

ILLINOIS' RACE TO THE TOP EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE GRANT 2015



VISION

Every child in Illinois begins kindergarten healthy, safe, eager to learn, and ready to succeed.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY

Raise the quality of early learning and development programs and reach children and families with the highest needs.

\$52,498,043* investment over four years (2013-2016)

EXCELERATE®

BUILDING PROGRAM QUALITY

www.excelerateillinois.com

WHAT IS IT?

Excelerate® Illinois uses a consistent set of standards to recognize program quality in a variety of settings.



387,329

Children in Illinois with high needs**



2,329

Programs achieving a rating BEYOND the licensed level



12
AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

1,306
GOLD

948
SILVER

63
BRONZE

915
ARE CHILD CARE CENTERS

77,017

Children with high needs served in Gold-rated programs

(↑6,371 since 2014)

** Children with high need are defined as those in families earning less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

GATEWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY

BUILDING A SKILLED WORKFORCE

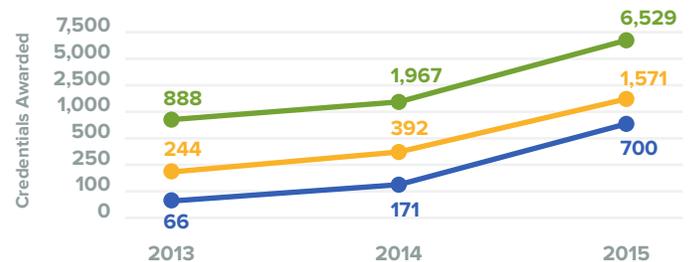
www.ilgateways.com

"The quality of any early care and learning setting is directly related to the quality of the staff, their education and training and understanding of child development and the ability to translate that understanding through effective practice."

— Linda Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

INCREASE IN CREDENTIALLED WORKFORCE OVER TIME

Credentials provide stackable pathways of training and higher education from entry level through Master's degree.



ILLINOIS DIRECTOR CREDENTIAL
ECE CREDENTIAL
INFANT TODDLER CREDENTIAL

INNOVATION ZONES

REACHING CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS

www.partnerplanact.org

11 Innovation Zones

are piloting collaborative cross-sector strategies for engaging children and families with high needs in high-quality early childhood programs.



* Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge is a competitive federal grant awarded to the State of Illinois