**Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Renewal Grant**

**Questions & Answers**

**Parent/Child Playgroups:**

Q1: Can you please just confirm that the standards we are supposed to be using and linking are found in the following documents:  Preschool Learning Experiences, MA Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers, Kindergarten Learning Experiences, and the MA Curriculum Frameworks?  How do the National Common Core Standards play into this, if at all?

*A1: EEC has explicitly asked grantees to link their programming to the standards contained within:*

* ***Massachusetts Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers ‐***

[*http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/Workforce\_Dev/Layout.pdf*](http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/Workforce_Dev/Layout.pdf)

* ***Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences‐***

 *http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/research\_planning/ta\_guideprelearnexper.pdf*

*Knowledge of the Kindergarten Learning Experiences, the MA Curriculum Frameworks and the National Common Core Standards will certainly strengthen your programming for children and families.*  ***For more information on all three resources:*** *http://www.doe.mass.edu/kindergarten/resources.html*

**Training**

Q2: What is the process to get training for CFCE staff approved, if it is not being run or endorsed by EEC?  At this point we may not know SPECIFIC training that staff may be taking or have the opportunity to take in FY 14, so we cannot provide a detailed description.  Can we still budget some $$ for this, even if we do not yet know exactly if/what the training may be?

*A2: Grantees may budget for staff training, with a general description of how training needs will be determined and met, if specific trainings have not been identified at the time of your grant submission. Your Family and Community Quality Specialist will review and approve your proposed training plans as your specific training needs are determined during the year.*

**Parental Consent**

Q3: One of the parents I work with signed the parental consent form and asked when she will be receiving information from EEC.

Q4: Parent Consent Form- Will there be a Q and A?

Q5:  Can parents still opt-out of the parental consent form?

*A3, A4, and A5: EEC is suspending the requirement for CFCE grantees to use the parental consent form as its function in the Early Childhood Information System is currently under review.*

**Working with Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies**

Q6: Working with R and Rs- It seems that this is a very difficult task given the number of communities an R and R needs to be responsible for. Can you review EEC expectations for CFCEs and R and Rs in light of personnel shortages?

**Is there a template for this plan and if so, how do we access it? Will CCR&Rs approach us about all of this, or is that our role?**

*A6: As was discussed in the grant renewal meetings, guidance for the partnership between CCR&Rs and CFCE grantees is in development. EEC will share more detailed information related to the requirements listed in the CFCE RFR as soon as these guidelines are finalized.*

*CCR&Rs are expected to initiate contact with their local CFCE grantees.*

**Calendar of Activities**

Q7: Activities Plan- Date- We often do not know when an activity will take place, e.g., exact date. Is EEC expecting an exact date? Sometimes a consultant and space availability require adjustments.

*A7: EEC expects that grantees will be as accurate as possible in their proposed calendars for FY14. It is understood that exact dates for activities may need to finalized and/or revised as the year progresses.*

Q8: If an activity takes place each month, do we need to list that activity each month? In the past I had a July-June list of activities, e.g., referral.

*A8: All of the activities funded through your CFCE grant should be included on your calendar. This gives EEC a complete picture of grantees’ work each month.*

Q9:  What goes in the Program column of the calendar?

*A9: A description of the program type should be included in that column, e.g., “parent training on early literacy,” “parent/child playgroup,” etc. The text will wrap, so you may include as much information as you deem appropriate.*

Q10: Should you list on the calendar what you are paying for and not paying for?

*A10: Only programs funded by your CFCE grant should be listed on your calendar.*

**Data Collection and Reporting**

Q11: Could you please talk some more about **evidenced based parent education trainings**?  Currently this would only include our financial literacy trainings and our family literacy parent training.  Are we no longer supposed to be doing parent workshops?  Or are you just not counting those on the monthly report any more?  What are some other evidenced based parent education trainings?

*A11: CFCE grantees are expected to offer parent trainings/workshops. All parent education trainings/workshops offered by CFCE grantees must be based on evidence. For example, any child development workshops and parenting information shared with families must include information and guidance based on what we know from research.*

Q12: Can you please say more about providing detailed reporting on **early literacy programming**?  Will this be narrative format? Numbers? Combination?

*A12: As noted in the grant renewal meetings, EEC will provide additional guidance around the new data elements that will be included in FY2014 reporting.*

Q13: The other new monthly reporting requirement that talks about the CFCE reach in the community by % of children served in the different age categories.  Can you please define what you mean by **children served?** Would this be just children and/or children in families that actually participated/attended/accessed any of our services? (playgroups, workshops, referrals, waitlist) Or are you looking for numbers on our community OUTREACH efforts?

*A13: The number would reflect actual children served through referrals and/or programming, not outreach efforts.*

Q14: Census- The census does not list children in the age groups of birth to three, 3-5 and 5-8. Please advise how we can track this data in Monthly Reports (page 14 of RFR).

*A14: As stated in the grant renewal meetings, EEC will provide guidance around the additional FY2014 reporting requirements before June 30, 2013.*

Q15: Deliverables- Are they cumulative? If we serve 13 families per month do we multiply the number of families by the number of months served?

*A15: It is unlikely that the exact same number of families will be served each month. Reporting should include the actual number of families served each month. The data can then be aggregated to provide the total number of families served for each FY2014 quarterly report.*

Q16:  Regarding data, how do we count things for reporting purposes? Do you want unduplicated data?

*A16: Currently, it is difficult for all CFCE grantees to provide EEC with unduplicated data. As EEC works toward providing children with unique identifiers, it will be easier to track participation in CFCE programming and to report unduplicated numbers.*

Q17: Is the data from the census 2010 being used because our region has changed quite a bit since then and it is not representative of our region?

*A17: Yes, the 2010 census data is included in the demographic information. This is just one resource of information. If grantees have recent data that more accurately describes the families within their communities, EEC expects that it will be used to inform CFCE programming and services.*

Q18: At the bidder’s conference, we were told that we needed to get our final reports in this year by June 30, or our grant period may have a later start date. Does this direction refer to our existing monthly report for the month of June, or is there going to be a new final report for this year’s grant period?

*A18: The FY2013 CFCE grant states “grantees will be required to submit a final report on the use of grant funds and the outcome measures of the funded activities on or before July 15, 2013.” Based on this information, EEC expects the FY2013 existing CFCE Monthly report for June 2013 will be submitted no later than July 15, 2013 in order to avoid any interruptions in grant funding.*

Q19:  Quarterly reporting: How much narrative do you want?

*A19: The Family and Community Specialists have indicated that they want narrative comments as the comments help clarify the services that are being delivered and the families that are being reached. It is at the discretion of the grantee to determine the narrative content and length.*

Q20: Do we put in information even if we end up canceling an event?

*A20: If an event is cancelled, there will be no data to report. In such an event, it is important to include a narrative description that describes the planned event and insight about why the event had to be cancelled to inform future planning.*

Q21: Can the database have monthly and quarterly reporting capabilities?

*A21: EEC is currently researching this possibility for FY2014. Grantees wishing to collect data monthly, may need to use an excel spreadsheet to report data each month then aggregate the data for the on-line quarterly report.*

Q22: What kind of data should family centers be collecting to inform their playgroups?

*A22: Collecting evaluations from families who are participating in playgroups is a good way to gauge the success of playgroups in meeting their needs. Many CFCEs have evaluations in place; EEC may facilitate an exchange of best practices around data collection that informs the quality of playgroups.*

*There is basic information, such as understanding if you are offering playgroups at time(s) of day or days of the week, that encourages participation or is in fact a barrier to participation. Feedback on the length of time, playgroup facilitation, and content, are important elements that influence the effectiveness of playgroups. In addition, attendance numbers are important data to be collected and analyzed when evaluating whether your playgroups are meeting the needs of families.*

*To understand the gains that families make as a result of playgroup participation, some grantees include questions about changes in behavior, i.e., whether parents read more to their child, whether parents have a better understanding of child development and behavior, and whether parents have gained tools to support their child’s development through their participation in playgroups.*

**CFCE and EPS**

 Q23. I am hoping through the CFCE re-contracting package or another communication you can clarify CFCE programs' role in relation to the EPS grantees. What is the CFCE responsible for? What is the EPS responsible for? Does the EPS grantee need to serve the whole region whether or not a site has signed an MOU?

*A23: CFCEs are expected to:*

*Provide opportunities for early education and care programs to share program quality needs and facilitate* ***access*** *to training, professional development and other quality support services through the regional Educator and Provider Support (EPS) grantee. CFCE Grant funds may not be used to provide professional development. Grantees are expected to employ efficient methods for sharing information and resources with local educators and providers, e.g. governance council meetings, email distribution, and web postings.*

* *Provide information to regional EPS grantees about the professional development needs of local educators and providers. Grantees are expected to employ efficient methods for communicating the professional development needs of local educators/providers to the EPS grantee, such as email and occasional EPS Partner meetings.*

*The FY2014 EPS competitive grant is currently under review. The service area for the successful bidder(s) will be announced when the grant is awarded. For more information about EPS required services -*

*http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/financial-assistance/funding-opportunities/open-competitive-grants/fy2014-educator-and-provider-support-grant.html*

**Mandatory Administrative Services**

Q24: "Grantees are expected to ensure that staff funded through the CFCE grant is reflective of the population served." **Does this mean we can expect to see a 50% male CFCE workforce in FY'14?**

**A24: CFCE grantees are expected to exhibit intentional hiring practices that demonstrate a commitment to employing staff who reflect the population served, i.e., gender, ethnicity, etc.**

Q25: The instructions for #2 in the section Mandatory Administrative Requirements (page 3 of the RFR) indicate a list of documents that we must have on file. One of these includes a “short description explaining how fiscal decisions are determined for the overall program/agency as well as for the proposed funding source.” Our agency has detailed fiscal procedures that govern how *all* grant funds are utilized and monitored, not specific to the CFCE grant. Should we develop this description for the CFCE grant specifically?

A25: In addition to your agency’s overarching procedures, information specific to the CFCE grant, including the role of your council, should be included in your description.

**Public School Partnerships**

Q26: "Partner with public elementary schools to promote connections with....families of five to eight year olds (for out of school time opportunities)"  **Since the public schools, the Y, the Library and the Recreation Department all are involved in OST and engaging families in it, where is the non-duplicative role for CFCEs to play?**

***A26: CFCE grantees are expected to connect families with school-age children to out-of-school time opportunities as well as locally based comprehensive services, transition supports for families moving from early education and care settings into public schools, etc. EEC expects CFCE grantees to know all of the resources available to support families with school-age children, and to work in partnership with community agencies that serve this population.***

Q27: Please elaborate on the new requirement to partner with public elementary schools (#C.2, page 7). What kind of new partnerships are envisaged, and how should these be structured?

*A27: While there was an indication in the RFR that this is a new requirement for CFCE grantees, it has always been a requirement to work with public schools on behalf of children and families. Historically, grantees have been expected to coordinate activities that maximize families’ access to supports that promote successful birth to eight transitions from home and/or early education and care and/or early intervention to public schools, including early childhood special education.*

*The “new” expectation is to ensure that CFCE grantees are intentionally promoting connections between public schools and families with respect to the specific activities listed in the grant application, “families with three year olds (for child find), families of five year olds (for kindergarten entry) and families of five to eight year olds (for out-of-school time opportunities).”*

**Council Sign off Sheet**

Q28: The Sign off page reads “Children’s Librarian\* (able to provide information on access to Early Childhood Resource Center Materials,”does this mean someone from the resource center? Or one of my local librarians?

*A28: This means your local Children’s Librarian. It also means that EEC expects CFCE grantees to inform the local librarian about the EEC funded Early Childhood Resource Centers located within several Massachusetts public libraries and their role in the early education and care system. For more information on the Early Childhood Resource Centers - http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/early-education-and-care/parent-and-family-support/early-childhood-resource-centers.html*

**CFCE Contact Information**

Q29: In our situation the coordinator will be gone on July 1.   Is it appropriate to use the current coordinator now for grant preparation purposes and change to the new arrangement at the end of June?

A29: Yes.

**Memorandum of Understanding**

Q30: If the number of subcontractors in partnership with us to implement the grant *reduces* (meaning one or more will no longer be a partner for purposes of this renewal grant) but the existing partners will still be implementing similar grant activities within the same service area, do we need to submit a “FY2014 Memorandum of Understanding and Consolidated Funding Amounts” Form, or a revised MOU using another format?

*A30: It is important for EEC to understand if you will change the way you are implementing your grant program. This should be a discussion with your Family and Community Quality Specialist. It is especially important if you are a CFCE grantee created through a merger with a former Massachusetts Family Network (MFN) and you are now considering no longer subcontracting with the entity that has been providing those services under your CFCE grant.*

***Please note:*** *If you are a CFCE that is required to offer PCHP programming, you must work with the PCHP replication site that was merged with your grant to implement these services. The National PCHP monitors program quality in all PCHP replication sites. Massachusetts’ PCHP data is provided to EEC from the National PCHP on all PCHP programs through the CFCE grant.*

*The only time you are required to use an MOU is when you are actually merging with an existing CFCE.*

**Massachusetts Home Visiting Initiative**

Q31: Is the Home Visiting Initiative different than PCHP?

*A31: Yes. The Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, a provision in the federal Affordable Care Act, is designed to strengthen and improve programs and activities carried out under Title V; improve service coordination for at risk communities; and identify and provide comprehensive evidence-based home visiting services to families and children from birth to eight years old who reside in at-risk communities.* ***The Massachusetts Home Visiting Initiative (MHVI)****, as it is known in the Commonwealth, has received $9.05 million to $10.66 million over a five year period. The Massachusetts Department of Public Heath was designated as the lead agency for the Home Visiting Initiative. EEC, along with the Massachusetts Children’s Trust Fund, the Department of Children and Families, and the Head Start Collaboration are also collaborating agencies for this project.* ***For more information about the Massachusetts Home Visiting Initiative -***

 *http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/family-health/home-visiting/*

**Strengthening Families Self-Assessment**

Q32: How do we know we submitted our Strategies for Families Self-Assessment?

*A32: If you are not sure if you submitted your Strengthening Families Self-Assessment, please contact the Strengthening Families online support department - (*[*support@mosaic-network.com*](https://email.state.ma.us/OWA/redir.aspx?C=m8ZMPvTHskWCXW1YgLSlcimRwr28ItBIu49m5M6mhA9qPaaOUefk3ZG1Oqlr6vbroOXF49Lcpmc.&URL=mailto%3asupport%40mosaic-network.com) *or 866-575-9372)*

**MASS 2-1-1**

Q33: How do you find out what families are accessing MASS 2-1-1? And how do you know it is being used?

A33: *EEC expects CFCE grantees to provide MASS 2-1-1 with accurate information about their grant programs that will be shared with families that call from your service areas. To learn more about whether families in your communities are contacting MASS 2-1-1 , please contact MASS 2-1-1 directly.*

**ASQ**

Q34: What is EEC’s vision for ASQ?

*A34: Administering the ASQ is a required service for CFCE grantees. The ASQ Screening Tool supports CFCE priorities in the following ways****:***

* *Offers a consistent method**for grantees to meet the CFCE priority of providing high‐quality, accurate consumer information and parent education based on science****;***
* *Creates opportunities for grantees to work in partnership with families to identify potential risk factors early in order to prevent developmental delays****;*** *and*
* *Builds on core function of CFCE grantees to provide linkages to comprehensive services**to support optimal child development for families.*

Q35:  ASQ: Should we hit a quota or are we supposed to do this in a trusted relationship?

*A35: The ASQ should be shared with families with whom grantees have trusted relationships.*

**Budget Narrative**

Q36: What is the Narrative Question page limit?

*A36:  Narrative Responses should be typed in Arial font, font size 12, and single-spaced.  Please limit your responses to 2.0 pages per question. Please target your responses to meet the specific goals, priorities, and requirements of the renewal grant.*

**Grant Submission**

Q37: I do not have scanning capabilities so how will I submit the signatures for the council sign off sheet?

*A37: If you do not have scanner capabilities and do not have access to a scanner, please submit your council sign-off sheet in hard copy.*

Q38: Please explain how to number the document given that files should be separated.

*A38: Once you have all your documents ready and have put them in order according to the checklist, please start at 1 and number each page.*

**Budget**

Q39: Purchase of Food:  we purchase snacks for our multi-session playgroups as a self-care learning activity.  Also in implementation Parent Cafés, food is central to the function of this service.  Are these completely unallowable in FY 14?

Q39: Snack time is an integral part of toddler playgroups where many begin to learn to drink from an open cup, learn language skills answering questions about the food, hear new descriptive words, and parents get a time to network while children are busy eating.  Can food be purchased for this purpose?

*A 39: Food will be an allowable expense for your FY2014 budget. The purchase of food must accordance with the following guidelines:*

*1. The purchase of food will not redirect funds away from services to be delivered.*

*2. CFCE funds may not be used to purchase food for council, staff or stakeholder meetings.*

*3. Food may only be purchased for and integrated into CFCE activities as an intentional extension of the curriculum for parents and children, such as:*

* *Building literacy and language skills during meal and snack times. Talking with children about what they are eating, colors, texture, temperature, size, etc. is an important opportunity for developing vocabulary. Emphasizing the importance of these conversations with parents. Promoting conversations between parents and children during snack and mealtimes without the distraction of screen time (TV, phones, etc.).*
* *Serving healthy foods with a discussion about nutrition, portion sizes, etc. Helping families build their awareness about food choices and portion sizes for their children and themselves which supports our goal of having healthy, fit children and adults. Intentionally incorporating food as an important way to engage families in these conversations.*
* *Preparing and/or serving food with the intention of creating skill-building opportunities for children, i.e., mixing, pouring, self-serving, sharing, etc. Helping parents have developmentally appropriate expectations of their child’s skills.*
* *In conjunction with the guidelines above, building social skills in children and strengthening social connections between children and families around snacks/meals. These opportunities build social connectedness between program participants which is one of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors.*

*Please note: If grantees are offering food during activities or programs that do not align with the above guidelines, grantees are expected to use resources other than CFCE funds to purchase foods.*

Q40: Can VISM supplies be listed as such and not itemized?

*A40: Yes, VISM supplies can be listed and not itemized.*

Q41: Can PCHP Home Visitors be listed as one group rather than individually? Can their travel

 be listed as a group?

*A41: Please group employees individually, by title, on the 10 travel lines. If you have more than 10 titles, and the PCHP home visitors have the same mileage rate, please group these positions together on one travel line. However, if the positions have different mileage rates, they must be listed separately.*

Q42: Is buying a computer unallowable in all circumstances for FY 14?

*A42: Computers are an unallowable expense for the FY2014 grants. However, grantees are allowed to purchase tablets with grant funding.*

Q43: What do we do if our computer dies during FY14?

*A43: Please see Response A42, above.*

Q44: Would monthly expenses for online for tablets be an allowable expense?

*A44: Monthly expenses for tablets such as online applications for the tablets are an allowable administrative expense. These expenses will need to be itemized in the Office & Programmatic Supplies tab under the Admin cost column.*

Q45: What is the difference between supplies and equipment?

*A45: Supplies are items that have a useful life of less than a year. Subject to limitations outlined in Grant Application, supplies can include books, paper, and art supplies. Equipment includes items that have a useful life of more than a year. Equipment must be itemized with a brief statement of the need for the item.*

Q46: How is equipment vs. materials defined?  It was once that equipment had to be a single Item that cost over $500 and had a useful life of more than one year.  Is this item for all tablets regardless of the cost?   Are apps purchased here, as a supply, or as a contract?

*A46: Tablets costing up to $600 will be approved for this grant. Applications (Apps) for the tablet can be purchased under the Office and Programmatic Supplies tab under Admin expenses.*

Q47: What is considered as admin/direct service for a support staff person?  Parenting ed--making flyers, emailing info and putting it on the website, arranging space, registering participants, etc.

*A47: Time spent on the above described activities would be considered admin expenses. Printing/reproduction is a direct expense.*

Q48: With reference to the Supplies line item on the Budget form, how specific do you want the description of budget items for Supplies to be? For example, is it sufficient to list “arts and craft supplies” versus “office supplies,” instead of “x# of markers,” “x# of pens,” “x# of reams of paper,” etc.?

*A48: It is sufficient to list “arts and crafts supplies” and “office supplies”. EEC does not require a list of reflecting the number of pens, markers and reams of paper you intend to purchase.*

Q49: Under travel for staff, there is no place to show cost for parking or tolls.  I have one staff who will not drive to Boston for meetings/trainings so she takes a bus from Springfield to Boston and then the T. Is there a way to show that on the travel line item?

*A49: If you have parking, tolls, bus, ferry or public transportation expenses, please list these expense on the “Other Costs” tab under the “Other” line item. Make sure that you clearly explain these expenses in the budget narrative.*

Q50: As my position needs to be posted every year and I need to reapply, what name do I put on the grant for the position?  TBD?

*A50: List your name as TBD and current title.*

Q51: Regarding the budget workbook, “Personnel and the Total Annual Salary” column. Do you want the total salary if the staff member was a full time employee? We do not have any full time employees.

*A51: Determine the annual total salary for each position as if they were full time. Then, list the accurate FTE for each position. The FTE multiplied by the total salary should equal what each staff member is being paid. This cost will be listed in the direct or admin column depending on the position.*

Q52: Could you explain the FFATA Form and was this the same information we submitted to William Concannon at the start of April?

*A52: The FFATA form does not need to be submitted with your grant application. Once a bidder is awarded a contract, the bidder will be asked to complete a survey and to submit information based on federal reporting requirements.*

Q53: Do we need to fill in the “Matching” Column on the workbook section or will this be used for next year (FY15) when the grant is competitive?

*A53: The Match column is locked for the FY2014 Budget Workbook; it may be used in the FY2015 Budget Workbook.*

Q54: Many school employees have their benefits through a significant other.   However most school employees need to pay for Life insurance, at approximately $13 per year, to keep retirement eligibility for health benefits in case something happens to the significant other.   Do we need to budget the $13 or is there some form of minimum?

*A54: Yes, grantees will need to include life insurance under fringe benefits. There is no minimum for fringe benefits but EEC requires that if fringe benefits exceed 35%, a breakdown must be included.*

Q55: In our situation, the Coordinator will be gone on July 1.   Is it appropriate to use the current coordinator now for grant preparation purposes and change to the new arrangement at the end of June?

*A55: This grant is for FY2014 so the new Coordinator should be listed.*

Q56: We are the Lead Agency for the CFCE grant and work in partnership with a subcontractor. The Lead Agency has a federally approved an Indirect Rate (13%) that exceeds the 8% cap that EEC places on Administrative Expenses for this grant. The Lead Agency takes on a greater share of actual administrative expenses (fiscal support, etc.) because we have the responsibility for administering the grant. If our subcontractor does not budget for administrative costs (or budgets for less than 8% of their program expenses), can the Lead Agency claim administrative expenses that exceed 8% *of its portion of the program budget*, as long as the total administrative expenses on the *entire grant amount* do not exceed 8%? (We would not exceed our overall Indirect Rate percentage on our portion of the program budget)

If the Lead Agency *can* claim up to 8% administrative costs on the entire grant amount, does the Lead Agency Budget Worksheet allow for this? (Or, will it show an error because admin. costs on the Lead Agency worksheet will exceed 8% of the *Lead Agency’s portion* of the program budget, even though this will still be within the 8% admin. limit on the entire grant?)

*A56: The Lead Agency can claim administrative expenses that exceed 8% of its portion of the program budget, as long as the total administrative expenses on the entire grant amount do not exceed 8%. The Budget Workbook shows an alert for Administrative expenses only if the entire budget exceeds 8%.*

Q57:  If the lead agency has an indirect cost approval rate, do they need to fill out admin for subcontractors?

*A57: If a lead agency has an indirect cost approval rate, this applies to the lead agency only. Subcontractors need to have their own indirect cost approval rate if they are using the indirect cost line. If subcontractors do not have an indirect cost approval rate, they must itemize their administrative expenses on the admin lines.*

Q58: On Appendix E, for Data Point 6, the explanation is not clear to me. One of our towns is Brewster, which has 24 for that column on the spreadsheet. It seems to refer to the “number of providers in each town where families reside.” Brewster has 4 EEC-licensed center-based programs (since the number explicitly “excludes in-home care”).  Where does the 24 come from?

*A58:* *The numbers included in that data point are a composite of family child care homes, licensed center-based programs, and exempt early education and care options – all options that that participate in the EEC child care financial assistance system.*