

**Delaware Preschool Development Grant (B-5)**  
**August 2019 Update**

In August we launched the first major activity of the grant, the **Needs Assessment** of Delaware's early childhood care and education (ECCE) system for children birth to age five. The Needs Assessment brings together quantitative and qualitative analyses to identify gaps in our existing services and programs and will be a crucial input into the next activity of the grant, developing our Five-Year Strategic Plan.

The Needs Assessment includes a **User Experience Assessment** that focuses on how families and early childhood professionals interact in our current environment. It is comprised of:

- 1) Field research with families and early childhood professionals to qualitatively assess the diverse range of needs across the state and gaps in current offerings; and
- 2) An early childhood landscape assessment to collect and quantitatively analyze programs and services available to Delaware families with a B-5 child.

The Needs Assessment also includes a **Data Systems Assessment** that is identifying gaps in our B-5 data system applications and data bases with a focus on our ability to identify the unique number of children B-5 being served in Delaware's ECCE programs.

Across August, we conducted the first of three rounds of field research that took us to all of Delaware's counties, allowing us to speak directly with families and early childhood professionals and to observe them in real settings in their communities. We also analyzed data from Office of Child Care Licensing and survey data on Delaware's "childcare deserts" collected by nonprofits to understand our existing early childhood landscape. By pairing these qualitative and quantitative analyses, we generated a set of key user insights from families and providers and used them to develop draft design principles for our future early childhood system. During our next rounds of field research in September, we will continue to develop these insights and test our design principles in real time with families and professionals.

Simultaneously, we conducted over 20 interviews with functional and technical experts in the Departments of Education, Health and Social Services, and Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families. Through these interviews we created information flow diagrams and technical analyses of our existing early childhood systems. Across September, we will finalize the Data System Assessment in order to make recommendations on how we can address gaps data collection and analysis that we need to serve all families and children.

Engagement with stakeholders, families, and professionals continues to be a high priority for us. We welcome opportunities to capture their authentic perspectives. For example, in the first week of September we are hosting "pop up" activities at playgrounds and state service centers to collect more parent feedback on Delaware's ECCE system. We will share ongoing opportunities to engage in the project through email and on the PDG B-5 website as they are scheduled.