

Delaware Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5)  
**Fall 2019 Update**

Delaware continues its work on the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) through the collaboration of the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Social Services, and the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families.

Throughout the fall months, Delaware concluded its statewide Needs Assessment, a partnership to improve and strengthen the state’s early childhood (EC) mixed delivery system. Work began in June 2019 and was divided into two integrated parts 1) a User Experience Needs Assessment; and 2) a Data Systems Needs Assessment:

<b>User Experience Needs Assessment</b>	<b>Field Research</b>	Interviews and surveys with families of children B-5 and EC professionals to qualitatively assess the diverse range of needs and gaps in current programs and services across the state.
	<b>Provider Landscape Assessment</b>	Statewide collection and analysis of EC professionals <sup>1</sup> and program data to calculate and report on the current landscape of programs and services available to child B-5 and their families.
<b>Data Systems Needs Assessment</b>		Assess the gaps of current data systems, focusing on the State’s ability to quantitatively identify the unique number of children B-5 being served in Delaware’s EC system.

**Needs Assessment Processes and Findings**

**Phase 1a: User Assessment-** The work has been dedicated to the ‘synthesis & iteration’ of the field research collected:

- Many interviews and workshops took place across Delaware to capture family and professional insights. These insights were synthesized as a qualitative element of the needs assessment.
- Public meetings with the Delaware Early Childhood Council were also planned as workshops.
- There were opportunities for organizations/working groups to meet one-on-one with the PDG B-5 team to share their experiences in the early childhood system.

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<sup>1</sup> In this grant, “B-5 workforce” or “early childhood workforce” (EC workforce) is used interchangeably with “early childhood professionals” (EC professionals) to refer to: Specialists: Part C service coordinators, allied health professionals, mental health contractors, DHSS case managers; Specialist/Educators: home visitors; Educators: school-based teachers, center-based teachers, center-based assistant teachers, paraprofessionals; Educator/Administrators: family child care providers; Administrators: school-based principals, center-based directors, curriculum coordinators, family service workers, 619 coordinators.

The table below lists the different “user-centric” approaches of field research methods used to engage with participants of our EC mixed delivery system:

Field Research Method	Approx. Number of Interactions
Pop-up intercepts in community settings	6
In-depth interviews with families	22
Interviews with early learning professionals	33
Interviews with experts in EC or analogous industries	12
Prototyping solutions with families and professionals	More than 200
Online survey of families	280

For further information on our User Experience Needs Assessment process, please refer to our main PDG B-5 Website. In-depth documentation of our procedures and findings are [here in the final report](#).

**Phase 1b: Data Systems Assessment-** The Data Systems Needs Assessment mapped B-5 data flows between fifteen (15) systems that collect early childhood data through state agencies and partner organizations. This in-depth research allows the State to estimate the current number of children being served by EC programs and services in Delaware. **\*\*Please note that the numbers in the chart below include duplicated children because Delaware’s MCI is not fully integrated.\*\***

Dept.	EC Program or Service	Children B-5 Served	Children B-5 Awaiting Service
DHSS	Healthy Families America (HFA)	129	0
	Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)	148	0
	Part C Services	1,413	69
	Children Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	2,238	0
	Medicaid	27,418	0
	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	1,692	0
	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)	17,161	0
	Women Infant and Children (WIC)	11,988	0
	Purchase of Care (POC)	10,346	0
DOE	Parents as Teachers (PAT)	490	0
	Early Head Start (Home Visiting)	148	14
	Early Head Start (Center Care)	90	24
	Head Start	1,209	90
	619 Programming	1,943	0
	ECAP Programs	1,532	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>77,943</b>	<b>197</b>

## Discoveries from Assessments

### **Bright Spots:**

Family and stakeholder experiences uncovered bright spots of the current ECCE system.

- **Governance:** Delaware is making progress on streamlining EC governance, as evidenced by the initial move of OCCL to DOE (July 2020);
- **Resources:** My Child DE ([www.mychildde.org](http://www.mychildde.org)), a great unified resource for families to access online as a single point of early childhood information;
- **Programs/Services:** Delaware has a small waitlist of children for its services and a high satisfaction rate of families with services such as Child Development Watch and Home Visiting Program because EC professionals have strong connection with families.

### **Opportunities to better serve Families:**

1. Availability of program/services
2. Quality of program/services
3. Affordability of program/services
4. Identifying & Navigating program/services

### **Enabling Conditions for Opportunities to Improve**

1. High-quality, stable educator workforce
2. Data to uncover child/family needs and inform program/service design
3. Unified governance for consistent program/service delivery

## Strategic Planning Process

**Next Steps** – Delaware will use the needs assessment information to design improvements to the early childhood mixed delivery system in a strategic plan. Using a similar user experience approach, the team is holding workshops for existing EC professional groups, families, and public Delaware Early Childhood Council meetings throughout the winter. Steps include:

1. Shape the Strategic Plan based on the findings of the Needs Assessment (Nov. 2019); and
2. Co-design strategies to Strategic Plan priorities and digest drafts prior to developing a roadmap for implementation (Dec. 2019 - Jan. 2020).

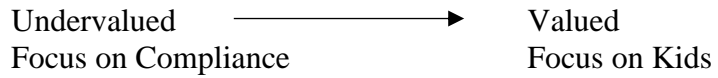
We will continue to hone our “living vision” as this process unfolds: “Delaware commits to all children and families having access to an integrated early childhood system, from birth through third grade, which provides high-quality services and an environment that supports their growth, development, and learning; and prepares them for success in school and life.”

### **Focused Principles:**

These design principles are driving the solution of raise the overall quality of Delaware’s EC mixed delivery system:

<b>From</b>	—————>	<b>To</b>
Policy Mindset	—————>	Service Mindset
Pay Later	—————>	Invest Now
Stigmatized	—————>	Universal

—————>



Please help us reach out to families and EC professionals to learn more about their experiences in the early childhood system and their solutions for improvement. The calendar of public Strategic Planning meetings [is found here](#). If you are interested in participating in a needs assessment presentation and strategic planning workshop with a group that you lead or organize, please reach out to [early.learning@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:early.learning@doe.k12.de.us).