

Rhode Island | Race to the Top

EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE GRANT

2012 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.

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
- measuring outcomes and the developmental progress of our states 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 (PSA): the Department of Human Services, the Department of Children Youth and Families, the Department of Health, and the Office of Health and Human Services. The administration of this grant demonstrates an extraordinary amount of collaboration across these agencies.

The Rhode Island Early Learning Council, co-chaired by Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner for Elementary and Secondary Education and Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, guides the input process, supports collaborative decision-making and facilitates overarching policy decisions to help ensure the effective implementation of the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant.

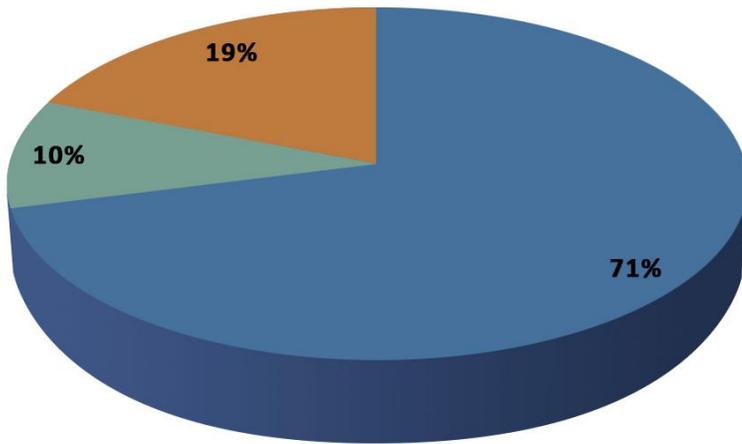
During Year One of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, Rhode Island realized key accomplishments in the following areas:

- Revision and alignment of the state’s continuum of early childhood program standards, including: DCYF Child Care licensing regulations, DHS Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (BrightStars) standards, and the RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Program standards.
- Revision and expansion of the state’s Early Learning and Development Standards for children age birth to five, outlining the developmental milestones of what children should know and be able to do at each age level and ensuring they are on course to be ready for kindergarten.
- Development of Workforce Knowledge and Competencies Frameworks outlining what all early childhood educators in all settings should know and be able to do in their work with young children.
- Mapping the design of an integrated early learning data system which will align with the State Longitudinal Data System for Pre K – 12 programs and link with other key state agency data systems

For more information on the Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge Grant, please contact Melissa Emidy, Executive Staff Assistant, at 401-222-8165 or Melissa.emidy@ride.ri.gov.

Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge: Where is the \$50M Going?

* Percentages are based on the currently US ED/HHS approved RTTT-ELC budget



- 71% of RTTT – ELC Grant funds will be used to support Early Learning Programs, the Early Learning Workforce, and Primary Care Practices for Early Intervention: \$35,492,284
- 29% of RTTT – ELC Grant funds will be used for infrastructure, systems building, and to support State staff in the design and implementation the RTTT – ELC Early Learning initiatives: \$14,507,716

■ 71%: Supports to Early Learning Programs, the Early Learning Workforce, Primary Care Practices

- One-time incentive payment for all programs participating in BrightStars; Technology Supports; Kits for Primary Care Practices
- 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 CECE approval
- Supports for the Early Learning Workforce, Expanded Professional Development opportunities, Standards Training, Child Assessment, classroom observations, family engagement, and TEACH Scholarships
- Supports for Early Intervention to improve formative assessment practices and for Primary Care Practices to implement evidence-based interventions

■ 10%: Consultants

- National experts, researchers, meeting facilitators/recorders to support ELS, KEA, and WKC Frameworks Development
- Developmental Screening Campaign
- Baseline Data Scan
- KIDSNET
- External Communication Plan

■ 19%: State Support (RIDE, DHS, DOH, DCYF, EOHHS)

- For planning, development, and implementation of the state's RTTT-ELC plan including salary, fringe benefits, computers, office supplies and travel for 24 FTEs
- 13% indirect costs