pain pill and drug addiction (then rehab, children in foster care, recovery, housing, food, head start). “Now I am pain and drug free and a good mom; a new life” – Parents, Detroit Lakes*

**Recommendation: The Legislature should consider broadening authority for MDE, MDH, and DHS to share individual-level data from early childhood programs to improve program coordination.**

- Community engagement echoed that families and service providers are asking for increased service coordination.
- Responding through work with the Attorney General’s Office and the Data Practices Office to:
  - Formalize a commitment between DHS, MDH and MDE to coordinate eligibility and services for families;
  - Provide further clarity on data practices laws that allow counties and local government to share information; and
  - Create and share resources for county and local government to enhance partnerships to coordinate services, such as a template common consent form.

*“There are so many hoops. You have to tell them about your entire life before you can access just a little bit of help. I only go for help when I really, really need it.” – Minneapolis parent*



# Preschool Development Renewal Grant



**Explore technology supports** to coordinate eligibility and services.



**Fund Help Me Connect**, a system to connect families and those working with families to resources and direct referral to programs and services.

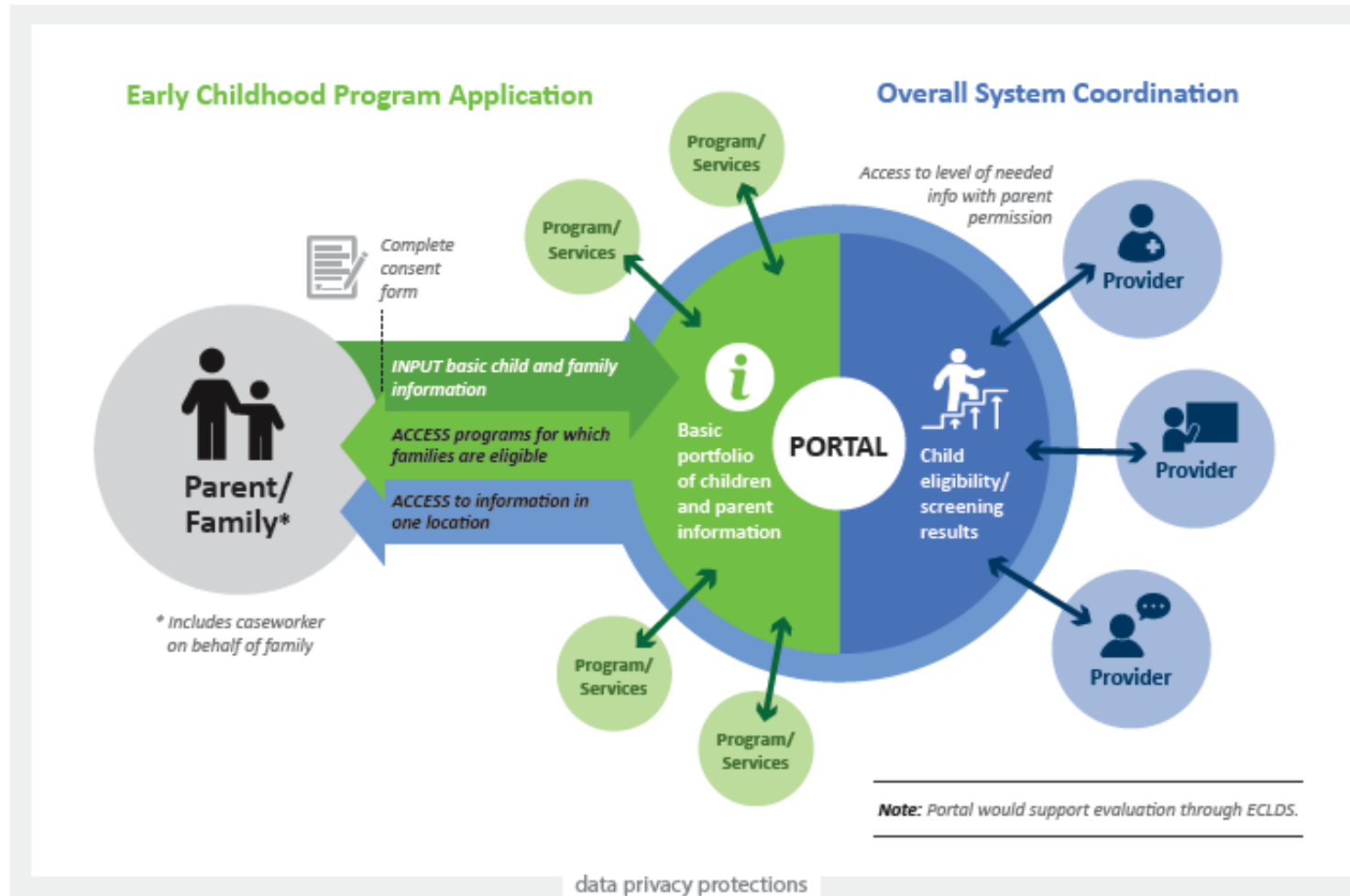


**Pilot 4-10 local, cross-agency hubs** in the state as a prevention strategy and in testing Help Me Connect.



**Invest in community solutions** of community-identified challenges, prioritizing people of color and American Indians.

## Portal Concept



*“Disjointed systems and communications lead to families’ distrust of all our systems. Our systems don’t communicate between each other.” – Hennepin County*

*“...if such data sharing were allowed, it could help agencies operate more efficiently and reduce the paperwork burden that families now face when providing income information to multiple agencies.” – State Staff as quoted in Office of Legislative Auditor Report, 2018*

# Help Me Connect

**Outcome:** Families and front-line workers will be able to connect to supports by better understanding the services and programs available and direct referrals.

**Early childhood navigation system** as a one-stop shop to:

- Navigate prenatal and 0-8 resources;
- Refer families directly to programs; and
- Coordinate services, offer follow-up and utilize a common application.

*“There needs to be a system developed that is specifically targeted to families on how to get the resources they are seeking. Ideally there would be a clearinghouse – what are the contacts needed, then the family would be passed to the next tier for support.”*

*– Hermantown-Proctor School*



# Investing Directly in Communities

## Hubs

Fund Tribal Nations and local collaborations to coordinate services, build capacity and pilot initiatives. Open feedback loops to ensure continuous improvement and responsive policy, practice and programs.

## Sub-grants

Community Solutions sub-grants (MDH) to promote solutions to community identified problems prioritizing families of color and American Indian families.

*“We know children in our Tribal programs need something a little more unique. Our people are the best resources for determining what that is and how that happens” Terrance Tibbetts, Former White Earth Chairman (from Tribal Tour Report)*

# Workforce Supports

- Mental Health Consultation
- Knowledge and Competency Framework dissemination
- Marketing to recruit and retain workforce
- Trauma-Informed Toolkit
- Updates to Develop
- Train the trainers on transitions

*“There need to be nurses, social workers, mental health providers all part of a center or a school to help students and parents.”*  
– Parents, Minneapolis

# Bringing It All Together

- Ongoing community engagement
- Communities of Practice for Hubs and Sub-Grants
- Communications
- Evaluation



**Guiding Principles:** Racial Equity • Trauma-informed • Geographic Responsiveness • Everything is Connected • Whole Family • Agencies Working Together • Belonging



**Inclusive  
and Responsive  
Practices, Programs  
and Policies**



# Questions?

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<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/early/preschgr/>