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## **Preschool Development Expansion Grant (PDEG): Guidance and Instructions for Applications**

The Preschool Development Expansion Grant (PDEG) is a competitive, four-year, federal grant. On April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the U.S. Department of Education approved Vermont’s request to extend the PDEG grant until June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019. The 2018-2019 school year will be the final year of the grant.

PDEG is designed to strengthen state and local efforts to build, develop and expand high-quality preschool programs so that more children from low- and moderate-income families enter kindergarten ready to succeed in school.

This document provides applicants and subgrantees grant participation information, program and fiscal requirements, the application process, the monitoring process, resources and contact information.

## Table of Contents

Participation Requirements and Child Eligibility .....	3
Subgrantees.....	3
Child and Family Eligibility .....	3
Automatic Eligibility .....	3
Program Requirements .....	3
Fiscal Requirements.....	5
Including Eligible Students in Your Budget .....	5
Contracting with Private Providers .....	6
Application Process .....	6
Application Materials.....	6
Instructions for Budget Categories.....	6
Personnel.....	7
Fringe Benefits.....	8
Travel.....	8
Equipment.....	9
Supplies .....	9
Contractual .....	9
Training Stipends.....	9
Other .....	10
Indirect Costs.....	10
Sustainability Plan .....	10
Grant Agreements.....	10
Request for Amendment Process.....	11
Resources and Community of Practice .....	11
Monitoring Procedure and Protocol .....	11
Data Collection.....	12
Contact Information .....	12

## Participation Requirements and Child Eligibility

### Subgrantees

Supervisory unions (SU), supervisory districts (SD), and Head Start programs are welcome to apply to be a subgrantee of the Preschool Development Expansion Grant.

Community based and private PreK programs may receive PDEG funds, but must be in a partnership agreement with a supervisory union or supervisory district to do so. Funds will then be funneled from the SD/SU to the community-based or private program. It is the responsibility of the subgrantee to ensure any private program that they are in a partnership agreement with, are meeting all PDEG requirements (fiscal and programmatic). The subgrantee must also ensure correct contract administration protocol and processes are implemented and maintained per 2 CFR §200.22 and 2 CFR §200.318(b).

### Child and Family Eligibility

Funds from this grant can only be used for four-year-old students (date determined by the SD/SU/Head Start cut off) whose family income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty guideline. Please note that you need to double the poverty guideline to show 200%.

Subgrantees must ensure proof of income eligibility during the period of performance of the grant. The [Universal PreK household income form](#) is appropriate evidence. This information will be verified during monitoring activities.

### Automatic Eligibility

If a family is experiencing homelessness that child is automatically eligible under PDEG. The only requirement they need to meet is being four years of age.

If a child is in the foster care system and considered a ward of the State, that child is automatically eligible under PDEG. The only requirement they need to meet is being four years of age.

### Program Requirements

As a PDEG subgrantee, all classrooms supported by PDEG funds must maintain in good regulatory standing with AHS Child Care Licensing regulations. Similarly, all classrooms supported by PDEG funds must be prequalified under Act 166. If any of these status' change during the grant's period of performance, subgrantees must notify the PDEG Program Manager immediately or risk loss of funds.

Subgrantees may not charge a fee for eligible children and their families that are funded by this grant. This does not include any early/after care and education programs provided before or after the program's standard operation hours for a full day program.

PDEG (as defined in the Federal Register Vol. 79 No. 159 August 18, 2014) has 12 elements of a high quality PreK program that must be met and maintained by subgrantees. If a subgrantee is only requesting funds for one criteria (e.g., comprehensive services), the subgrantee must meet all other criteria as well. Subgrantees may use their PDEG funds to meet these requirements. These criteria include;

Elements	Required Program Criteria
<b>High-Level Staff Qualifications</b>	<p>1) Comply with the licensure rules of <a href="#">Universal PreK (Act 166)</a>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Public School-Operated PreK Programs: Every classroom must have a licensed ECE or ECSE teacher.</li> <li>B. Private Center-Based PreK Programs: At least one licensed ECE or ECSE teacher. The ten hours that the licensed teacher is present shall coincide with the hours of prekindergarten education paid for by tuition from districts;</li> </ul> <p>2) Comply with federal grant criteria: One teacher in each classroom of 20 or fewer children served through this grant program must meet the following high staff qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Have a bachelor’s degree in ECE or ECSE or</li> <li>B. Have a bachelor’s degree in any field with a State approved alternate pathway for acquiring knowledge and competency in early childhood education, which may include course work, clinical practice, and evidence of knowledge of content and pedagogy relating to early childhood, as well as teaching assistantships that meet State or local requirements.</li> </ul> <p>3) The second staff person in the classroom is required to, at a minimum, meet the qualifications for an instructional assistant or classroom aide as set out in State or local requirements.</p>
<b>High-Quality Professional Development</b>	Programs must provide high-quality professional development for their staff.
<b>Curriculum</b>	Programs must implement developmentally, culturally, and linguistically responsive and appropriate evidence-based curricula and learning environments aligned with the Vermont Early Learning Standards.
<b>Full Day Program</b>	A program’s schedule must be equivalent to a full school day at the public elementary school and not fewer than 5 hours per day; a minimum of 35 weeks.
<b>Class Size</b>	Programs must maintain a class size of no more than 20 students.
<b>Child-Staff Ratio</b>	Programs must maintain a child to instructional staff ratio of no more than 10 to 1.
<b>Program Evaluation</b>	<p>Programs must participate in Teaching Strategies GOLD which is the State’s approved student assessment tool under Universal PreK Act 166. Programs must ensure continuous program evaluation of PDEG supported classrooms. Program quality can be evaluated by a valid and reliable assessor using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Third Edition (ECERS-3) and/or the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS).</p> <p>Programs must complete a CLASS observation by a certified CLASS observer for each classroom that is supported by PDEG funds during the grant’s period of performance.</p>
<b>Comparable and Equitable Educator Salaries</b>	Instructional staff salaries that are comparable to salaries of local K-12 instructional staff

Elements	Required Program Criteria
<b>Comprehensive Services</b>	Provide on-site or accessible comprehensive services for children to support children’s learning and development including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Screenings for hearing, vision, dental, health (including mental health) and development, as well as appropriate referrals;</li> <li>2. Responsive family engagement opportunities;</li> <li>3. Nutrition services;</li> <li>4. Coordinated IDEA, Part B, Section 619 services;</li> <li>5. Physical activity services; and</li> <li>6. Additional community and support services as appropriate (e.g., income supports, food pantries, housing, and social services).</li> </ol>
<b>Evidence-Based Health and Safety Standards</b>	Program has, at a minimum, an active CDD child care license.
<b>Inclusion of Children with Disabilities</b>	Programs must ensure the inclusion of children with disabilities to ensure access to and full participation in all opportunities.
<b>Individualized Accommodations and Supports</b>	Programs must ensure individualized accommodations and supports so that all children can access and participate fully in learning activities; <a href="#">See policy statement</a> on Supporting the Development of Children Who Are Dual Language Learners in Early Childhood Programs; <a href="#">See policy statement</a> on Expulsion and Suspension in Early Childhood Programs.

## Fiscal Requirements

PDEG funds are federal funds. Therefore, subgrantees must comply with the requirements set forth in 2 CFR Part 200, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, cost principles, and audit requirements for federal awards. PDEG funds can only be used to support four-year-old students whose family income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty line.

PDEG funds must be used to supplement, not supplant, any Federal, State or local funds (e.g., Act 166 tuition, IDEA, Title I, Child Nutrition, Child Care and Development Block Grant, Medicaid, Head Start, etc.). As a prequalified program (as required by this grant), subgrantees must first provide 10 hours of PreK services to their students and families. PDEG funds can then supplement expenses after the first 10 hours of State funded PreK. If a program was providing more than the required 10 hours of Stated funded PreK, those hours must also be accounted for before requesting PDEG funds (e.g., a half day program).

## Including Eligible Students in Your Budget

When organizing and calculating costs, all items must be based on eligible students in each classroom that is requesting PDEG funding, not by site, district or union.

PDEG eligible student enrollment is expected to change throughout the school year. If there is a major loss or gain in PDEG eligible student enrollment, such as the closing of a classroom, please notify Agency of Education (AOE) immediately.

## **Contracting with Private Providers**

The subgrantee (SD/SU/Head Start) is responsible for meeting the programmatic and fiscal documentation requirements of the applicable federal regulations, state law and the grant award. If contracting services with a private provider, all subgrantees must procure and document the procurement of the services per 2 CFR §200.320. If you have any questions on meeting federal procurement requirements you can call Cassandra Ryan at (802) 479-8545.

When contracting services, there must be an active contract between the subgrantee and the entity. The contract must include, a clear scope of work, rate of compensation that relates back to the scope of work, termination clause requirements, invoicing requirements, back up documentation requirements, etc.

The subgrantee must be able to verify services have been provided per the terms of the contract before any payment is made. No services may be completed and charged to the federal award prior to the execution of the contract (signed and dated by both parties). Please note that you cannot backdate the period of a contract.

The subgrantee's budget must accurately represent the anticipated costs in each budget category of the entity's budget. All contracted expenses must be documented in the "contractual" budget category of the subgrantee's budget.

## **Application Process**

### **Application Materials**

All application materials must be completed in full for applications to be reviewed. Additional documents or appendixes will not be reviewed. Applications must be submitted in the original format (Excel) which can be found on [PDEG page](#) of the Agency of Education website. Before applying, applicants must read *Instructions for Budget Categories* below.

Application materials include:

- Step 1: Applicant Information
- Step 2: Program Requirements
- Step 3: Classrooms, Enrollment, and Eligibility
- Step 4: Scope of Work (SOW)
- Step 5: Other Funding Sources
- Step 6: Budget Narrative
- Step 7: Budget Table
- Step 8: Sustainability Plan

### **Instructions for Budget Categories**

When applying for PDEG funds, applicants will notice that budget documents are organized in nine budget categories: Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Training Stipends, Other, and Indirect Costs. Directions must be followed for each budget category in this document when completing the application materials.

PDEG funds are for improving PreK programs to meet the PDEG high-quality criteria, and expanding high-quality PreK programs for eligible students and families, not for supplanting existing services. Unallowable grant expenses include, but are not limited to, expenses associated with the requirements of AHS-CDD child care licensing, Act 166 prequalification (first ten hours of PreK services), the Head Start

Act, Child Care and Development Block Grant, TS GOLD subscriptions and profiles, costs associated of services required in a student's IEP, special education teacher salaries, and prepaid gift cards or gas cards for families.

If there are questions after reading this document about where an expense should be documented in an application, contact [Laura Greenwood](#).

## **Personnel**

PDEG funds may be used for employee salaries that directly support PDEG eligible students and their families. These may include; lead teachers, teaching assistants, substitutes, specialists, transportation professionals, coaches, family support workers, family engagement coordinators, program administration, and early education coordinators. Instructional staff include lead teachers, assistant teachers, and paraprofessionals.

- For classrooms with 15 or less total students, 2 instructional staff may be supported by PDEG funds.
- For classrooms with 16 or more total students, 3 instructional staff may be supported by PDEG funds.

Positions that require an applicant to enter into a contract with another entity, (e.g., private provider teachers, mentors, coaches, music specialists, art specialist, etc.) must be documented under "Contractual" in the budget narrative and budget table of the application. This includes private provider teacher salaries who are in a contract with an SD/SU.

PDEG funds cannot be used for the salaries of special education teachers or support staff that is required in a student's IEP.

For year four PDEG applications, all personnel costs must follow the requirements in each personnel category as described below:

Personnel Categories	Required Calculations for Funds Requested
<b>Instructional Staff:</b> Lead Teacher, Assistant Teacher, Paraprofessional	These positions must account for 10 hours of publically funded PreK <u>and</u> the percent of eligible PDEG students in the classroom in which they work.
<b>Instructional Support Staff (short term):</b> Floater, Substitute	For the time spent in the classroom, these positions must be calculated based on the percent of eligible PDEG students in the classroom during hours worked in PDEG supported classrooms.
<b>Program Administration:</b> Early Education Coordinator, PDEG Coordinator, Program Administrator, Administrative Assistant, Grant Manager	These positions must be calculated based on the time assigned to working on PDEG activities (e.g., working directly with PDEG eligible students/families, completing administrative tasks for PDEG eligible students/families, monitoring PDEG budget and scope of work activities, completing program evaluation activities for PDEG classrooms, facilitating professional development, etc.)
<b>Additional or Comprehensive Support:</b> Family Engagement Coordinator, Family Support Worker, Art Specialist, Music Specialist, Transportation Professional, Social Worker, Coaches	<p>These positions will vary based on how the position is utilized in a program. For example, a family engagement coordinator may strictly work with PDEG eligible students and families in PDEG supported classrooms, if so, that position could potentially be funded 100% through PDEG funds.</p> <p>If a family support worker works with eligible and non-PDEG eligible students and families, that position could only be funded based on the time spent working with PDEG eligible students and families and PDEG specific tasks.</p> <p>Specialists who may come to a classroom to work on specialized content (e.g., social/emotional, art, yoga, etc.) with students need to be prorated based on the percent of eligible students in the classroom.</p> <p>Transportation professionals must be prorated based on the percent of eligible students being served.</p> <p>Coaches and mentors for PDEG supported instructional staff can be funded 100% in PDEG supported classrooms as they are professional development. If contracted, these expenses must be documented under the "Contractual" budget category.</p>

### Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefits needs to follow the same calculation requirements as personnel. See table, *Personnel Categories* of this document. Applicants need to include teacher retirement benefits for licensed teachers.

### Travel

Travel expenses may include mileage reimbursement for staff (e.g., to and from PDEG supported classrooms, home visits for PDEG eligible families, to and from professional development, etc.), flights, or other transportation methods. Travel associated with professional development can be requested in full, if the professional development supports the twelve criteria of a PDEG program. Any contracted



services for student transportation or travel costs associated with a contracted personnel must be documented under "Contractual." Prepaid gas cards or gift cards are not an allowable expense.

Travel expenses that are not allowed are expenses related to required travel for meetings, events, trainings, or professional development that are required to maintain AHS-CDD child care licensing regulations, Act 166 prequalification, or expenses associated with other State or local programs. PDEG funds can only be used to supplement, not supplant previous and existing expenses. PDEG funds can only be used for four-year-old students whose family income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty line.

### **Equipment**

Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit (2 CFR §200.30). Equipment must be calculated based on the number of PDEG eligible students using the piece of equipment during the grant's period of performance. If the equipment is in the classroom, funds requested must be based on the number of PDEG eligible students in the classroom to the total number of students in that classroom. If the equipment is outside (e.g., playground equipment), funds requested must be calculated based on the PDEG eligible students to the total number of students who use that equipment.

### **Supplies**

Supplies (2 CFR §200.94) must be calculated based on the number of PDEG eligible students using the supplies. For example, if a classroom has 10 PDEG eligible students in a classroom of 15 total students ( $10/15=.67$ ), a science table priced at \$1,000 would potentially qualify for \$670.00 ( $1,000 \times .67=670$ ) of PDEG funds. Supplies may include classrooms supplies or supplies for program administration that directly support PDEG eligible students. Supplies may include art supplies, science supplies, blocks, curricula materials, books, etc. Computers and tablets/iPads are allowable expenses. One computer and one tablet are allowable per classroom. If either were purchased in previous PDEG grant years, this will not be approved. Supplies required for the first 10 hours of PreK services are not allowable. Supplies needed to expand or improve PreK services may be requested.

### **Contractual**

Contractual items and services may include; contracted facilities for a classroom, operational costs of contracted facilities (heat, electricity), student transportation services, teaching professionals/instructional staff salaries with private providers, contracted trainers, coaches, mentors, contracted comprehensive services (e.g., dental, hearing, vision screeners), and contracted items or services that support meeting the twelve program criteria as defined by PDEG. Contractual items must follow the same requirements listed under personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, training stipends and other.

### **Training Stipends**

Training stipends may include; trainings fees, workshop fees, and college credit tuition and fees for classes in ECE or ECSE for employees that support PDEG eligible students and families. Training stipends do not need to be prorated based on the number of PDEG eligible students. Trainings, workshops, or professional development opportunities that are required by AHS-CDD child care licensing, Act 166 prequalification, Head Start, or trainings required by a union, district or program are unallowable. Training stipends must be for training opportunities that support the twelve criteria of a

PDEG. Travel costs associated with training or professional development must be documented in the "Travel" category. Travel costs associated with professional development do not need to be calculated based on eligible PDEG students.

### **Other**

Other expenses may include nutrition services (if not contracted) or additional community and support services. All expenses must be calculated based on the percent of PDEG eligible students. Family engagement events that were made available prior to the grant year (e.g., back-to-school night, family dinners, community meals, or school-wide events) may not apply for PDEG funds. PDEG funds can only be used to supplement, not supplant, previous and existing expenses. As family engagement events consist of many different types of expenses (contracted space, contracted equipment, supplies, etc.), applicants must ensure they are in the appropriate budget categories.

Funds cannot be used for construction, renovation, modernization, or other facilities-related activities. However, construction does not include "minor remodeling" as defined in 34 CFR 77.1(c). Under that definition, "minor remodeling" means, in general, minor alterations to a previously completed building. "Minor remodeling" does not include building maintenance and repairs and is an allowable expenditure to the extent it is necessary and reasonable for grant purposes, e.g., to ensure safe and appropriate environments for preschoolers. "Minor remodeling" can only be applied to new PreK classrooms.

### **Indirect Costs**

An indirect cost rate may only be used under the subgrantee's Agency approved rate. Therefore, a school district, supervisory union, or Head Start are the only entities that can apply their indirect cost rate to a PDEG application. If the subgrantee is in a partnership agreement with a private community based program, the private program cannot use their indirect cost rate, as they are not the subgrantee.

If an applicant has not received an Agency approved FY19 indirect cost rate at the time of applications, applicants may use their FY18 Agency approved rate for the purpose of this application.

### **Sustainability Plan**

All applicants must complete a sustainability plan detailing how the school or program will maintain full-day, no-cost PreK services to four-year-old students whose family income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty line. Applicants will need to detail what funding sources they are expecting to supplement their PDEG funds. Applicants will find the sustainability plan in step eight of the application materials.

### **Grant Agreements**

Grant agreements are not officially approved until executed by the AOE. During the application process, applicants will be notified via email if there are not further questions or revisions. The application will then continue through the approval process. The approval process includes a risk assessment and final review from members of AOE leadership in program and finance divisions. If approved, applicants will receive a cover letter of approval along with a grant agreement. The cover letter and grant agreement will be addressed to the superintendent or executive director of the applicant. The applicant must follow all directions in the cover letter to ensure the grant award funds can be accessed.

The grant agreement will provide information of how to request funds, receive funds, and payment provisions. It is important for all team members working with PDEG to review the grant agreement. If

there are any questions about the information in the grant agreement, subgrantees can contact [Julie Morse](#).

If an application is not approved, the applicant will be notified by the PDEG Program Manager.

### **Request for Amendment Process**

Subgrantees may request for an amendment to an original grant award. As stated in the grant agreement, "Your application, consisting of budget template, budget narrative, detailed description of activities, and planned number of students to be served is hereby attached. This plan and budget must be followed unless amended by the Agency. No more than 10% can be moved between budget categories without an amendment by the Agency."

Subgrantees may request for the Agency of Education to amend the original grant if:

1. Subgrantees need to move expenses between budget categories that amount to over 10% of the original budget;
2. Subgrantees need to decrease the total approved amount; or
3. Subgrantees need to increase the total approved amount.

Subgrantees must submit the *PDEG: Request for Amendment Form* and the revised application materials when requesting to amend their grant.

After the required documents are received, the PDEG Application Review Committee will review the request and approve or reject. If approved, the amendment will go through the same approval and signature process as did the original grant.

### **Resources and Community of Practice**

- [Federal Administrative Regulations](#)
- [PDG Technical Assistance and Resource Website](#)
- [US Education Department PDG Information](#)
- [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#)

If a grant application has been approved and a grant award has been received, contact [Laura Greenwood](#) to join the PDEG Community of Practice group.

### **Monitoring Procedure and Protocol**

Monitoring teams will be led by the grant supported AOE Program Manager and Business Data Analyst. Other members of the PDEG Interagency Implementation Team, AOE staff, and invited staff from partner PDEG programs will also support the monitoring process.

All subgrantees are required to participate in all monitoring activities during the grant's period of performance. The monitoring process, both fiscal and programmatic, will continue throughout the 2018-2019 school year. Monitoring activities will consist of desk monitoring and onsite monitoring visits. Subgrantees will receive information about what activities take place during a visit, and what the subgrantee needs to prepare ahead of time. For the 2018-2019 school year:

1. All new subgrantees will receive an onsite monitoring visit within six months of the start date of their initial grant agreement.
2. All subgrantees will have a desk monitoring or an onsite monitoring conducted of the program each grant year.

Subgrantee's receiving an onsite visit versus a desk monitoring will be decided by multiple factors, though not limited to:

1. A first-time participant of PDEG
2. Challenges meeting the target number of slots
4. Challenges spending approved grant funds
5. Needing more in-depth technical assistance and support
6. Needing further support when planning for sustainability after the grant cycle
7. Findings from previous monitoring activities

After an onsite visit, the AOE will verify Act 166 prequalification status, child care licensing status, and licensed teacher status' of the subgrantee sites and classrooms through desk monitoring. Within seven days, a subgrantee will receive a letter, via email, acknowledging the time and date of the monitoring visit. A monitoring summary and report will be sent to the subgrantee within 30 business days of the visit. If there findings, the subgrantee must address the findings through a corrective action and improvement plan (CAIP) within 30 business days of receipt of the report. If no CAIP is needed, then the only action will be to review, sign, and return a copy of the report to the AOE.

Desk monitoring activities will include communication via email and over the phone with subgrantees. Subgrantees will be asked to provide specific evidence of meeting PDEG program criteria.

All Head Start programs are monitored to the same standards, procedures, protocol, and timeline as supervisory union and supervisory district subgrantees.

## **Data Collection**

Subgrantees will be asked to submit PDEG specific data throughout the grant year for the PDEG Annual Performance Review that will be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education. Subgrantees will be notified in advance to provide time to collect the requested data.

## **Contact Information**

PDEG Program Manager: [Laura Greenwood](#)

Office: (802) 479-1476