RTT–ELC is …

The Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) is a federal grant awarded to New Mexico on January 1, 2013 to improve the early education system.

“Through the $37.5 million, 4-year grant, we are creating an environment that allows young children to build a strong foundation for learning. As a result, we will see more children ready for school, reading at grade-level, graduating from high school and growing into engaged citizens and productive workers,” explained RTT-ELC Project Manager Kathy Ytuarte (PED).

To learn more, visit www.earlylearningnm.org

RTT–ELC: Building a Strong Foundation for New Mexico

- **Raising Quality**
  - Ensuring a highly qualified and skilled workforce to best support children’s optimal development.
  - Implementing FOCUS, a rating system that allows parents to identify high quality programs and supports early learning providers to improve quality.

- **Promoting Accountability**
  - Developing a system that integrates data from across early learning programs serving young children to measure child outcomes over time and to enable planning for early learning investments in student improvements.

- **Supporting Schools in Meeting Each Child’s Needs**
  - Through the Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT), assessing school readiness to understand individual child needs at the beginning of kindergarten and provide early interventions for positive learning outcomes.

- **Investing in Communities**
  - Identifying where children are at the greatest risk and prioritizing services to meet needs in most needed areas.

Ensuring all children thrive by five!

New Mexico Race To the Top – Early Learning Challenge is building the foundation for positive outcomes for all children making sure they enter kindergarten ready to learn, grow and succeed in life.
RTT-ELC is working together to produce the best outcomes for New Mexico’s children

RTT-ELC is bringing together everyone that works on behalf of New Mexico’s young children — agencies and organizations, providers and families — to produce the best outcomes for children. With Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, we are building a New Mexico where each child has the opportunity to fulfill his or her potential. For more information, be involved or stay in touch, email Kathy.Ytuarte2@state.nm.us or visit www.earlylearningnm.org

Raising the Quality of Early Learning Programs
The next generation of New Mexico’s quality rating system – FOCUS on Young Children’s Learning – will provide families with the information needed to choose quality early learning programs. Known as the FOCUS TQRIS (Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System), the 5-star rating includes a stronger emphasis on the full participation of every child, effective teaching, and promoting early learning and development outcomes for each child across the early learning system.

Raising Quality Through Professional Development
Quality programs begin with an educated workforce. RTT-ELC is:
- Creating opportunities for early childhood staff to earn an Associate, Bachelor, Master or Ph.D. degree;
- Ensuring early learning teachers, assistants and providers have the knowledge and skills needed through higher education enhancements;
- Providing training in best practices; and
- Developing a consistent set of competencies.

Promoting Accountability
This Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) will pull together data from across all early learning programs, allowing for informed decision-making about programs and policies. The ECIDS will also enable us to measure child outcomes over time.
ECIDS will help program administrators, teachers, service providers, policy makers, and families identify short and long term outcomes of early learning interventions for continuous improvement in programs and to ultimately achieve positive outcomes for each child from preschool through high school and beyond.

Supporting Schools in Meeting Each Child’s Needs
As part of our comprehensive plan to ensure that all New Mexico students have the opportunity to succeed in school, the Kindergarten Observation Tool (KOT) was developed to help teachers better understand a child’s strength in learning, well-being, social development, and conceptual understanding at the beginning of school.

Investing in Communities
Early Childhood Investment Zones have been identified using data that compares levels of risk and resiliency across New Mexico. The levels of risk were then geographically ranked to identify where New Mexico children are at the most risk and where investments in programs, services and greater access to high quality early learning programs are needed.
The communities identified touch every region of New Mexico ranging from frontier to urban population centers and are located within 11 counties and 35 school districts.

The first five years form a foundation for success in life.
www.earlylearningnm.org