



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



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Early Childhood

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**OEC WINS \$8.5 MILLION FEDERAL AWARD TO ADVANCE CHILD SUCCESS**

*Funds to advance cross-agency innovation to measurably improve outcomes for young children and families.*

HARTFORD, January 7, 2019 – The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) today announced it has been awarded an \$8,591,087 federal grant. The flexible funds are intended to enable states to design and launch better, more cost-effective systems serving families with young children.

Connecticut is a national leader among states in both grant size and per capita funding. The most anticipated federal early childhood initiative in years, the new Preschool Development Grant program was highly competitive.

“Making smart investments to support families with young children is among the best ways to advance a brighter future and a stronger Connecticut,” said Governor Malloy. “I worked with the legislature to create the OEC as a new agency to build a more effective early childhood system. One of many positive results has been OEC’s ability to attract millions more in federal resources to the state than we had in the past. This new grant builds on our nation-leading efforts, giving OEC new resources work across agencies and increase impact for children and families.”

Under Governor Malloy, Connecticut became first among all states in preschool access for 3- and 4-year olds. The OEC has introduced innovations to support young children and parents, winning national recognition.

Connecticut was selected to receive one of the nation’s largest awards by the two federal agencies administering the grant, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education. Among the largest state recipients, no state received more funding per target family than Connecticut.

“I am thrilled that our state is making the most of this opportunity to better serve young children,” said Representative Rosa Delauro, who is a leading advocate for early childhood programs in congress. “Connecticut families will be stronger for it and the innovations that result will set an example other states can follow.”

Unlike a previous iteration of this federal grant program – which focused on expanding preschool for four year-olds – the new grant focuses on child success from to zero to five, with an emphasis on infants and toddlers. Further, it calls on states to look beyond the classroom to broader measures of child and family success, including mental and physical health, family stability, and parental employment. Finally, because such considerations involve multiple agencies, it calls on states to advance a cross-system data and

performance infrastructure, asking them to cost-effectively implement new solutions with an emphasis on measurable outcomes.

Connecticut's application responds specifically to these mandates.

“Connecticut punched well above its weight on this grant. That’s because its goals are in our DNA,” said David Wilkinson, “OEC’s enabling legislation calls on us to be data driven, to be outcomes accountable, and to support the whole family by working across government silos. We’ve been delivering on that mission, but no agency can do those things alone. What’s exciting here is that these resources will allow the next administration build a smart, collaborative infrastructure across agencies – one that better supports young children and families, reducing redundancies and focusing on shared goals for family success.”

“If we want young children to grow strong and be ready for kindergarten, we can’t ask preschools to do it alone. We need parents to succeed,” said Senator Marilyn Moore (Bridgeport) who co-chairs the state’s Two-Generational Advisory Council. “Family economic stability is critical, so is mental and physical health – this requires agencies to collaborate. With new federal funding, I hope we can build a system that works together for child and family success.”

OEC’s new innovations to measurably increase child and family success – outcomes contracts, cost-saving mobile technology, and new data initiatives – have been covered by the New York Times, featured by the Aspen Institute, and highlighted nationally by the federal government. The agency’s new, multi-component infant toddler plan was held up by the Center for American Progress as a national example.

With this new grant, federal authorities call on states to improve measurable outcomes for children and families and to more efficiently use federal and state resources. The grant program asks states to do this by planning and building more coordinated systems, deploying resources to:

- Better link families to the full range of services they need, aligning and improving coordination among existing agencies and programs while blending and braiding funds for better efficiencies
- Advance an infrastructure for data sharing across the silos of government to better support families
- Design and implement a performance management approach focused on measurable child and family outcomes
- Develop and implement evidence-based practices to cost effectively improve child and family outcomes
- Investing in the cross agency, digital infrastructure to support all of the above

“This new grant allows the state to expand on OEC’s recent efforts,” said Wilkinson. “Connecticut can cost efficiently increase impact through deeper, data-informed collaboration across agencies.”

### **About the Office of Early Childhood**

Established in 2014 through a bi-partisan effort of Gov. Dannel Malloy and the Legislature, the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood advances a family-centered approach to support young children and families. Integrating early childhood programming formerly administered by five separate state agencies, OEC serves children each year through programs including child care, preschool, home visiting, health and safety assurance, early intervention and parenting supports. Through this integrated approach and collaborations with other state agencies, OEC works to advance better coordinated, more cost-effective services that yield measurable results for Connecticut’s children and families.