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Acronyms		
Adverse Child Experiences (ACE)	Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA)	Total Protective Factors (TPF)
Classroom Assessment Scoring System® (CLASS)	Language Environment Analysis (LENA)	University of Dayton Business Research Group (UD/BRG)
Conscious Discipline® (CD)	Minnesota Executive Function Scale (MEFS)	Woodcock-Johnson-IV Tests of Early Cognitive and Academic Development (WJ-IV ECAD)
electronic Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (eDECA)	Quasi-experimental design (QED)	
Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC)	Professional Learning Community (PLC)	

INTRODUCTION

History and Background: In 2007, advocates collaborating through the Montgomery County Ohio Early Care and Education Initiative formed ReadySetSoar, the focus of which was to improve children's readiness for Kindergarten and 3rd-grade reading proficiency. For the next 9 years, ReadySetSoar worked collaboratively with Learn to Earn Dayton, which was dedicated to improving educational achievement among older children, operating as Montgomery County's cradle-to-career initiative. In 2016, Preschool Promise was established to carry forth the mission of partnering with families, providers and community leaders so that all children have high-quality early childhood experiences from prenatal through age 5 years, envisioning kindergarten readiness for each child in Montgomery County. In the ensuing years, in order to reach this overarching goal, Preschool Promise has developed partnerships with 120+ licensed preschool and child care sites, which collectively care for and educate 3,000+ preschoolers each year. Preschool Promise receives support from Montgomery County and the City of Dayton, working collaboratively with area early childhood education providers to improve the quality of instruction so that every child has access to high-quality programming in the critical formative preschool years, focusing on Black children and children from lower-income families.

Preschool Promise is committed to fostering equity and addressing disparities and obstacles in access to early childhood education. In addition to promoting best practices for all young learners, Preschool Promise identifies and leverages resources to families with young children who have the greatest needs. More recently, Preschool Promise has expanded the focus to support children from Birth to age 3 by implementing evidence-based home visiting and identifying resources that encompass parenting support and early intervention services, so that all children can thrive in their earliest years.

Overview of EIR Project Partnership Structure: Preschool Promise will lead and manage the proposed EIR project, relying on and leveraging close partnerships with local, state, and national education and research experts. Preschool Promise will work with the established network of licensed preschool and child care partner sites to identify classrooms that will participate in the EIR funded program, which will entail a QED. The Preschool Promise EIR project will benefit from the expert leadership of the Director of the University of Dayton's Business Research Group, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED], Associate Professor of Psychology at University of Dayton, to design and implement data collection protocols. Abt Associates, a global leader in state-of-the-art research, monitoring and evaluation, will serve as the research evaluator, and collaborate with the University of Dayton to analyze the collected data, publish and disseminate the findings in an array of venues. A community Advisory Council, comprising an array of early childhood education experts, and a Parent Council that includes parents of young children will also inform and guide the EIR project.

Geographical Area/Population of Focus: The Preschool Promise EIR project will be conducted in Montgomery County, Ohio, which encompasses urban, suburban, and rural sectors, with a total population of 538,892, 5.8% of which are children under the age of 5 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Dayton, the largest city, is also the county seat, and ranks among the top third (33%) most geographically segregated of the 90 largest metropolitan areas in the United States at 23rd (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Dayton's government, civil, and neighborhood stakeholders collectively acknowledge the significant racial divide in the city, exemplified through geographical perception and embedded in stark reality (City of Dayton, 2020). The population of focus for the EIR project is preschool children, between 3-5 years old, who reside in the highest and most under-resourced urban neighborhoods and outlying communities in Montgomery County. Of the total population, approximately 66% of the children and families identify as

Black, and 8 of 10 families live in households with an annual income of \$42,000 or less (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Kindergarten readiness and 3rd grade reading proficiency scores are notably low, with only 24% of children scoring in the highest band on the state's KRA.

Overview of EIR Project: CD is a popular and widely utilized trauma-informed, evidence-based practice, designed to improve the social-emotional skills that children need to succeed in school and later as adults. Although CD is implemented in educational settings throughout the U.S., and also applied in classrooms within the Preschool Promise system, there is minimal research to substantiate the impact of implementation. To date, there have been no studies of CD that meet the What Works Clearinghouse Standards With or Without Reservations. Prior research of the program includes a study of teachers' perceptions of the program and a study of children's behavioral improvement (after being identified by the teacher as exhibiting challenging behaviors) following participating in the program. Recently, [REDACTED] and her colleagues examined correlations between scores on the CD Fidelity Rubric and changes in children's executive function and academic skills over time (Anderson et al, 2022; Anderson et al, 2020). Through this research, the team found that children who were in classrooms where teachers implemented the program with higher fidelity had greater executive function gains across the preschool year, and they also found that the association between program fidelity and children's kindergarten academic skills was fully mediated by children's growth in executive function skills (Anderson et al, 2022; Anderson et al, 2020).

The proposed EIR project will evaluate CD's effectiveness in programs with large populations of children of color in selected classrooms who are experiencing poverty. The EIR project will also assess the effectiveness of the emerging practice of Black Boy Brilliance, a program developed by Preschool Promise through the guidance of prominent Montgomery

County leaders and stakeholders, and which has resulted in an innovative strategy to enhance learning environments for children of color, focusing on the needs of Black boys.

Multiple modalities of assessments, including standardized, nationally norm-referenced achievement tests for students including WJ-IV ECAD, MEFS, eDECA, in addition to teacher self-assessment on fidelity of implementation, and the nationally acknowledged CLASS and state KRA, will be utilized to more holistically assess impact on preschool children's academic and social-emotional outcomes and classroom quality. Through this Early-Phase EIR project, Preschool Promise will address the Absolute and Competitive Priority as described in *Table-1*.

TABLE-1	ABSOLUTE & COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY
Absolute Priority #1	Preschool Promise's work and other national studies have shown CD to have initial promise in improving academic and social-emotional outcomes. Further iterative development and evaluation, implementation, and feasibility testing are needed with a larger and more diverse range of preschools to ensure the intervention is ready for scale-up and dissemination. Iterative development will focus on monitoring implementation and outcomes to ensure CD is efficient enough to be implemented at scale and effective across a wide range of schools and student groups.
Absolute Priority #4:	<p>(a) Create, develop, implement, replicate, or take to scale entrepreneurial, evidence-based, field-initiated innovations to improve student achievement and attainment for high need students: Preschool Promise will estimate the effectiveness of the program at increasing the social-emotional, self-regulation, executive function, academic skills, and kindergarten readiness for 3- and 4-year-old children attending Preschool Promise programs. The QED will compare outcomes for children attending Preschool Promise programs implementing CD compared to children attending Preschool Promise classrooms without CD and will also compare the instructional quality in the 2 sets of classrooms. Evaluation will also include an implementation evaluation that assesses fidelity of implementation in both years of the program and observes the relationship of implementation to outcomes.</p> <p>(b) Improve students' social, emotional, academic, and career development, with a focus on underserved students, through 1 or more of the following priority areas: (b1) Developing and supporting educator and school capacity to support social and emotional learning and development that fosters skills and behaviors that enable academic progress: (b1i) Fosters skills and behaviors that enable academic progress: CD focuses on activities that build cognitive regulation, including working memory/planning as well as attention control, inhibitory control, and cognitive flexibility. CD activities that build emotional processes focus primarily on emotion knowledge/expression and emotion/behavior regulation. Everyday rituals, routines, and structures that make up a majority of the program focus on emotion/behavior regulation. (b1ii) Identifies and addresses conditions in the learning environment, which may negatively impact social and emotional well-being for underserved students, including conditions that affect physical safety: While most programs offer at least some support for school climate and culture, CD is one of only 3 programs to offer extensive support. As a behavior management system, CD is built around a set of structures, rituals, and routines that are embedded throughout the learning environment in order to build positive school and classroom culture. (b1iii) Is trauma-informed, such as addressing exposure to community-based violence and trauma specific to military- or veteran-connected students (as defined in this notice): CD is a trauma-informed, evidence-based social emotional behavioral methodology for all ages. CD provides a</p>

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variety of behavior management strategies and classroom structures to support teachers in creating a learning space based on safety, connection, and problem-solving, essential for children exposed to community-based violence. **(b2) Creating education or work-based settings that are supportive, positive, identity-safe and inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status, through 1 or more of the following activities:** **(b2i) Developing trusting relationships between students (including underserved students), educators, families, and community partners:** Healthy connections promote problem-solving and thriving. Unhealthy connections promote defensive survival skills in efforts to feel safe. Caring or willingness comes from a relationship with others (connection). Disconnected children don't care, so no consequence or punishment will work. This is one reason the same are often punished over and over. CD emphasizes connection through empathy, encouragement, the School Family, I Love You Rituals, the Brain Smart Start, and more. Once children are connected, they are more willing to see from another's point of view and understand the impact of their behavior on others. They feel safe enough to reflect on their choices and try a better way. **(b2ii) High-quality professional development opportunities designed to increase engagement/belonging and build asset-based mindsets for educators:** CD involves intensive teacher training and self-study; coaching and continuing support for teachers as they deploy conceptual components in the classroom and model behaviors; and exposure of students to various social opportunities, including schoolwide opportunities and practice of skills. CD is designed to modify teacher and child behavior in order to build a school and classroom culture based on safety, connection, and problem-solving instead of external rewards and punishment. CD consists of common language and sets of behavior management strategies/positive discipline techniques to help manage thoughts, feelings, and actions during daily stressors, taught to children for the lifespan.

Competitive Preference Priority #1:

Preschool Promise will engage Sinclair College, a community college located in Dayton, Ohio, through Education Department Instructor [REDACTED], to draw from his expertise in large scale research projects, social-emotional learning, executive function, early childhood education, and culturally relevant teaching practices, including the Black Boy Brilliance practices and approaches. More specifically, [REDACTED] will offer project guidance and feedback through his expertise creating trauma-informed classrooms and developing social emotional strategies across the development continuum. [REDACTED] will represent Sinclair College as an integral member of Preschool Promise's Advisory Council. Preschool Promise has also engaged Swapna Purandare at Sinclair College to serve on the Advisory Council. Professor Purandare teaches in the Early Childhood Education associate degree program, which will enable integration of learning from this project into the curriculum for the early childhood education students at Sinclair College.

SIGNIFICANCE

Project Involves the Development of Promising New Strategies that Build Existing

Strategies: The Preschool Promise EIR, as noted in the EIR Overview and *Table-1*, will advance the body of information and evidence related to promising and innovative strategies and practices which have been applied in early learning classrooms but not fully or extensively studied or evaluated through comparative research methods. Examples of existing national and local research and studies that have explored the factors contributing to early learning positivity, obstacles, and comparative outcomes follow:

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National Significance: The early childhood years of birth to age 5 have long been acknowledged as the most critical point in a child’s brain development (Harvard University, 2007). For example, studies show that young children learn through active exploration—and the drive to observe, interact, discover, and explore is inherent in their development (National Science Teaching Association, 2014). Experts further report that this sensitive period of development must be utilized to start children on the right path to be successful (National Science Teaching Association, 2014).

Research has also indicated that children who participate in early childhood education programs achieve better academic and life outcomes, with the strongest impacts occurring for children from low-income families (Bustamante et al, 2021). Additional reports indicate that early childhood is an important time to build foundational skills in traditional academic areas and may play a similar role for technology literacy (Bustamante et al, 2021). Research further shows that among preschool-aged children, knowledge of math is a better predictor of later academic achievement than early reading or attention skills (Bjorklund et al, 2020). Additionally, research has demonstrated that the drive to explore, interact, and observe begins in early childhood, long before middle and high school, and even before elementary school (Harvard University, 2007). Research has further indicated these early skills catapult young scholars into a lifetime of personal and professional success (Harvard University, 2007). Equitable, early introduction to such approaches, as cited in research, will inspire the next generation of leaders as diverse, thoughtful citizens of the world. These new leaders represent untapped perspectives that will lead to revolutionary innovations, and the approach to early learning intentionally nurtures these perspectives, encouraging child-driven investigative experiences.

In contrast, diminished resources and attention given to the nation’s minority students has caused high numbers of America’s students to underperform in key academic measurements. In

2019, White students in 4th grade scored an average of 230 points on reading exams compared to an average score of 204 points for Black students and 209 points for Hispanic/ Latinx students (Bushnell, 2021). White 4th graders similarly earned higher mathematics scores, with an average score of 249 points compared to an average score of 224 points for Black students and 231 for Hispanic/Latinx students (The Nation's Report Card, 2019). In 12th grade, White students scored almost twice as high as Blacks and Hispanic/Latinx on reading proficiency, with 46% of White students scoring at or above the proficiency level, compared to 17% of Black students and 25% of Hispanic/Latinx students (The Nation's Report Card, 2019).

The consistency of lower performance measures for minority students has remained steady for the past 20 years, with clear impacts on the overall educational performance level of American students, increasing more each year as the minority population grows (The Nation's Report Card, 2019). Failure to hit early milestone compounds, as those who fall behind early often stay behind (Bushnell, 2021). Racial and socioeconomic inequity has stifled access to quality early education during the years in which children's minds are most fertile and open for instillation of lifelong learning habits, according to additional research (Bushnell, 2021).

Psychological, social, and emotional factors-specifically *Toxic Stress*-associated with poverty and racism, negatively impacts children's overall health and development, which manifests through challenging behaviors in home and preschool settings, and a lack of connection with peers and caregivers (Gitterman et al, 2016). *Traumatic events*, often referred to as ACEs, during early years, also affect the structural development of the brain and the neurobiological pathways that determine a child's functional development (Gitterman et al, 2016). While positive experiences support children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, adverse childhood experiences may likewise hinder and create lasting problems (Gitterman et al, 2016).

Children in low-income families often are exposed to increased ACEs and negative environmental factors that delay or compromise learning (Gitterman et al, 2016).

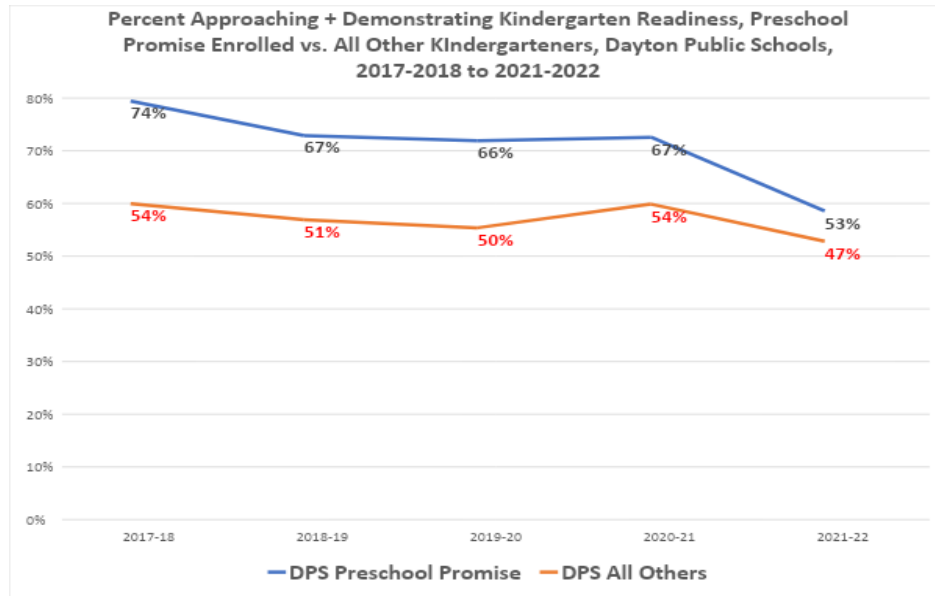
A key challenge for educational institutions, including preschools, involves serving culturally diverse students with varied abilities and motivations for learning. Unfortunately, many students lack social-emotional competencies, and become less connected to school as they progress from elementary to middle to high school, and this lack of connection negatively affects academic performance, behavior, and health. By high school as many as 40% to 60% of students become chronically disengaged from school (Durlak et al, 2011). For example, the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance survey estimates 30% of high school students engage in multiple high-risk behaviors such as substance use, sex, violence, depression, attempted suicide, that interfere with school performance and jeopardize their potential for life success (CDC, 2019), which can be attributed to loss of connection and perceived lack of relevance in school settings.

An unprecedented set of circumstances that also occurred during 2020-2022, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the full impacts of which have yet to be fully explored, clearly created and exacerbated psychologic and emotional reactions, stress and trauma for children of all ages. The array of disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the growth in youth mental health distress, continue to impact student well-being, according to most recent and short-term studies. Accordingly, relevant and persistent support for students' social and emotional needs, which is shown as integral to academic achievement, has grown exponentially. The COVID-19 pandemic compounded these identified stressors experienced by Montgomery County's most vulnerable and at risk residents, resulting in over 10,800 hospitalizations (Ohio Department of Health, 2022). Montgomery County also reported a COVID-19 mortality rate of 392 per 100,000 residents, 90% higher than the state average of 206 per 100,000 residents (Ohio Department of Health, 2022). Local school closings as a result of the pandemic mandates also affected more

than 12,000 Dayton students and families, creating an array of challenges, including severe learning losses (Ohio Department of Health, 2022) .

Local Significance: Preschool Promise with its collaborators and stakeholders have conducted and analyzed trending qualitative and quantitative assessments of conditions that affect children. This information has been derived from an array of public, private, and observational sources. For example, of every 20 children in Montgomery County, 11 are economically disadvantaged, including 6 living in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Within specific geographic sectors of Montgomery County, locally collected data from providers, community entities, and the corresponding school districts show that children, specifically those from lower income families who qualify for financial assistance, experience startlingly scarce access to quality early care and education programs and thus may be likely to score lower in academic performance assessments by entry into third grade, a strong predictor of life outcomes. The University of Dayton has worked with Preschool Promise since its inception in 2016 in the context of evaluation and assessment. The annual evaluations have included 1) extensive child assessment data collections and analysis: 2) process evaluation aspects, (attendance monitoring and data analysis, and 3) annual kindergarten experience surveys in conjunction with 16 Montgomery County School districts where parent reports on childcare experiences prior to kindergarten are influenced by socioeconomic factors.

Ohio's KRA to Measure Kindergarten Readiness: As part of ongoing local evaluation efforts related to early childhood education, [REDACTED] has analyzed the impacts of preschool characteristics on the KRA for a sample of Preschool Promise enrolled children each year, measured at the start of kindergarten given family, neighborhood socioeconomic demographics and attendance (Fuhs et al, 2018). In addition, the KRA scores of Preschool Promise enrolled children in participating school district's kindergarten classes have been compared to those of all



other children in the district’s kindergarten in each of the last 5 years. As a consequence, there is ample documentation of the differential impact of preschool on school readiness, as indicated on the chart below. In the Dayton School District kindergarten classrooms for example, the typical differential in the percent in the top 2 of the 3 bands (“approaching” and “demonstrating” vs. emerging), has been approximately +16 percentage points. Evaluative data has demonstrated that this differential has narrowed dramatically, linked to teacher turnover, lack of preschool experienced teachers, and lower attendance rates during the COVID-19 pandemic disruptions.

As noted, the percent of Preschool Promise enrolled children “demonstrating readiness” was at 24% for the 2021-2022 cohort across 5 school districts and little improvement is expected for the 2022-2023 cohort given continuing issues of teacher turnover and lower attendance rates. Just as important, there is a profound differential in the percent demonstrating readiness between African American and White children enrolled in Preschool Promise. Specifically, although 33% of White children were demonstrating readiness, only 13% of African American children demonstrated readiness.

Local Use of CLASS for Measuring Instructional Quality: For the last 5 years, Preschool Promise and its local evaluation team have applied and utilized CLASS to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of professional development and coaching. Over the course of the 2 pre-COVID-19 pandemic years, evidence of improvement in CLASS Scores across all 3 domains and that improvement was linked statistically specifically to involvement in the professional learning communities and associated coaching (*Table-2*). The COVID-19 pandemic's impact on local preschool teachers and students was profound: for example both a dramatic increase in teacher turnover and loss of experienced teachers resulted in substantial increases in reported social emotional problems with children in the classroom and substantial reductions in attendance rates for children tied to ongoing health fears and transportation difficulties. As a consequence of these collective factors, CLASS Scores deteriorated dramatically. Examining Spring 2022 mean scores, (when sample size is back to appropriate levels), the decrease compared to Spring 2019 is most profound for Instructional Support, (-0.72). During the last year, only modest improvement was reported. Those improvements are tied to the subset of classrooms where teachers participated in a PLC.

TABLE-2 MEAN CLASS DOMAIN AND OVERALL SCORES, PRESCHOOL PROMISE AFFILIATED CLASSROOMS/KETTERING SCHOOL DISTRICTS											
	Pre-Covid, Professional Learning Community, and Coaching Impact					Covid Impact					Post Covid Change
	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Mean Change, Fall 2017 to Spring 2019	Spring 2021 *	Fall 2021 *	Spring 2022	Mean Change, Spring 2019 to Spring 2022	Spring 2023	Mean Change, Spring 2022 to Spring 2023
Emotional Support	5.82	5.93	5.92	6.15	0.32	5.91	5.84	5.97	-0.18	6.10	0.13
Classroom Organization	5.27	5.39	5.41	5.69	0.42	5.58	5.43	5.66	-0.04	5.67	0.01
Instructional Support	2.91	2.90	3.04	3.17	0.25	2.41	2.29	2.45	-0.72	2.49	0.04
Over-all Average	4.78	4.86	4.93	5.12	0.34	4.82	4.65	4.82	-0.30	4.89	0.07
Sample Size	135	136	172	172		80	97	147		134	
<i>Sample reductions due to COVID-19 Impact</i>											

Preschool Promise has further gathered substantial evidence, which verifies that more intensive use of resources in the form of PLC and job embedded coaching based on best practices, is measurably impactful. Specifically, the need for professional development, training, re-orienting, and prioritizing best practice approaches post-COVID-19 is demonstrably acute, given turnovers in the early childhood workforce and resulting increase in child needs.

For Preschool Promise associated classrooms, Emotional Support Scores tend to fall in a narrow range from 4 to 7 on the 1 to 7 scale, with more than half of teachers following in the top of the range from 6 to 7. For Classroom Organization there is greater variability with scores ranging from 2.67 to 7. However again, half of the teachers cluster in the 6 to 7 range. By contrast, Instructional Support scores display a range from 1.17 to 5.83 for Preschool Promise classrooms with no clustering at the higher range. This pattern demonstrates similarity to national Head Start data related to average domain scores. Performance measures for Emotional Support and Classroom Organization are adjusted to acknowledge the high-end skew.

Racial Equity-Bias: Research by Yale University's [REDACTED] poignantly documents the existence of implicit bias in the context of preschool environments. In this study's description, early childhood educators were asked to watch a video of young children and told to push a button when they saw what could become challenging behavior-except that none of the children were actually misbehaving. Eye scan technology showed that teachers reflexively surveilled the Black children, and especially Black boys, at a disproportionate rate. Discipline rates are higher for Black boys - black boys are suspended and expelled more frequently than other students, including in preschool (Gilliam et al, 2016). Preschool Promise is aware that bias negatively impacts Black boys in our community. To identify, assess and ameliorate bias on a local level, Preschool Promise has created and led multiple year-long Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), including Culturally Relevant Teaching, Wired to Move, and Bridging the

Gap; Becoming a Black boy-friendly Teacher to help teachers become aware of bias and change practices in the classroom. Qualitative data collected from teachers confirm that they “did not realize their own biases” and they were able to learn new ways of creating equitable classrooms. Another locally studied factor is preschool teacher gender and racial representation that reflects the student demographic. Currently, more than 80% of White preschoolers are in classrooms with a White teacher while less than 50% of Black students have a Black teacher, this figure estimated at 41% for Black males in Montgomery County. Also, because early childhood education is historically a female-dominated profession, boys see few male — and particularly few Black — role models in their classrooms.

Research Gaps: A growing body of research indicates that school-based efforts to promote students' social and emotional learning represent an effective approach to enhance children's success in school and life. Schools have an important role to play in raising healthy children by fostering not only their cognitive development, but also their social and emotional development. Yet schools have limited resources to address all of these areas and are experiencing intense pressures to enhance academic performance. Given time constraints and competing demands, educators must prioritize and effectively implement evidence-based approaches that produce multiple benefits.

Past research has suggested that social-emotional learning programs designed for children in kindergarten through 12th grade are effective in improving social and emotional skills and decreasing behavior problems (Durlak et al., 2011). Given that social-emotional learning programs emphasize the development of self-regulation skills and executive function skills are considered to be the cognitive component of self-regulation, it stands to reason that social-emotional learning programs would have a positive impact on children's executive function skill development (Blair & Ursache, 2011; Carlson et al., 2016).

Past studies examining the effectiveness of social-emotional learning programs in terms of improving executive function skills have also been promising. For example, Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (Kusché & Greenberg, 1994) is a social-emotional learning curriculum that emphasizes the importance of recognizing and labeling feelings in order to learn how to manage them. A randomized controlled study of third grade students suggested that improvements in inhibitory control mediated the relationship between implementation of the PATHS curriculum and ratings of internalizing and externalizing behavior problems, suggesting PATHS to be effective for promoting executive function skills (Riggs et al, 2006). The Chicago School Readiness Project, an intervention program designed to promote self-regulation skills among children living in poverty, also appears to be an effective social-emotional learning program for developing executive function skills (Jones et al, 2013).

Specifically, researchers found that the quality of teacher-child relationships and children's self-regulation skills mediated the effects of the Chicago School Readiness Project on children's behavioral outcomes (Jones et al., 2013). In addition, a 10-year follow-up study of adolescent students who completed the Chicago School Readiness Project program demonstrated that students in the Chicago School Readiness Project group performed better on measures of executive function skills compared to those in the control group (Watts et al, 2018).

Extensive early childhood developmental research indicates that effective mastery of social-emotional competencies is associated with greater well-being and better school performance whereas the failure to achieve competence in these areas can lead to a variety of personal, social, and academic difficulties (Schonert-Reichl, 2017). The findings from various clinical, prevention, and youth-development studies have stimulated the creation of many school-based interventions specifically designed to promote young people's social-emotional learning (Greenberg et al, 2003). Further, several researchers have questioned the extent to which

promoting children's social and emotional skills will actually improve their behavioral and academic outcomes.

Expansion of Research through Preschool Promise EIR - Conscious Discipline Impact Study:

Through the proposed QED, increased and more advanced research and evaluative processes will focus on the outcomes for 3-4 year-old children attending preschool classrooms in programs that are part of the Preschool Promise network. This advanced QED study, a type of which has not been previously conducted, will estimate the effectiveness of the program at increasing the social- emotional, self-regulation, executive function, academic skills, and kindergarten readiness for 3- and 4-year-old children attending Preschool Promise programs. For example, the QED will compare outcomes for children attending Preschool Promise programs that are implementing CD, and selected programs that include both CD and Black Boy Brilliance modules, compared to children attending Preschool Promise classrooms without CD and Black Boy Brilliance enhancements, and will also compare the instructional quality in the 2 sets of classrooms. The evaluation will also include an implementation evaluation that assesses the fidelity of implementation in both years of the program and the relationship of implementation to outcomes.

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

(1) Conceptual Framework Underlying Proposed Research: The Preschool Promise EIR

project is based on the conceptual framework of Conscious Discipline® an evidence-based, trauma-informed approach that encompasses multiple components, each of which are scientifically and practically designed for success. CD work in the treatment group would be expected to impact school readiness through a variety of vehicles. Most directly, the positive impact on classroom climate should both decrease teacher turnover and improve children's attendance rate. In addition, less time spent dealing unproductively with classroom interruptions

and unsafe behavior should increase the amount of constructive play and cognitive development time devoted to learning. When implemented with fidelity, CD will lead to improved outcomes with respect to teaching young students self-regulation skills to enable learning of important academic skills through a culturally responsive lens.

Preschool Promise will focus on the underlying theory of change that systematic instruction on social and emotional learning with classroom management will result in the following desired outcomes: a) increased teacher use of personal self-regulation practices in classroom; b) increased teacher use of self-regulation instructional practices; c) increased teacher focus on children's social-emotional skills; d) increased teacher use of high-quality classroom instructional practices; e) increased student self-regulatory skills; f) increased student social-emotional skills; g) increased student executive function skills; h) increased student academic skills; and i) increased student kindergarten readiness.

Conscious Discipline®: CD is used in over 900 school districts across the United States (Loving Guidance Inc, 2018a) and is designed to promote children's self-regulation skills so they can avoid impulsive behavior and engage in higher-order problem-solving skills (Bailey, 2000, 2014). A key component of CD is the Brain State Model; while based in neuroscience research, the Brain State Model is a highly simplified conceptual framework that suggests individuals have 3 hierarchical needs: safety, connection, and problem-solving (Bailey, 2000, 2014). These needs correspond with 3 "brain states": the survival state, the emotional state, and the executive state. When children are in survival and emotional brain states, they have difficulties self-regulating their behavior and engaging in other higher-order cognitive processes. Thus, CD teaches caregivers how to help children move from lower-level brain states (i.e., survival and emotional states) to the higher-order executive state (Bailey, 2000, 2014). In other words, CD purports to

promote classroom climates where students feel safe and emotionally connected with others so that they can engage in higher-order cognitive processes.

When children are operating within this “executive state,” CD emphasizes the important role that teachers and other caregivers play in helping young children learn to effectively regulate behaviors and solve problems; as such, teachers are encouraged to model these skills and to help their students practice these skills daily (Bailey, 2014). The developers suggest that by verbally labeling their own emotions, modeling emotion regulation strategies (e.g., deep breathing), and discussing problem-solving strategies aloud with students, teachers provide examples of inner speech patterns that promote self-awareness and regulation (Bailey, 2014; Vygotsky, 1986). In doing so, they argue, children are better able to engage in academic activities, which in turn promotes students’ school readiness skills. While the developers of CD claim that the program is effective for promoting students’ academic skills, peer-reviewed research evaluating the association between CD and school readiness skills is quite limited.

To date, most of the peer reviewed research that has studied CD has focused on teachers’ perceptions of the program (e.g., Caldarella et al., 2012) or the association between CD and students’ behavior (e.g., Hoffman et al., 2005, 2009). To our knowledge, Anderson et al. (2020) is the only peer-reviewed study that has examined the relationship between CD and school readiness skills. This study found that there was no significant association between teachers’ fidelity to the CD program (i.e., the extent to which the program was implemented in the way intended by the developers; Vermilyea et al., 1984) and academic skills in math, literacy, and language skills at the end of preschool (Anderson et al., 2020). However, this study also found that students who were enrolled in classrooms in which CD was implemented with higher fidelity demonstrated significantly greater gains in their executive function skills across the preschool year (Anderson et al., 2020). One limitation of this study, however, was that the school

readiness assessment used (Bracken Basic Concept Scale - Third Edition: Receptive; Bracken, 2006) measured skills that most children master by the time they enter kindergarten; as such, it is possible that the association between CD fidelity and academic skills was suppressed due to a ceiling effect (Anderson et al., 2020). It is also possible that CD may have a “sleeper effect” on children’s academic development, meaning that the benefits of the program may not manifest until later stages of the child’s education (Kagan & Moss, 1962). In other words, CD may equip preschoolers with the cognitive skills (e.g., executive function) necessary to effectively engage with academic material in kindergarten and beyond, even if it is not associated with students’ performance in the short-term. In a subsequent study, [REDACTED] and her colleagues (Anderson et al., 2022) examined associations between CD fidelity and children’s kindergarten academic readiness skills in language, literacy, math, and social foundations and found that there was an association between program fidelity and higher social foundations skills in kindergarten, and although there were no direct effects of fidelity on children’s literacy, language, and math skills, these effects were significantly fully mediated through growth in children’s executive function skills in preschool.

The primary aim of CD is to facilitate an intentional shift in adults’ understanding of child behaviors. and consists of a philosophy, common language, and set of behavior management strategies and positive discipline techniques that help adults manage their thoughts, feelings, and actions in the face of daily stressors, as well as teach these skills to children. Instead of scripted lessons delivered as a discrete component of the day, CD builds a school family culture through consistent modeling of routines, rituals and structures designed to set behavioral expectations, build school and classroom connectedness, and scaffold social/emotional skill development during everyday teachable moments. As a core component, participating treatment classrooms will receive extensive training on how to implement CD with fidelity, as noted in *Table-3*.

TABLE-3	CD CORE COMPONENTS
<p>Week-long Summer Professional Development (5 days): Each participant will learn the CD framework, understanding how to implement strategies to transform the dynamics in their classrooms. [REDACTED] of Preschool Promise will work with CD to design the week-long professional development. Preschool Promise will contract with CD for Master or Certified Instructors and will also provide their own Certified Instructors who are women of color to facilitate. This is a hands-on workshop where participants are expected to practice different techniques and interact with their colleagues. Teachers will leave with a strong understanding of the CD framework and a clear understanding of what to implement first in their classrooms. (Assumes 50 Lead Teachers, 50 Assistant Teachers, and 25 coaches/administrators for a total of 125 attendees. Participants will learn the following: the 3 Brain States of CD; the 7 Skills and Powers of CD through an equity lens; practical application of CD through the lens of Black practitioners; the 5 Steps of Self-Regulation; the importance of I love You Rituals and connection; how to create the School Family; how to implement the Safe Keeper Ritual; and how to model the rituals and routines of CD with adults (staff members). Participants will participate in table talks where they will be able to discuss the connection between CD and equity in small groups.</p>	
<p>Classroom Setup Technical Assistance (2 hour consultation per teacher): A Coach will come onsite to evaluate the physical classroom space and make suggestions and recommendations for changes to facilitate implementation of CD. The Coach will work with each classroom to help them understand how to use the resources that are provided (see “Resource Distribution” row below) in their classrooms, including where and how to create a “Safe Place” where children can practice the 5 Steps to Self-Regulation within the classroom. They will also help the teachers with where and how to set up the Greeting Plate, Feeling Buddies, the Friends and Family Board, and other resources, in order to structure the classroom for the most effective implementation.</p>	
<p>Job-embedded individual coaching (60 hours per teacher): The Coaches will build trusting relationships with the Lead and Assistant Teachers in each classroom. They will employ the Practice-Based Coaching model. This cyclical process involves collaboration between the Coach and the teacher. The 1st cycle is planning goals and action steps, then focused observation, and then reflecting and sharing feedback. Each coach will be assigned an estimated 14 classrooms and will be expected to visit each classroom 2 times a week providing hands-on support and feedback on the implementation of CD using the CD Scoring Rubric. Coaching will be centered around the exploration and implementation of the following skills: composure, assertiveness, encouragement, choices, empathy, positive intent, and consequences.</p>	
<p>Professional Learning Community (monthly for 9 months): The 9-month PLC will meet monthly, in the evening, for 2 hours each session, from September through May. The majority of the sessions will be in-person. The PLC will be facilitated by a Coach who has earned a Certified Instructor distinction. The PLCs will break down the components that were taught in the 5-day workshop to help teachers with implementation. PLCs will be interactive, providing an opportunity for peer support and learning as they share successes and frustration with implementation. Topics will include the following: Composure: being the person you want other to become; Assertiveness: Saying “no” and being heard; Setting limits respectfully; Encouragement: connection and belonging primes the brain for willingness, engagement, and academic success; Choices: when motivated from within, lacking coercion, improve goal achievement and self-regulation; Empathy: integrates the brain for personal responsibility and self-control; Positive Intent: Creating teaching moments with oppositional, shut down and aggressive children; and Consequences: Helping children learn from their mistakes. There will be homework assignments at the end of each PLC and participants will be expected to share evidence of implementation with their Coach. Teachers will continue to practice things like the “I Love You Rituals” to strengthen their confidence to use them in the classroom. Example Assignments: The practicing of key phrases which correspond with each Power and Skill of Conscious Discipline (S.T.A.R. Smile, take a deep breath, and relax. I am safe, Keep breathing. I can handle this/ I’m going to _____. Did you like it?/ You did it! You _____ so _____. That was helpful.) Participants will complete the Mindset Pre-Training Assessment Self-Reflections Training Tool prior to the PLC, and the Mindset Post-training Assessment Self-Reflections Training Tool after the PLC.</p>	
<p>Representation of People of Color in the Development Team: Multiple people of color will be leading, facilitating, and coaching in this project. Latoria Marcellus, Professional Development Lead, will be leading the development and implementation of the CD training. Latoria will also include Crystal Howard,</p>	

Professional Development Specialist, and additional people of color who are Certified Instructors in our community. These Coaches will be involved in leading the 5-day professional development, the PLC and the Coaching to ensure that examples shared during training reflect people of color and that activities and songs are culturally relevant. 4 Black women who have earned the distinction of “Certified Instructor” who are on our staff or who have contracted with us in the past. Additionally, videos of children and teachers will be incorporated practicing CD in our monthly training. Each training will feature a “Real Deal” segment with a Black practitioner sharing their experience with CD through their lens.

Resource Distribution: Each classroom teacher will receive resources to help them implement CD. Teachers will be given the “Classroom Edition: Feeling Buddies Self-Regulation Deluxe Toolkit, Bilingual (English/Spanish) (with digital music download)” to aide teachers in implementing the CD strategies to teach children self-regulation, which includes the “CD: Building Resilient Classrooms” book by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] provides an explanation of the 7 transformational powers and skills and information about the brain. Each classroom will also receive a CD resource kit.

Black Boy Brilliance: Preschool Promise will institute a program that recruits Black male ambassadors to visit Preschool classrooms to provide role modeling and mentorship to Black boys in the classroom. Ideally, ambassadors will visit classrooms twice per month over the course of a school year, with 10 ambassadors dedicating up to 6 hours per week during a 39-week period. Ambassadors will be trained in Conscious Discipline and will read or play games with the children. Others may share about their profession or teach a skill. The EIR project will explore the impact of including Black male ambassadors in a subset of classrooms, as part of Preschool Promise’s innovative Black Boy Brilliance movement.

Accommodations / Adaptations: 2 specific tools that will be utilized by Preschool Promise - the WJ-IV ECAD and the MEFS - are designed to go down to 2 years of age and are specifically designed to be appropriate for children of wide range of abilities, including developmental delays. However, if a child is non-verbal, for example, the child is always given a chance to meet with us and get stickers and coloring pages, but if in the teacher's opinion, based on direct experience with the child, assessments cannot be completed, this is the decision.

(2) Specific Measurable Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes: The project will accomplish 2 primary goals, focused on teacher and child outcomes, impacting an estimated 50 teachers and 500 students in Montgomery County, Ohio over the 5-year project period.

TABLE-4 GOALS, OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES	
Outcome	Performance Measure
Goal 1: Increase educator capacity and efficacy to amplify social and emotional skills within their academic curriculum.	
Objective 1.1: By December 31, 2028, 90% of teachers will improve self-efficacy, pedagogical content knowledge, and attitudes towards teaching social emotional learning.	
Outcome: By May 2026 and May 2027, increase teacher use of personal self-regulation practices in classrooms Tool: CD Fidelity Rubric and Pre- and Post- Surveys.	Performance Measure: At end of each implementation year, teachers observed in treatment classrooms will average 2.5 on the composure subscale of the CD Fidelity Rubric that goes from 1 to 4. Performance Measure: 90% of teachers will report an increase in the use of personal self-regulation practices on end of the year surveys.
Outcome: By May 2026 and May 2027, increase teacher use of self-regulation instructional practices. Tool: CD Fidelity Rubric	Performance Measure: At end of each implementation year, teachers observed in treatment classrooms will average 2.5 on the composure subscale of the CD Fidelity Rubric that goes from 1 to 4.
Outcome: By May 2026 and May 2027, teachers' focus on children's social-emotional skills. Tool: CD Fidelity Rubric	Performance Measure: At the end of the second implementation year, teachers will average 2.5 on the overall CD Fidelity Rubric (again on a scale from 1 to 4).
Outcome: By May 2026 and May 2027, increase teacher use of high-quality classroom instructional practices. Tool: CLASS	Performance Measure: Mean Emotional Support scores of classrooms that fall below 6 on the pre-test will be improved by 0.3 points pre to post annually. Performance Measure: Mean Classroom Organization scores of classrooms that fall below 6 on the pre-test will be improved by 0.3 points pre to post annually. Performance Measure: Mean Instructional Support scores will be improved by 0.3 points pre to post annually.
Goal 2: Improve high-needs students' academic performance and engagement through relationship-focused, inclusive social and emotional skills and embedded instruction.	
Objective 2.1: By December 31, 2028, 60% of children in CD classrooms will experience an increase in self-regulation and social-emotional skills.	
Outcome: By May 2026 and May 2027 increase student self-regulatory skills. Tool: eDECA P2 Behavioral Concerns scale and Self-Regulation and Initiative scale and the TPF overall	Performance Measure: The overall set of children in the treatment group will show an average change on the T scores on the TPF scale and each of the three subscales of 2 to 4 points, (a small change in effect size), in a positive direction from pre to post. Performance Measure: Of the children who score in the need for improvement range on the pre-test, 75% will be moved into the typical or strength ranges on the post. Performance Measure: Children of color in the treatment group will show an average change on the T scores on the TPF scale and each of the three subscales of 2 to 4 points, (a small change in effect size), in a positive direction from pre to post.
Outcome: By May 2026 and May 2027, increase student social-emotional skills by. Tool: eDECA P2 scales Attachment/ Relationships and TPF overall	Performance Measure: Children of color in the treatment group who score in the need for improvement range on the pre-test, 75% will be moved into the typical or strength ranges on the post.

Outcome: By May 2026 and May 2027, increase student executive function skills. Tool: MEFS Standard Score.	Performance Measure: The overall set of children in the treatment group will show an average change on the MEFS Standard Score of 2 to 3 points (a small change in effect size), in a positive direction from pre to post. Performance Measure: Of the children in the treatment condition who score in the Approaching range on the pre-test, 75% will be moved into the Meets range at post-test
Outcome: By May 2026 and May 2027, increase student academic skills. Tool: WJ-IV ECAD Picture Vocabulary, Letter-Word Identification, and Number Sense Subtest Standard Scores.	Performance Measure: Children in the treatment group will show an average change on the Picture Vocabulary Standard Score of 2 to 3 points in a positive direction from pre to post. Performance Measure: Children in the treatment group will show an average change on the Letter-Word Identification Standard Score of 2 to 3 points in a positive direction from pre to post. Performance Measure: Children in the treatment group will show an average change in the Number Sense Standard Score of 2 to 4 points in a positive direction from pre to post.
Objective 2.2: By December 31, 2028, 36% of children in CD classrooms will “demonstrate” kindergarten readiness.	
Outcome: By December 2026 and December 2027, increase student kindergarten readiness. Tool: KRA	Performance Measure: The percent of children in the treatment group scoring in the “demonstrating readiness” range will increase to 36% relative to the 2021-22 cohort baseline of 24%.
Outcome: By December 2026 and December 2027, increase student kindergarten readiness among Black children. Tool: KRA	Performance Measure: The percent of children of color in the treatment group scoring in the “demonstrating readiness” range will increase to 30% relative to the 2021-22 cohort baseline of 13%.

(3) Design is Appropriate to Successfully Address Needs of Population: The proposed implementation model will ensure that resources, designed to support the needs of these children will be based on the high demand for resiliency resources among caregivers and educators, particularly with the lasting impacts of COVID-19 on students and their families. *Underserved Population Definition:* The proposed project is designed to meet the critical need of high-need and underserved students enrolled in preschools across Montgomery County, Ohio. Preschool Promise will prioritize schools having the following characteristics, defining as underserved: large proportion of students of color defined as 50% or greater; or a high percentage of students, defined as 50% or greater, living in low-income households earning 200% or below the Federal Poverty Level. *High Need Student Definition:* For the purpose of this EIR project, a high-need student is defined as a child who is performing below grade/age expectations, are involved in the foster care system, and/or considered part of an underserved population.

Selection of Classrooms: Preschool Promise has identified selection criteria to ensure preschools with the greatest determination and need are included in the project. The team will initially recruit 100 high need preschools utilizing Preschool Promise's underserved population definition and project eligibility defined as: state licensed as a child care center, actively engaged as a Preschool Promise site. As described in the Evaluation section, the project will construct 4 blocks of classrooms defined by auspice (Head Start, Ohio Public Preschool, Licensed Center-Based Care, Other). Within each block, treatment and comparison classrooms will be matched on characteristics (staff demographics, years as a Preschool Promise partner, demographics of children/families served). We will attempt to match classrooms within the same center so that there will be both treatment and comparison classrooms within the same center. Because preschool classrooms will not be randomly assigned to the intervention, this project addresses selection bias by using a matched comparison group of classrooms that are equivalent in their student body and other characteristics before the intervention begins. Teachers will be offered stipends to compensate them for their participation in the project to include additional time spent in training and coaching. Within the group of treatment classrooms, Preschool Promise will select 8-10 of these classrooms to participate in Black Boy Brilliance Ambassador program. Classrooms will be selected based on the following criteria: at least 3 Black boys assigned to the class, and teachers/administrators support of an ambassador in the classroom.

Advisory Councils: As part of the project's continuous quality improvement process, a community Advisory Council, comprising an array of early childhood education experts, and a Parent Council that includes parents of young children will also inform and guide the EIR project. National and local experts and parents / caregivers will be assembled to offer feedback on implementation plans, including consent procedures, to ensure that strategies are feasible and meet the needs of the population of focus. Initial membership for the Advisory Council has been

Qualifications/Relevant Training/Experience of Personnel: Preschool Promise will secure culturally competent staff members as shown in the Organizational Structure Diagram. Preschool Promise will serve as the financial and operational manager for the proposed project, and will coordinate and provide all of the training, coaching, and technical support to teachers, as well as facilitate the meetings between partners. Preschool Promise will manage the relationships with the selected partner preschool sites including executing contracts and securing releases from the preschool providers and parents of preschoolers. Preschool Promise has been providing training and coaching, as well as administering classroom assessments, for the last 7 years and is well positioned to implement the proposed project across a wide array of classroom settings.

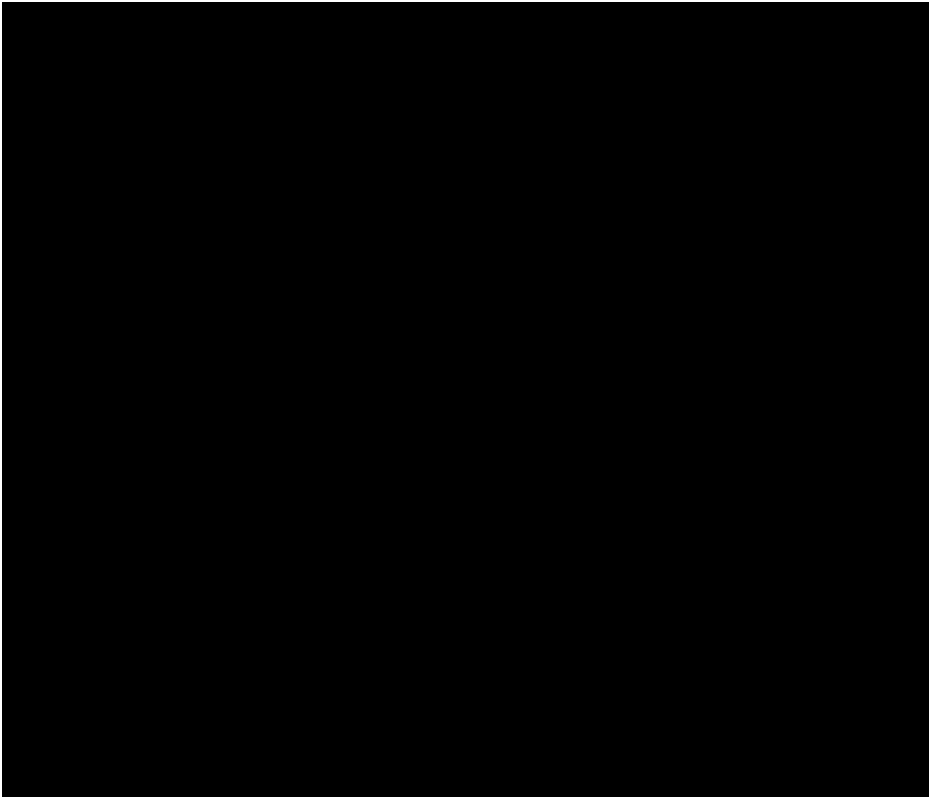


TABLE-6 KEY PERSONNEL	
<i>Project Advisor/CEO:</i> [REDACTED], Executive Director of Preschool Promise, will serve as the Project Advisor. She will provide supervisory oversight of the project and provide guidance, chairing all project team meetings, coordinating work, reviewing results, and overseeing the project’s budget. Robyn will be liaison with DOE and assess regular benchmarks to ensure project success and prepare materials for dissemination. Robyn developed the early childhood initiative, ReadySetSoar, which resulted in the creation of Preschool Promise, which has grown to be a \$10 million per year organization and serves as a leading model in Ohio and around the country, convening early childhood initiatives in Ohio to share learnings. She manages partnerships	

with national funders and partners including Results for America, Pritzker Children's Initiative and What Works Cities, and champions equity to improve opportunities/outcomes for diverse populations. Robyn leads the annual Readiness Summit event that brings together 500 people to work on early childhood education strategies.

Project Manager: [REDACTED], Senior Project Manager for Preschool Promise, will serve as the Project Manager. She will oversee the project timeline and overall deliverables of outcomes and oversee reporting administration, including support for both the research and data collection teams, coordinate with the Advisory Council and Parent Council, and oversee the project team. She has over 30 years of grant and project management experience, including securing over \$10 million in grants during her tenure as Executive Director of the HomeOwnership Center of Greater Dayton. She has administered multiple programs with federal funding from the U.S. Department of HUD and as a sub-grantee of direct THUD appropriations to NeighborWorks America.

Project Administrator: To-Be-Hired, will be responsible for project support to include managing contracts, releases with preschool students, scheduling assessments, monitoring coaching hours, and general accounts payable activities to remain in budget compliance. Required education and experience include: high school diploma and 1 year of experience managing projects with strong communication and organizational skills.

Lead Coach: To-Be-Hired, will be the primary point of contact for the Coaches and responsible for reporting and making programmatic improvements and enhancement suggestions. Required education and experience include at least a Child Development associate or associate degree in early childhood education, at least 5 years' experience teaching in early childhood education with diverse populations, and at least 3 years' experience coaching in early childhood classrooms. A preference will be given to people with at least a bachelor's degree in early childhood education. The Lead Coach must also have excellent relationship and leadership skills, prior experience and training in CD, and understanding of kindergarten readiness and developmental milestones from birth through kindergarten.

Coaches: To-Be-Hired, will visit the classrooms and work with the teachers individually assigned and provide guidance through the Professional Development program. They will also assess and evaluate the teachers and report on each teacher for data analysis. The Coach will have a minimum of 5 years' experience working in early childhood education, preferably with diverse populations, and expertise in preschool education and with evidence-based curriculum.

Professional Development Lead: [REDACTED], Senior Director of Education Strategy at Preschool Promise, will serve as the Professional Development Lead. Latoria spent the last 2 years working at CD, serving as their Senior Manager of Mission Expansion, with a focus on diversity and inclusion, and is a CD certified instructor. She will be responsible for supporting the development and implementation of the professional development program and overseeing the selected Professional Development Specialist, Lead Coach, and Coaches.

Professional Development Specialist: [REDACTED], Quality Professional Development Manager for Preschool Promise, will serve as the Professional Development Specialist. She will work with facilitators within Preschool Promise providing support for developing professional learning communities for CD. She is a Certified Instructor for CD and a CLASS Affiliate Trainer, and coaches programs using CD and CLASS showing teachers how the 2 tools align.

Black Boy Brilliance Lead: [REDACTED], Senior Program Manager for Black Boy Brilliance, will serve as the Black Boy Brilliance Lead. He will be responsible for recruitment and training of Black Boy Brilliance ambassadors to be assigned to select treatment classrooms. As the current Senior Program Manager at Preschool Promise, he will grow Preschool Promise's male volunteer endeavors, discover avenues for high school students to matriculate into early childhood education, and assist our preschool partners with efforts in equity. Christopher brings experience from all levels of education and has long been a community advocate.

Staffing Training to Prepare Project Team: To ensure the Preschool Promise team has the capacity to implement the project herein, various staff trainings are proposed and included in the budget: 1) the Lead Coach will attend University of Washington Practice-Based Coaching 9-

with national funders and partners including Results for America, Pritzker Children's Initiative and What Works Cities, and champions equity to improve opportunities/outcomes for diverse populations. Robyn leads the annual Readiness Summit event that brings together 500 people to work on early childhood education strategies.

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Staffing Training to Prepare Project Team: To ensure the Preschool Promise team has the capacity to implement the project herein, various staff trainings are proposed and included in the budget: 1) the Lead Coach will attend University of Washington Practice-Based Coaching 9-

month online program to be trained on Practice-Based Coaching. This course is focused on: culturally responsive coaching, relationship-based professional development competencies, best practices for coaching for promoting positive behavior support and engaging interactions and environments, best practices for trauma-informed coaching, and data-driven goal setting, action planning and focused observation. 2) Preschool Promise Coaches will attend the CLASS Certification Training to support their role in completing CLASS assessments within classrooms. 3) To ensure Coaches are expertly trained and remain abreast of updates, Coaches will attend both the week-long CD Introduction during their first year of employment, and a 2-day CD sponsored workshop as a refresher course each subsequent year of the grant.

Partner Experience: The existing and proposed synergistic services involve the collaboration of multiple preschool partners, with 65 preschool sites offering their commitment going into the project, as noted in the signed MOU and letters of commitment. All partners share a similar mission of improving outcomes for children in the target area and have previously and successfully collaborated on similar initiatives.

Project Contractors: Preschool Promise is contracting with the University of Dayton and Abt Associates for data collection and research activities.

TABLE-7	CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL
<i>Lead Research Consultant:</i> [REDACTED], Associate Professor of Psychology for the University of Dayton, will serve as the Lead Research Consultant. She will oversee the data collection of child outcomes and data management and serve as a research liaison between Preschool Promise and Abt Associates. She will also provide leadership and consulting for the project due to her experience in child data collection efforts for Preschool Promise for the past 5 years. [REDACTED] has extensive experience managing large-scale research projects and program evaluation research, including serving as the Institute of Education Sciences Postdoctoral Fellow in Field-Based Research Methodology at the Peabody Research Institute at Vanderbilt University. She is currently the PI on 2 federally- funded longitudinal projects with preschoolers (National Science Foundation, ECR-EHR Core Research; National Institutes of Health, R15 AREA program).	
<i>Research Associate:</i> [REDACTED], Director of Business Research Group of the University of Dayton will serve as the Research Associate. [REDACTED] has conducted an extensive set of program evaluations in the education and behavioral health sectors over the last 20 years. His Ph.D. in Urban Economics from the University of Colorado where his dissertation was a simultaneous equation model and his ongoing practical work leaves him comfortable with statistical analysis with large data sets. In addition his consultation work has extensively involved qualitative methods including online surveys and focus groups. He will carry out the	

research and data collection as directed by the Lead Research Consultant. [REDACTED] and his staff will work in conjunction with [REDACTED] on child assessment data collection and have primary responsibility for survey and focus group work with teachers, coaches and parents.

Evaluation Lead: [REDACTED] with Abt Associates bring over 15 years of experience spanning the government, nonprofit and for-profit sectors. [REDACTED] has experience in evaluating both programs and policy initiatives and is proficient in communicating findings across broad groups of education stakeholder audiences. [REDACTED] experience focuses on extensive experience working with practitioners in the education sector to develop evaluation plans for their vision for improving service delivery to children and young people. She currently leads an evaluation of an early phase EIR grant led by the Intercultural Development Research Association which is implementing a coding course for 8th grade students in middle schools educating students in historically underserved STEM communities. [REDACTED] has deep expertise applying different methodological approaches to build evidence of impact, and has experience with study design, instrument development, qualitative data collection and analysis, data collection management, literature reviews, and site/program recruitment. [REDACTED] also has extensive content knowledge in ensuring successful transitions into K–12 education for our youngest learners. She brings a keen working knowledge of early childhood education systems—including priorities for state agencies and partnerships built across sectors. Finally, [REDACTED] adds on-the-ground knowledge of social-emotional learning approaches at play in communities and schools. In her previous role as the Associate Director, at the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, she led a network of school districts focusing on how to integrate social-emotional learning into classrooms, overseeing the development of content and facilitating working sessions.

Evaluation Support: [REDACTED] with Abt Associates is an applied micro-economist with 15 years of policy research experience focused in the areas of disability, workforce, and education policy. [REDACTED] implements economic tools to design/carry out quantitative and mixed-methods investigations and understand policies and programs and leads data analysis teams. [REDACTED] served as deputy director of analysis for the National Evaluation of the 2nd Generation of Health Profession Opportunity Grants impact analysis, a multi-site trial of a career training program. [REDACTED] conducted sampling and led analysis for a nationally representative educational assessment in Malawi primary schools for USAID and led analysis of data for the 2019 Farm to School Census. In her prior education work, [REDACTED] has studied how schools respond to incentives, the effectiveness of education programs, and factors influencing career paths for PhDs.

Community Support: Letters of support are provided in Appendix C to demonstrate local, regional, and state support from across the Montgomery County community and beyond.

QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Adequacy of the Management Plan to Achieve Objectives of Project on Time / Budget:

Preschool Promise enjoys strong partnerships with the University of Dayton and has collected population level and programmatic data for early childhood initiatives across the state, including student level and classroom level data from 700 children and families during the past 6 years.

Preschool Promise has been implementing CD for 7 years and has seen promising results but are eager to do more official research on what really works with our children, especially children of color. Preschool Promise has worked with Loving Guidance, the parent company of CD, to encourage identification and recruitment of more diverse Certified Instructors, resulting in 4

Black women who are certified instructors in our community. Preschool Promise, as lead applicant and partner, is responsible for overarching project management, compliance, and reporting to the funder. In this capacity, Preschool Promise will be responsible for all elements of oversight, monitoring, supervision, quality assurance, and fiscal management of the project.

Preschool Promise has successfully managed large projects in the past, including partnering with Learn to Earn Dayton to manage implementation of a \$2.2 million project funded by Blue Meridian Partners to improve early childhood education in Northwest Dayton from 2021-2023. Preschool Promise designed and implemented the strategies, including a large wage pilot with 250 child care staff at 14 sites. Preschool Promise recruited the sites, defined the parameters and administered monthly stipends to all participants, and is currently analyzing the monthly survey and retention data to assess impact. Preschool Promise also managed a 4-year, \$400,000 early literacy grant from the State of Ohio that has involved multiple partners. Preschool Promise designed and implemented the intervention using the evidence-based LENA technology, scaling the work to serve 34 teachers and 134 children. In fall 2022, LENA© Essentials Sequence children who were in the bottom third of classrooms and children who experienced low talk (less than 5 conversational turns/hour on average) saw statistically significant growth in terms of increasing conversational turns. This significant impact has grown exponentially since the first year. CLASS was also used to measure effective teacher-child interactions. Early Language Support and Language Modeling dimensions capture the quality and amount of the teacher's use of language-stimulation and language-facilitation techniques to encourage children's language development. The interventions and support have yielded increases in language modeling CLASS scores over the 2-year period of data collection - a meaningful impact in a short amount

of time. Preschool Promise is also serving as a sub-grantee to Omega Community Development Corporation in the recently awarded Promise Neighborhoods grant.

Timeline and Milestones: Preschool Promise has designed its implementation and evaluation timeline based on the following phases: 1) Preparation and Pilot Phase:-January 2024 - July 2025; Treatment Year 1: August 2025 - July 2026; Treatment Year 2: August 2026 - July 2027; Evaluation Period: August 2027- December 2028.

TABLE-8 PROJECT TIMELINE - IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION			
KEY to Abbreviations: Conscious Discipline (CD) Project Advisor (PA); Abt Associates (Abt); Project Manager (PM); University of Dayton Business Research Group (UD/BRG); Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association (OCCRRA) Professional Development Specialist (PDS); Project Development Lead (PDL)			
Activity Description	Milestones	Responsible	Timing
Year 1 (January 2024- December 2024)			
Announce Award to Partners	Award Announced	PA	January 2024
Finalize Formal Agreements with Abt Associates and UD	Fully Executed Agreements	PA	February 2024
Review data collection materials: Review teacher surveys/child rating measures in collaboration with project team	Data Collection Materials Reviewed	Abt	February 2024-December 2024
Begin finalizing evaluation plan: Work with project team and EIR TA provider to finalize impact/implementation evaluation plan and associated materials.	Evaluation Plan Finalized	Abt	February 2024-December 2024
Evaluation meeting with project team: Meet biweekly with project team to discuss updates to the project and evaluation.	Evaluation Team Meetings Complete	Project Team	February 2024-December 2024
Meet with Evaluation TA provider: Meet monthly with Evaluation TA provider to discuss evaluation design and progress	Evaluation TA Meetings Completed	Abt	February 2024-December 2024
Purchase Necessary Year 1 Supplies & Materials	Supplies & Materials Received	PM	March 2024
Define pilot classroom eligibility, teacher stipend policy, and create application	Application & Parameters Written	PM	April 2024
Open Application for Classrooms to Apply to participate in Pilot Year	Application Portal Open	PM	April 2024
Secure eDECA License for Project Period	eDECA License Secured	PM	April 2024
Finalize consent language and demographic data collection process for pilot group	Consent Completed	UD/BRG	April 2024
Send quarterly updates to Advisory Council, Parent Council, other stakeholders	Written Quarterly Reports Sent	PA	April 2024, ongoing
Launch Advisory Council	5-Member Advisory Council Established	PM	April-August 2024

EIR-Preschool Promise project period.

Select and notify the 25 classrooms participating in the eDECA pilot	25 Classrooms Identified	PM	May 2024
Train Professional Development Specialist on eDECA	Training Completed	PDS	May 2024
Hire Lead Coach	Qualified Lead Coach	PDL	June 2024
Hire Coach A	Qualified Coach A	PDL	June 2024
Enter Project Plan in project management software, utilize software through completion of project in 2028	Project Management Plan in Monday.com	PM	June 2024
Send Lead Coach and Coach A to week long Conscious Discipline Institute	Training Completed	PDL	June-August 2024
Hold training: eDECA with 25 pilot classroom teachers	25 Teachers Trained	PDS	June-August 2024
Train Lead Coach and Coach A to be reliable CLASS Assessors	2 Coaches Trained to Reliability: CLASS	PDS	July 2024
Hold Joint Advisory & Parent Council dinner meeting	Meeting Held	PA	August 2024
Create materials to share with parents/caregivers to explain pilot project	Letter Completed	PM	August 2024
Recruit and Launch Parent Council	5-Member Parent Council Established	PM	August-September 2024
Schedule CLASS pre-assessments to be completed in 25 classrooms in early fall	25 CLASS Evaluations Scheduled	PM	August 2024
Conduct Child Assessments (eDECA) pre-in fall	250 Assessments Conducted	Teachers	August-September 2024
Coordinate administration of and collect eDECA data from Teachers	Data Collected	UD/BRG	August-October 2024
Lead Coach Begins Practice-Based Coaching Course	Practice Based Coaching Training Completed	Lead Coach	September 2024
Recruit and Train Black Boy Brilliance Ambassadors	3 Ambassadors Recruited	Black Boy Brilliance Lead	July-September 2024
Follow up with any students without signed consents to increase % of consented students in each classroom	Additional Consents Collected	PM	September 2024
Hire Project Administrator	Qualified Staff PA	PA	September 2024
Attend annual PD Conference: Attend annual EIR PD Conference	4 Project Team Members Attend	1 rep. Abt, 2 reps. , UD; PM, PDL	September 2024
Assign Black Boy Brilliance Ambassadors to classrooms	3 Ambassadors Assigned to Classrooms	Black Boy Brilliance Lead	September 2024
Pay Advisory, Parent Council Stipends	Payment Made to 10 Member	PM	September 2024
Conduct CLASS pre-assessment for Treatment and Comparison Groups	25 Assessments Completed	Lead Coach, Coach A	September-October 2024
Plan for week-long CD & Professional Learning Community	Professional Development Course Finalized	PDL	September-December 2024

Follow up with teachers on any new students in classroom to collect consents/administer eDECA	Additional consents and eDECA scores	PM, UD/BRG	Ongoing through year 2024
Train Lead Coach, Coach A on Practice Based Coaching, CD, and coaching & PLC sessions	Ongoing Coaching Training completed	PDS	September-December 2024
Internal PQA: Engage in internal Abt Project Quality Assurance review of any pertinent programs, code, analysis, and reports	Internal PQA Process Complete	Abt	December 2024
Pay first half of Teacher Stipends for eDECA Pilot	25 Teachers Compensated	PM	December 2024
Year 2 (January 2025- December 2025)			
Hire Coach B and Coach C	2 Qualified Coaches Hired	PDL	January 2025
Train Coach B and Coach C to be reliable CLASS assessors	Coach B and Coach C Trained to Reliability: CLASS	PDS	January-February 2025
Purchase Necessary Year 2 Supplies and Materials	Supplies and Materials Received	PA	January 2025
Weeklong & PLC Training Designed & Submitted to OCCRRA to be approved for Ohio's Professional Development credit	OCCRRA Submission Completed	PDS	January 2025
Obtain IRB Study Approval	IRB Approval	Abt	January 2025
Finalize release form language and process for child data collection for Cohort 1:implementation	Finalized Release Form Created	UD/BRG	January 2025
Evaluation meeting with project team: Meet biweekly with project team to discuss updates to the project and evaluation.	Evaluation Team Meetings Complete	Project Team	January 2025-December 2025
Meet with Evaluation TA provider: Meet monthly with Evaluation TA provider to discuss evaluation progress	Evaluation TA Meetings Complete	Abt	January 2025 – December 2025
Finalize eligibility and requirements for participation in Treatment or Comparison Year 1 Implementation Cohort	Finalized application for Teachers	PM	January 2025
Send quarterly updates to Advisory Council, Parent Council, other stakeholders	Written Quarterly Reports Sent	PA	January 2025, ongoing
Train Coach B and Coach C how to administer eDECA with children	Coaches Trained on eDECA	Coaches	February 2025
Train Assessors on MEFS; Woodcock-Johnson	Trained Assessors	UD/BRG	February-May 2025
Hold informational meetings about Year 1 Implementation cohort :teachers/administrators	Informational Meetings	PM	February 2025
Recruit and select Classrooms/Teachers for Year 1 Implementation Cohort	50 Treatment and 50 Comparison Classroom/Teacher Selected Cohort 1	PM	March-May 2025
Lead Coach completes Practice-Based Coaching program	Program Completion	Lead Coach	March 2025
Offer eDECA training for new teachers in pilot classrooms who come mid-year	5 (est.) Teachers Provided Orientation / Catchup	Lead Coach	March 2025

Order CD supplies for each classroom in treatment group	Supplies ordered	PA	April 2025
Send Lead Coach, Coach A to 2-Day Conscious Discipline Workshop	2 Coaches Trained at Workshop	Lead Coach, Coach A	Spring 2025
Conduct ongoing attendance monitoring and data analysis	Data Collected	UD/BRG	Spring 2025
Conduct CLASS post-assessment for Pilot Group	25 Assessments Conducted	Coaches	April-May 2025
Teachers in the 25 pilot classrooms conduct eDECA post-assessment with children	250 assessments completed	Teachers in Year 1 Pilot	April-May 2025
Coordinate and support teachers in collecting eDECA	eDECA Data Collected	UD/BRG	April-June 2025
Finalize evaluation plan and register study: Work with the project team and EIR Technical Assistance provider to finalize evaluation plan and register study design.	Final Evaluation Plan and Study Registered	Abt	May 2025
Collect CLASS data from Coaches and Teachers	CLASS & eDECA Scores in Database	UD/BRG	June 2025
Send Coach B and Coach C to week-long Conscious Discipline Institute	2 Coaches Completed CD Institute	Coach B, Coach C	June-July 2025
Produce data request: Provide a data request form or memo to guide the collection of classroom and child level matching variables and impact analysis	Data Request Sent	Abt	June 2025
Hold week-long Equity-Focused Conscious Discipline training for Teachers-Treatment group	125 People Trained	PDL	June 2025
Distribute resources to each classroom in treatment group	Resources Delivered	Coaches	June-August 2025
Train Teachers in treatment and comparison groups to administer eDECA assessment	100 Teachers Trained	Lead Coach	July-August 2025
Assign Coaches to each Classroom-Treatment group	4 Coaches Assigned to 50 Classrooms	PDS	July 2025
Pay Teachers remaining stipend for Pilot Year participation	25 Teachers Receive Stipend	PM	July 2025
Finalize Teacher Survey instrument for Year 1 Implementation	Finalized Teacher Survey Instrument	UD/BRG	August 2025
Hold Joint Advisory & Parent Council meeting	Meeting Held	PA	August 2025
Conduct matching and assignment: Conduct matching of classrooms and students and assignment to condition for Cohort 1	Matching and Assignment Complete	Abt	August 2025
Hold orientations for Preschool Administrators at treatment and comparison sites	100 Administrators Onboarded	PM, Coaches	August 2025
Provide start of year classroom setup/technical assistance for Treatment group	Coaching Provided to 50 Classrooms	Coaches	August 2025
Begin in-classroom coaching with 50 classrooms in Treatment group	Coaching Provided to 50 Classrooms	Coaches	August 2025
Collect MOUs from Teachers participating in Year 1 Implementation Cohort	100 Completed MOUs	PA	August 2025

EIR-Preschool Promise project period.

Conduct MEFS, Woodcock-Johnson Assessments in treatment and comparison classrooms	1,400 child assessments completed	UD/BRG	August-October 2025
Conduct eDECA pre-assessment in treatment and comparison classrooms	700 eDECA Child Assessments Conducted	Teachers	August - September 2025
Coordinate and collect eDECA scores	Data Collected	UD/BRG	August-October 2025
Conduct CLASS Pre-assessment for Treatment and Comparison Groups	100 Assessments Completed	Coaches, Contracted CLASS Assessors	August-September 2025
Follow up with any students who do not have signed consents to increase percentage of consented students in each classroom	Additional Consents Collected	PM	September-November 2025
Launch Professional Learning Community (PLC) with Teachers in the 50 treatment classrooms	PLC Sessions	PDL	October 2025
Begin weekly online Teacher Surveys tied to Professional Learning Community	50 Weekly Surveys Collected	UD/BRG	October 2025
Conduct quarterly survey on Coaching for treatment group	50 Quarterly Surveys collected	UD/BRG	Quarterly, Starting September 2025
Offer orientation/catch-up for new teachers who come mid-year	20 (est.) Teachers Provided Orientation / Catchup	PDL	September 2025, ongoing
Attend annual PD Conference: Attend annual EIR PD Conference	4 Project Team Members Attend	1 rep. from Abt, 2 reps: UD, PM, PDL	September 2025
Conduct CD Fidelity Rubric Pre-Assessment in Treatment Classrooms	50 completed Rubrics	Coaches	September-October 2025
Collect Cohort 1 Baseline Data: Collect baseline child, classroom, and teacher data	Data Collected and Provided to Abt	UD/BRG	September - October 2025
Monitor Coaching, Professional Learning Community implementation	Adjustments Made as Needed	PDL	September 2025, ongoing
Distribute Advisory, Parent Council Stipends	Payment Made to 10 Member	Project Manager	September 2025
Conduct Geocoding and mapping of Preschool Promise enrolled students to collect census block group level data and link ACS data to students.	Analysis Completed	UD/BRG	October-December 2025
Clean University of Dayton-collected baseline child, classroom, and teacher data	Cohort 1 Data Cleaned	Abt	November 2025
Analyze Baseline Data: Analyze baseline child and teacher data and classroom observation data for performance feedback	Data Analyzed	Abt	November 2025 – December 2025
Internal PQA: Engage in internal Abt Project Quality Assurance review of any pertinent programs, code, analysis, and reports	Internal PQA Process Complete	Abt	December 2025
Produce year 2 report: Provide an evaluation update summarizing work done to date on the evaluation, including results of random assignment and results from teacher survey.	Year 2 Report Complete	Abt	December 2025
Pay Teacher Stipends for Treatment Group	50 Teachers Compensated	PM	December 2025

Pay Teacher Stipends for Comparison Group	50 Teachers Compensated	PM	December 2025
Year 3 (January 2026- December 2026)			
Purchase Necessary Year 3 Supplies and Materials	Supplies and Materials Received	PA	January 2026
Collect KRA student level assessment data from all 16 Montgomery County school districts to match Preschool Promise enrolled students	KRA Scores Collected	UD/BRG	January-May 2026
Evaluation meeting with project team: Meet biweekly with project team to discuss updates to the project and evaluation..	Evaluation Team Meetings Complete	Project Team	January 2026 – December 2026
Meet with Evaluation TA provider: Meet monthly with Evaluation TA provider to discuss progress	Evaluation TA Meetings Complete	Abt	January 2026 – December 2026
Send quarterly updates to Advisory Council, Parent Council, other stakeholders	Written Quarterly Reports Sent	PA	January 2026, ongoing
Send Coaches to 2-day CD Workshop	4 Coaching Staff Trained	Coaches	Spring 2026
Conduct CLASS Post-assessment for Treatment and Comparison Groups	100 CLASS Assessments Completed	Coaches, Contracted CLASS Assessors	Spring 2026
Conduct child assessments - MEFS, Woodcock- Johnson	1,400 Assessments Completed	UD/BRG	April-June 2026
Collect Cohort 1 Posttest Data: Collect child, classroom, and teacher data	Data Collected and Provided to Abt Associates	UD/BRG	April 2026
Conduct CD Fidelity Rubric post-assessment in Treatment Classrooms	50 completed Rubrics	Coaches	April-June 2026
Teachers conduct eDECA child assessment	700 eDECA Assessments Completed	Teachers	April-June 2026
Coordinate with and collect eDECA scores from teachers	eDECA Scores Collected	UD/BRG	April-July 2026
Conduct Parent Surveys	Surveys Collected	UD/BRG	May 2026
Produce data request: Provide a data request form or memo to guide the collection of variables for impact analysis	Data Request Sent	Abt	June 2026
Organize and analyze classroom level data that includes CLASS assessments, CD Fidelity Rubric assessments, demographic data on Lead and Assistant Teachers and changes in teaching staff over the course of the academic year, participation in PLC and Coaching	Organized Data Set	UD/BRG	June-August 2026
Clean University of Dayton-collected posttest child, classroom, and teacher data	Cohort 1 Follow-up Data Cleaned	Abt	June 2026
Pay Teacher Stipends for Treatment Group	50 Teachers Compensated	PA	July 2026
Pay Teacher Stipends for Comparison Group	50 Teachers Compensated	PA	July 2026

Analyze preliminary outcome data: Conduct statistical analyses to assess impact of the intervention on cohort 1 student and classroom outcomes and for performance feedback.	Preliminary Analysis of Outcome Data Complete	Abt	July 2026 – August 2026
Collect Year 1 Implementation Data: Collect baseline child, classroom, and teacher data	Data Collected and Provided to Abt Associates	UD/BRG	July 2026
Clean University of Dayton-collected implementation data from Year 1 of impact/implementation studies	Cohort 1 Implementation Data Cleaned	Abt	July 2026
Conduct matching: Conduct matching of students for Cohort 2.	Matching Complete	Abt	August 2026
Analyze Year 1 Implementation Data: Conduct analyses to assess the degree to which the program was implemented with intended fidelity in year 1 of impact/implementation studies	Year 1 Implementation Data Analyzed	Abt	August 2026 – September 2026
Hold Joint Advisory & Parent Council dinner meeting	Meeting Held	PA	August 2026
Update and collect MOUs with Teachers for Year 2 Implementation Cohort	MOUs Collected	PM	July-September 2026
Review any classroom teacher changes in treatment and comparison groups and determine appropriate next steps	Review Completed	Project Team	July 2026
Onboard and train new teachers as needed for Year 2 Implementation Cohort	New Teachers Trained	PDL	September 2026, ongoing
Conduct CLASS Pre-assessment for Treatment and Comparison Groups	100 Assessments Conducted	Coaches, Contracted CLASS Assessors	Fall 2026
Attend annual PD Conference: Attend annual EIR PD Conference	4 Project Team Members Attend	1 rep. from Abt, 2 reps. from UD: PM, PDL	September 2026
Pay Advisory, Parent Council Stipends	Payment Made to 10 Member	PM	September 2026
Collect Cohort 2 Baseline Data: Collect baseline child, classroom, and teacher data	Data Collected and Provided to Abt Associates	UD/BRG	September - October 2026
Begin monthly Professional Learning Community for Year 2 of Implementation	50 Classroom Teachers Participating	PDS	October 2026
Begin weekly Teacher Survey to treatment group	Teacher Survey Data Collected	UD/BRG	October 2026
Monitor Coaching, PLC and make Quality Improvements (QI) as needed	Quality Improvements Made	PDS	October 2026, ongoing
Clean University of Dayton-collected baseline child, classroom, and teacher data	Cohort 2 Baseline Data Cleaned	Abt	November 2026
Analyze Baseline Data: Analyze baseline child and teacher data and classroom observation data for performance feedback	Baseline Data Analyzed	Abt	November 2026 – December 2026
Internal PQA: Engage in internal Abt Project Quality Assurance review of any pertinent programs, code, analysis, and reports	Internal PQA Process Complete	Abt	December 2026

Produce interim evaluation report: Provide interim evaluation report summarizing work completed on the evaluation of the first cohort.	Interim Evaluation Report Complete	Abt	November 2026 – December 2026
Pay Teacher Stipends for Treatment Group	50 Teachers Compensated	PM	December 2026
Pay Teacher Stipends for Comparison Group	50 Teachers Compensated	PM	December 2026
Year 4 (January 2027- December 2027)			
Purchase Necessary Year 4 Supplies and Materials	Supplies and Materials Received	PA	January 2027
Evaluation meeting with project team: Meet biweekly with project team to discuss updates to the project and evaluation.	Evaluation Team Meetings Complete	Project Team	January 2027 – December 2027
Meet with Evaluation TA provider: Meet monthly with Evaluation TA provider to discuss evaluation progress	Evaluation TA Meetings Complete	Abt	January 2027 – December 2027
Collect KRA data for children in Cohort 1: kindergarten readiness assessment data for children in Cohort 1	Data Collected and Provided to Abt Associates	UD/BRG	January-May 2027
Continue sending quarterly reports to Advisory Council, Parent Council, stakeholders	Quarterly Reports Sent	PA	January 2027, ongoing
Analyze KRA data for both Cohort 1: Conduct statistical analyses to assess the impact of the intervention on child KRA data (Cohort 1)	KRA Data Analyzed for Cohort 1	Abt	February 2027 – March 2027
Internal PQA: Engage in internal Abt Project Quality Assurance review of any pertinent programs, code, analysis, and reports	Internal PQA Process Complete	Abt	April 2027
Produce final evaluation report: Provide final evaluation report summarizing work completed on the evaluation of both cohorts	Final Evaluation Report Prepared	Abt	April 2027
Conduct CD Fidelity Rubric post-assessment in Treatment Classrooms	50 completed Rubrics	Coaches	April-June 2027
Teachers conduct eDECA child assessment	700 eDECA Assessments Completed	Teachers	April-June 2027
Coordinate with and collect eDECA scores from teachers	eDECA Scores Collected	UD/BRG	April-July 2027
Conduct Parent Surveys	Surveys Collected	UD/BRG	May 2027
Conduct CLASS Post-assessment for Treatment and Comparison Groups	100 Assessments Completed	Coaches, Contracted CLASS Assessors	April-May 2027
Collect Cohort 2: Collect post test child, classroom, and teacher data	Data Collected and Provided to Abt	UD/BRG	April-May 2027
Clean UD-collected district kindergarten readiness assessment data for children-Cohort 1	KRA Data Cleaned	Abt	June 2027
Clean University of Dayton-collected posttest child, classroom, and teacher data	Cohort 2 Follow-up Data Cleaned	Abt	June 2027

Analyze outcome data: Conduct statistical analyses to assess impact of the intervention on cohort 1 and 2 combined student and classroom outcomes and for performance feedback.	Outcome Data Analyzed	Abt	July 2027 – August 2027
Collect Year 2 Implementation Data: implementation data from Year 2 of impact/implementation studies	Data Collected and Provided to Abt Associates	UD/BRG	June 2027
Clean University of Dayton-collected implementation data from Year 2 of impact/implementation studies	Year 2 Implementation Data Cleaned	Abt	July 2027
Pay Teacher Stipends for Treatment Group	50 Teachers Compensated	PM	July 2027
Pay Teacher Stipends for Comparison Group	50 Teachers Compensated	PM	July 2027
Analyze Year 2 Implementation Data: Conduct analyses to assess the degree to which the program was implemented with intended fidelity in year 2 of impact/implementation studies	Year 2 Implementation Data Analyzed	Abt	August 2027 – September 2027
Hold Joint Advisory & Parent Council dinner meeting	Meeting Held	PA	October 2027
Attend annual PD Conference: Attend annual EIR PD Conference	4 Project Team Members Attend	1 rep. from Abt, 2 reps: UD,PM,PDL	September 2027
Pay Advisory, Parent Council Stipends	Payment Made to 10 Members	PM	September 2027
Year 5 (January 2028- December 2028)			
Evaluation meeting with project team: Meet biweekly with project team to discuss updates to the project and evaluation.	Evaluation Team Meetings Complete	Project Team	January 2028 – May 2028
Meet with Evaluation TA provider: Meet monthly with Evaluation TA provider to discuss progress	Evaluation TA Meetings Complete	Abt	January 2028 – May 2028
Collect KRA data for children in Cohort 2: Collect KRA data for children in Cohort 2	Data Collected and Provided to Abt	UD/BRG	January 2028
Clean University of Dayton-collected district KRA data for children in Cohort 2	KRA Data Collected for Cohort 2	Abt	February 2028
Analyze KRA data for both Cohort 2: Conduct statistical analyses to assess the impact of the intervention on child KRA data (Cohort 2)	KRA Data Analyzed	Abt	February 2028 – March 2028
Produce final evaluation report addendum: Provide an evaluation update summarizing impact on KRA scores across cohorts	Final Report Addendum Prepared	Abt	April 2028
Distribute learnings with stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders, state leaders	Information Sessions, Briefs Shared	PA	September-October 2028
Attend annual PD Conference: Attend annual EIR PD Conference	4 Project Team Members Attend	1 rep. from Abt 2 reps: UD,PM, PDL	September 2028
Internal PQA: Engage in internal Abt Project Quality Assurance review of any pertinent programs, code, analysis, and reports	Internal PQA Process Complete	Abt	September 2028

Produce dissemination report: Provide report summarizing all evaluation findings.	Dissemination Report Complete	Abt	September 2028
Incorporate Learnings into ongoing work to improve outcomes for students	Learnings Implemented	PA	September 2028

Continuous Improvement: The EIR project represents and embodies a long-term effort at community impact and sustained change, which requires attention to targeted outcomes that will establish a clear understanding of the key components of solutions when fully implemented and realized. Preschool Promise will participate in biweekly meetings to ensure data collection, management, analysis and evaluation are occurring according to plan. These meetings will provide an opportunity to review upcoming action items, identify and implement necessary refinements, and disseminate information and findings to the project team. Preschool Promise will utilize a systematic, standardized method of collecting data and will work with Abt Associates to set up processes for ensuring that baseline data are collected, utilizing strategies that have been successful with similar data collection efforts.

Budget Management / Cost Appropriateness: The Preschool Promise team is qualified and experienced in grant administration and fiscal management as well as grant implementation through its grant projects on the federal, state and local levels. Checks and balances are assured through external, electronic financial reporting conducted by an internal CPA and external auditing firm, implementing compliant, Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, which meet federal requirements. Computerized financial systems are operated internally and financial reports including revenue and expenses are reviewed and approved by the Preschool Promise governing board regularly, with cost centered accounting applied to ensure funding remains separate. As the applicant and ultimately accountable for grant funding and reporting on allocations and usage, Preschool Promise's annual audits will be presented in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America in accordance with the

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants’ audit and accounting guide, Health Care Entities, and other pronouncements applicable to health care organizations and guidance from the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and as outlined in the administrative requirements for 45 CFR part 75 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for federal grant Awards.

Sustainability: Preschool Promise has created a model that will provide shared learning across preschool sites giving the opportunity for expanded learning, resource sharing, and creating the scaffolding needed for sustainability of CD in the classroom. As the convener and facilitator, Preschool Promise will develop the capacity within its own organization to provide expert-level training and support on CD implementation to allow it to offer continuous training to other preschool sites following the conclusion of this grant, while also preparing the partnering preschools to continue efforts without funding at project end. With sustainability always top of mind, the learning community created through this project will become a cohesive team offering mutual support to help centers weather challenging situations and times so that the cohorts can continue to learn from each other as peers. This project will increase the efficiency of problem solving in each preschool center through the cohort model. While Preschool Promise does not have funding available to continue the research aspects of the project, as demonstrated through matching funds, local sources have committed to supporting hard costs associated with the expansion of CD through additional preschool classrooms in the catchment area.

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION

Preschool Promise will engage 2 entities to support the overall project evaluation process: Abt Associates and University of Dayton Business Research Group (UD/BRG). Abt Associates, a nationally recognized research organization with extensive experience conducting field tests of educational interventions, will conduct a comprehensive independent evaluation of the project

that includes a 2-year impact study and a 2-year implementation study, focusing on data analysis and reporting. UD/BRG provides economic analysis and program evaluation primarily in the social service and government sectors and expertise in conducting qualitative analysis based on surveys, focus groups and 1-on-1 interviews and quantitative analysis based on statistical regression models, for this project providing project-level data collection.

(1) Evaluation will Produce Evidence about Project Effectiveness that meets WWC

Standards: Abt Associates is well-versed in conducting QED and understands the pain points associated with this type of design. The proposed impact study will utilize a QED that will generate evidence aligned with the WWC rating of *Meets Standards with Reservations*. The QED will focus on the outcomes for 3- and 4- year-old children attending preschool classrooms in programs that are part of the Preschool Promise network. The primary challenge in a QED is related to establishing the equivalence of the treatment and comparison groups prior to the start of the intervention, and differences between the groups at baseline have the potential to bias the estimate of the intervention's impact. Abt will use 2 stages of participant matching to match classrooms and children, helping to ensure equivalent groups. Abt will also work with the grantee to ensure the collection of baseline data on as close to 100% of the consented children and participating classrooms as possible. Moreover, Abt will use baseline measures that are identical to outcome measures, which have the highest correlations with outcomes and will be used to satisfy the What Works Clearinghouse baseline equivalence standard, an important expectation with matching procedures.

All proposed outcome measures for the impact evaluation (*Table-9*) will meet WWC outcome standards for reliability, validity, and consistency of data collection procedures across conditions. In addition, as required by the WWC for meeting standards with reservations, we will establish baseline equivalence of the analytic samples for each outcome and use analytic samples that are

large and heterogeneous enough to produce moderate evidence of program effects on student outcomes, as defined by the WWC. There are 2 versions of the intervention being tested, CD alone and CD with the addition of Black Boy Brilliance; our primary interest is in whatever the treatment classrooms are delivering, though we will conduct exploratory analyses of the additive effect of Black Boy Brilliance on the impact of CD. The impact study uses a QED that will generate evidence aligned with the WWC rating of *Meets Standards with Reservations*.

TABLE-9 PROPOSED OUTCOME MEASURES FOR IMPACT EVALUATION			
Construct	WWC Domain	Performance Measure	Description
Children’s Social-emotional behavior	Student SE behavior	eDECA	Teacher ratings of child Attachment/ Relationships and Behavioral Concerns
Children’s Self-regulation	Student SE behavior	eDECA	Teacher ratings of child Self-Regulation// Initiative
Children’s Executive function	Student SE behavior	MEFS	Child direct assessment
Children’s Academic skills: Literacy	Phonics	WJ / ECAD Letter-Word Identification	Child direct assessment
Children’s Academic skills: Math	Numbers and operations	WJ / ECAD Number Sense	Child direct assessment
Children’s Academic skills: Literacy	Vocabulary	WJ / ECAD Picture Vocabulary	Child direct assessment
Children’s Kindergarten readiness	Academic Achievement Pre-K—12	KRA	Child direct assessment, District/state-collected
Classroom instructional quality	Teacher practice	CLASS	Classroom observation

TABLE-10 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS		
Measure	Baseline	Target
Performance Measure: At end of each implementation year, teachers observed in treatment classrooms will average 2.5 on the composure subscale of the CD Fidelity Rubric that goes from 1 to 4. Tool: CD Fidelity Rubric / Pre-Post-Surveys	2.22	2.5
Performance Measure: 90% of teachers will report an increase in the use of personal self-regulation practices on end of the year surveys. Tool: CD Fidelity Rubric / Pre-Post-Surveys	NA	90%
Performance Measure: At the end of the second implementation year, teachers will average 2.5 on the overall CD Fidelity Rubric (again on a scale from 1 to 4. Tool: CD Fidelity Rubric / Pre-Post-Surveys	2.07	2.5
Performance Measure: Mean Emotional Support scores of classrooms that fall below 6 on the pre-test will be improved by 0.3 points pre to post annually. Tool: CLASS	5.39	5.69
Performance Measure: Mean Classroom Organization scores of classrooms that fall below 6 on pre-test will be improved by 0.3 points pre to post annually. Tool: CLASS	4.93	5.23
Performance Measure: Mean Instructional Support scores will be improved by 0.3 points pre to post annually. Tool: CLASS	2.54	2.84

Performance Measure: The overall set of children in the treatment group will show an average change on the T scores on the TPF scale and each of the 3 subscales of 2 to 4 points, (a small change in effect size), in a positive direction from pre to post. Tool: eDECA P2 scales Attachment/ Relationships and TPF overall	NA	+2 to 4
Performance Measure: Of the children who score in the need for improvement range on the pre-test, 75% will be moved into the typical or strength ranges on the post. Tool: eDECA P2 scales Attachment/ Relationships and TPF overall	NA	+2 to 4
Performance Measure: Children of color in the treatment group will show an average change on the T scores on the TPF scale and each of the 3 subscales of 2 to 4 points, (a small change in effect size), in a positive direction from pre to post. Tool: eDECA P2 scales Attachment/ Relationships and TPF overall	NA	+2 to 4
Performance Measure: Children of color in the treatment group who score in the need for improvement range on the pre-test, 75% will be moved into the typical or strength ranges on the post. Tool: eDECA P2 scales Attachment/ Relationships and TPF overall	NA	+2 to 4
Performance Measure: The overall set of children in the treatment group will show an average change on the MEFS Standard Score of 2 to 3 points (a small change in effect size), in a positive direction from pre to post. Tool: MEFS.	95	97
Performance Measure: Of children in the treatment condition who score in Approaching range on the pre-test, 75% will be moved into the Meets range at post-test. Tool: MEFS	<85	85+
Performance Measure: Children in the treatment group will show an average change on the Picture Vocabulary Standard Score of 2 to 3 points in a positive direction from pre to post. Tool: WJ-IV ECAD Picture Vocabulary, Letter-Word Identification, and Number Sense Subtest Standard Scores.	98	100
Performance Measure: Children in the treatment group will show an average change on the Letter-Word Identification Standard Score of 2 to 3 points in a positive direction from pre to post. Tool: WJ-IV ECAD Picture Vocabulary, Letter-Word Identification, and Number Sense Subtest Standard Scores.	88	90
Performance Measure: Children in the treatment group will show an average change in the Number Sense Standard Score of 2 to 4 points in a positive direction from pre to post. Tool: WJ-IV ECAD Picture Vocabulary, Letter-Word Identification, and Number Sense Subtest Standard Scores.	92	94
Performance Measure: The percentage of children in the treatment group scoring in the “demonstrating readiness” range will increase to 36% relative to the 2021-22 cohort baseline of 24%. Tool: KRA	24%	36%
Performance Measure: The percent of African American children in the treatment group scoring in the “demonstrating readiness” range will increase to 30% relative to the 2021-22 cohort baseline of 13%. Tool: KRA	13%	30%

TABLE-11 PERFORMANCE MEASURES ACCURATELY MEASURE PERFORMANCE/HOW PERFORMANCE MEASURES ARE CONSISTENT WITH PERFORMANCE MEASURES ESTABLISHED FOR FUNDING COMPETITION:

eDECA: the project will use the DECA P2 for preschoolers and examine changes in T scores in each of the 3 areas - Attachment/ Relationships, Behavioral Concerns and Self-Regulation and Initiative. The performance measure goal is for an average change, in a positive direction, of 2 to 4 points on T scores, a small change in effect size. Preschool Promise’s local evaluation team has extensive experience conducting the child assessments required for executive function and school readiness. With respect to teacher ratings of students, [REDACTED] has extensive experience training teachers on using the MEFS themselves and coordinating with BRG staff as teachers have questions and problems arise during teacher execution of the instrument and problems in electronic data collection and storage. While training teachers in eDECA has not been a part of the prior evaluation data collection work, the prior experience training teachers to conduct MEFS assessments themselves will be invaluable to the work involved in training teachers to use eDECA and the ongoing support that is required. The suggested performance measure for student social emotional behavior and self-regulation

skills are linked to the 3 subscale T scores on the eDECA P2 - Attachment/ Relationships, Behavioral Concerns and Self-Regulation and Initiative. While a variety of studies have documented eDECA as a screening tool for mental health issues, there is also evidence that the scores on this measure of social emotional skills have an additive effect on academic readiness. For example, Ricciardi et al 2021 demonstrated that socioemotional skills as measured by DECA “at age 4 are related to GPA, standardized test scores, likelihood of retention, and likelihood of suspension in Kindergarten and key grades through Grade 5” controlling for a variety of other factors.
CLASS: performance measures for the 3 domains on the CLASS - Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support - will be treated slightly differently. For Preschool Promise associated classrooms, Emotional Support Scores tend to fall in a narrow range from 4 to 7 on the 1 to 7 scale with more than half of the teachers following in the 6 to 7 range. The performance measure goal will be to improve by 0.3 points the Emotional Support scores of teachers who fall below 6 on the pre-test. For Classroom Organization there is greater variability with scores ranging from 2.67 to 7. However again, half the teachers cluster in the 6 to 7 range, so the performance measure goal will be to improve by 0.3 points the Classroom Organization scores of teachers who fall below 6 on the pre-test. By contrast, Instructional Support scores display a range from 1.17 to 5.83 for Preschool Promise classrooms with no clustering at the higher range. The performance measure goal will be to improve by 0.3 points on average across the entire treatment group.
MEFS: a nationally normed, standardized assessment of children’s executive functioning skills that is both reliable and valid. In prior research on growth in these skills for preschoolers enrolled in Preschool Promise classrooms who were not systematically engaged in an intervention, preschoolers gained 0.5-1 standard points from fall to spring (Anderson et al., 2020; Anderson et al., 2022). The performance measure goal will be to improve scores by 2-3 points for children in the treatment group. The second performance goal is related to the categorical system developed by the MEFS administrators to determine if children meet readiness criteria, with scores below 85 indicating approaching or not yet reaching readiness criteria. The performance goal will be that for children who score in the approaching category at pretest, 75% of them will score in the meets criteria categories at post-test.
WJ IV: these subtests are nationally normed, standardized assessments of children’s language (picture vocabulary), literacy (letter-word identification), and math skills (number sense). In prior program evaluation technical reports for Preschool Promise, children have improved their language skills by about 0.5 points, their literacy skills by less than 1 point, and their math skills by 1.5 to 2 points. The performance goal will be to improve scores by 2-3 points for literacy and language skills for children in the treatment group, and to improve scores by 2-4 points for math skills for children in the treatment group.
KRA: this instrument has been established as a baseline measure of “school readiness” in Ohio since 2014 and is based on Ohio’s Early Learning and Development Standards. It replaced an earlier instrument, (KRA-L), focused just on literacy. The revised version was introduced in Fall 2020. It shortens the instrument while maintaining its reliability and validity. It is administered in the fall of the kindergarten year and must be completed before November 1st. The KRA captures elements of school readiness that has been demonstrated by a variety of studies over the past decade. Most recently, Justice et al, 2019, demonstrated the positive predictive power of the band the student scored in, (Emerging, Approaching, Demonstrating), While 74% of those scoring in the Emerging band did not meet the 3rd grade reading guarantee, whereas only 23% of those in the Demonstrating band failed to meet.
CD Fidelity Rubric: was designed as a self-assessment tool for teachers and for coaches who were working with them to assess progress on each of the elements of CD. As Preschool Promise coaches started to use CD Fidelity Rubrics with teachers enrolled in CD PLCs with Preschool Promise they realized that they need to be more consistent in their scoring of the rubric. [REDACTED] will work with coaches to develop inter-rater reliability. As a consequence locally, the CD Fidelity Rubric will be considered reliable and valid. [REDACTED] work has documented the differential impact on children’s progress associated with higher CD Fidelity.

TABLE-12 **VALIDITY OF BASELINE**

eDECA: There is not a prior local baseline for the Preschool Promise population of students for the subscale T scores or the TPF and so results from the fall of the pilot year will be used to establish a baseline for spring scores of the pilot year. Fall scores in each of the implementation years are the baseline against which spring

scores of each implementation year are measured. Note that specific performance measure outcomes are established for children of color precisely because of the importance from an equity perspective to test whether CD practice will assist children of color in social emotional and self-regulation growth. CLASS: Each year for the past 5 years, Preschool Promise has conducted CLASS assessments with a substantial minority of the population of Preschool Promise affiliated preschool classrooms. The baseline averages for each CLASS domain are based on CLASS domain scores from Spring of 2023. The baseline will be updated to the spring of 2025 before the 1st implementation year to accurately reflect the baseline for treatment and Comparison group classrooms at that point. The baseline data is likely to change by a relatively small amount prior to Spring 2025. There has been some recovery after a fall off in CLASS Scores during COVID-19 pandemic but improvement has been relatively slow.

MEFS and WJ-IV ECAD: The baseline standard scores were established by averaging Fall scores on these assessments for local Preschool Promise programs across several years and should thus represent an accurate estimate of the baseline anticipated at the beginning of the project. KRA: Each year for the past 5 years, Preschool Promise has obtained KRA data at the individual student level for each child in Preschool Promise affiliated classrooms with a research consent. The baseline established here is based on the fall 2022 KRA scores of the 2021-2022 cohort of Preschool Promise enrolled children. Because KRA data is always available with a lag, the KRA data for the 2024-2025 Cohort (last cohort before the 1st implementation year) would not be available until January of 2026 in the middle of the first implementation year. Hence, the KRA data for the 2023-2024 Preschool Promise cohort will be used to establish a revised baseline when available in January of 2025.

CD Fidelity Rubric: The baselines established for the CD Fidelity Rubric Composure Subscale and the CD Fidelity Rubric Overall Score are based on the CD Fidelity scores in the spring 2023 of a sample of 98 teachers in Preschool Promise affiliated classrooms who had not attended Conscious Discipline Professional Learning Communities in the last 2 years. Some of the teachers will have had workshops or prior experience with Conscious Discipline but no serious exposure in the last 2 years. They represent a good cross sample of Preschool Promise affiliated classrooms

TABLE-13 PERFORMANCE TARGETS ARE AMBITIOUS YET ACHIEVABLE COMPARED TO

BASELINE / WHEN PERFORMANCE TARGETS WILL BE MET

eDECA: the performance target for eDECA P2 is primarily based on coach and other expert qualitative assessment of the gains made in social emotional skills over the course of the year in classrooms where CD being executed with fidelity in Preschool Promise affiliated classrooms. In addition, there is some prior work, (Barkac, 2019), that suggests a significant difference between pre and post DECA scores for preschool children when CD is implemented. The target has been set at a small effect size because it is Preschool Promise's experience that it takes at least 2 years for teachers in a classroom to implement CD to fidelity. The target would be expected to be achieved when spring eDECA scores are compared to Fall eDECA scores in each implementation year.

CLASS: prior Preschool Promise experience with CD professional learning communities and job embedded coaching has demonstrated that classrooms with some combination of the 2 have typically gained about 0.2 points on the individual CLASS Domains, (excluding the Covid period). However, Preschool Promise has not had a program that combined systematically a week-long summer workshop, assistance in classroom setup, a yearlong professional learning community and most importantly 60 hours of job embedded coaching together. Hence the target on the CLASS Domain scores of +0.3 points has been set with the expectation that average improvement will be 50% greater than what has been accomplished before. Pre CLASS assessments will be done in the Spring of the year before the implementation year so spring of 2025 (for 2025-26 year) and spring of 2026 (for the 2026-27 year). Post CLASS Assessments will be done in the spring of each implementation year. Note that the target set is annual so the expectation is that over the course of the 2 years scores will rise by 0.6 points on the 1 to 7 scale for the relevant populations.

MEFS: based on prior years of Preschool Promise data on the executive function assessment that will be used MEFS, children have typically shown growth of about 0.5-1 points across a preschool year. Assuming that this growth is likely a combination of business-as-usual preschool practices and maturation, it is expected that

children in the treatment group will gain more standard points than what is typical across a preschool year. However, curriculum effects on child assessments are typically small, therefore a small gain was determined to be the appropriate performance target. Children will meet the performance target in each cohort at the end of the preschool year.

WJ-IV ECAD: in prior program evaluation technical reports for Preschool Promise, children have improved their language skills by about 0.5 points, their literacy skills by less than 1 point, and their math skills by 1.5 to 2 points. Assuming that this growth is likely a combination of business-as-usual preschool practices and maturation, it is expected that children in the treatment group will gain more standard points than what is typical across a preschool year. However, curriculum effects on child assessments are typically small, therefore small gains relative to baseline were determined to be the appropriate performance targets. Children will meet the performance target in each cohort at the end of the preschool year.

KRA: as noted in a prior section, Covid had a demonstrably negative effect on the percent of children demonstrating readiness for kindergarten. For children in Preschool Promise affiliated classrooms, evidence suggests this is tied to both substantial teacher turnover and lower attendance than in previous years. The target of 36% is ambitious because it calls for a +12-percentage point increase relative to the current baseline of 24%. That increases by 50% the number of children reaching the target. At the same time, the target is reachable because Pre-Covid values were close to the target. As noted earlier, the baseline will be adjusted as new cohort data becomes available and the target would then be adjusted as well. KRA data is only available in January of the kindergarten school year following the preschool year so for the first implementation year, (2025-26), KRA data is available in January 2027 and for the second implementation year, (2026-27) January 2028.

CD Fidelity Rubric: Prior Preschool Promise experience with CD PLC has shown average progress for participants from pre to post CD Fidelity Rubric scores of +0.2 points on the 1 to 4 scale (across 27 questions). The target chosen for the improvement is from 2.07 at baseline to 2.5 at the end of the implementation year (a +0.43 point increase). This exceeds prior progress but is possible because Preschool Promise has never combined a summer workshop with an all-year PLC and coaching. This should permit much more rapid progress in the establishment of the various routines, rituals and structures which undergird the CD approach.

Data Collection/Reporting Methods Proposed / Likelihood to Yield Meaningful Performance

Data: There are 6 data collection elements tied to this project for which performance targets have been established, (eDECA, CLASS, MEFS, WJ, KRA, and CD Fidelity Rubric, the UD/BRG evaluation team has been collecting, reporting and analyzing the data for the past 5 years. With respect to CLASS, Preschool Promise has contracted with outside assessors or used its certified coaches to conduct the CLASS Assessments. Independently Head Start classrooms also have CLASS assessments done by outside assessors and those scores are also reported to UD/BRG for Head Start classrooms that are Preschool Promise affiliated. With respect to MEFS and Woodcock Johnson, each year, [REDACTED] has trained and supervised student assessors to conduct these assessments. UD/BRG has worked with [REDACTED] to organize the collection effort across the Preschool Promise affiliated classrooms. [REDACTED] has used that data on an annual basis for

the technical report she provides Preschool Promise and in her published academic work. With respect to KRA, Preschool Promise has entered into MOUs with each of the 16 public school districts in Montgomery County to obtain KRA scores tied to the Kindergarten Experience Surveys analyzed by UD/BRG and for all Preschool Promise enrolled children with research consents. Each year UD/BRG has contacted the districts, provided the relevant documentation on children and obtained the KRA data at the student level. This data has been used annually to compare Preschool Promise enrolled children to all other kindergarteners in the relevant districts and is one of the performance measures tracked for Preschool Promise funders. In addition, an analysis of the KRA results as a dependent variable is an element of the technical reports provided by [REDACTED]. Finally with respect to eDECA, [REDACTED] and UD/BRG have prior experience organizing a teacher-based student assessment because of work done during Covid to train teachers to administer the MEFS themselves.

Capacity to Collect/Report Performance Data: Preschool Promise has partnered with [REDACTED] and the Development and Learning Lab at the UD/BRG on several federally funded large-scale longitudinal correlational and experimental projects in addition to [REDACTED] work as a program evaluator for Preschool Promise with [REDACTED] and the UD/BRG. These high-quality data collection, analysis, and reporting projects with Preschool Promise as partners include a National Institutes of Health R15 AREA program grant, R15HD100936 (PI: [REDACTED]) “The early development of flexible attention to numerical and spatial magnitudes” [\$438,830] (2020 - 2024), National Science Foundation DRK-12 grant, #17-584 ([REDACTED]: Co-Investigator and RCT Project Data Collection Lead in Dayton) “Development and validation of a mobile, web-based coaching tool to improve pre-k classroom practices to enhance learning” (PI: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], Vanderbilt University) [\$239,810 subaward to University of Dayton] (2018 - 2023), and National Science Foundation, ECR-EHR Core Research #2301009 (PI: [REDACTED]) “Collaborative

research: Mechanisms for improving flexible attention to magnitudes in young children” (PIs Indiana University Site: [REDACTED], [REDACTED]) [Total Cost University of Dayton, \$702,643; Total Cost Overall, \$2,489,778] (2023 - 2028). [REDACTED] has expertise in program evaluation, experimental design, and multilevel statistical analysis along with content expertise in early childhood cognitive development and curriculum and educational practice evaluation. She has partnered with [REDACTED], UD/BRG, and Preschool Promise for 6 years to conduct high-quality program evaluation work with Preschool Promise to understand which levers of classroom practice are associated with greater gains in preschoolers’ school readiness skills, including 4 publications in academic journals, yearly technical reports, and presentations to local stakeholders, Preschool Promise staff, and local educators. The Development and Learning Lab at the UD/BRG is committed to open science practices, including pre-registration, to contribute to the reproducibility of education science. As evidenced by their mission statement, the Development and Learning Lab at the UD/BRG “specifically attends to issues of racial and socioeconomic equity in accessing high-quality early childhood experiences that are culturally relevant for children and families”.

(2) Methods of Evaluation will Provide Performance Feedback / Periodic Assessment: The QED will focus on the outcomes for 3- and 4- year-old children attending preschool classrooms in programs that are part of the Preschool Promise network. The study will estimate the effectiveness of the program at increasing the social-emotional, self-regulation, executive function, academic skills, and kindergarten readiness for 3- and 4- year-old children attending Preschool Promise programs. The QED will compare outcomes for children attending Preschool Promise programs that are implementing CD compared to children attending Preschool Promise classrooms without CD and will also compare the instructional quality in the 2 sets of classrooms. The evaluation will also include an implementation evaluation that assesses the

fidelity of implementation in both years of the program and looks at the relationship of implementation to outcomes. Below we present the components, design, and analysis (*Table-14*) followed by the research questions for the impact and implementation evaluations (*Table-15*).

TABLE-14 EVALUATION COMPONENTS, DESIGN, AND ANALYSIS		
Component	Design	Analysis
Impact evaluation	QED comparing outcomes for 2 cohorts of matched children attending Preschool Promise treatment classrooms with CD curriculum and matched Preschool Promise comparison classrooms without CD curriculum, as well as classroom outcomes for treatment and comparison Preschool Promise classrooms	Impacts of CD curriculum versus no CD curriculum at the end of 1 year of exposure (for child outcomes) and at the end of 2 years of implementation (for classroom outcome)
Implementation evaluation	Descriptive study of fidelity of implementation in CD treatment classrooms with the CD Fidelity Rubric.	Fidelity of each key component of CD for treatment classrooms at the end of 1 and 2 years of implementation

TABLE-15 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DATA SOURCES	
Research Question	Data Source(s)
Impact Evaluation	
1. What is the impact of CD on children’s (1) socio-emotional, (2) self-regulation, (3) executive function, (4) academic, and (5) kindergarten readiness skills after 1 year of exposure to CD compared to skills of children who have not been exposed to CD?	Child direct assessment and demographic data; teacher-child ratings data; district/state data
2. What is the impact of CD on classroom instructional quality in treatment classrooms after 2 years of CD implementation compared to instructional quality in classrooms that are not implementing CD?	Observations of treatment and comparison classrooms
3. What is the impact of CD specifically for male, Black, and low-income students?	
4. Are the impacts of CD moderated by child, teacher, classroom, and center characteristics?	
5. Are the impacts of CD mediated by classroom factors?	
6. What is the additive effect of <i>Black Boy Brilliance</i> to CD on child and classroom outcomes?	
Implementation Evaluation	
7. To what extent are the key components of CD implemented with fidelity?	Teacher surveys, PD attendance records, program documentation
8. How does implementation fidelity vary across classrooms, centers, and key components of the program?	
9. What is the relationship between fidelity of implementation and effectiveness at the classroom level?	Implementation fidelity scores in the treatment years, child direct assessment and demographic data, teacher-child ratings data; classroom observations; district/state data

Impact Evaluation: To answer the impact research questions (1-6), Abt will use a QED with a total of 100 Preschool Promise partner classrooms but will over recruit for an eventual target of at least 80 classrooms), half implementing CD and half not using CD. The Preschool Promise classrooms will be recruited in the 2025-26 school year to participate for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 school years. To be eligible for the study, the center must be a state-licensed child care center that is a Preschool Promise partner site. Teachers in those sites who teach in preschool classrooms serving 3- and 4-year-old children and who volunteer for the study will be part of the evaluation. The project will construct 4 blocks of classrooms defined by auspice (Head Start, Ohio Public Preschool, Licensed Center-Based Care, Other). Within each block, treatment and comparison classrooms will be matched on characteristics (staff demographics, years as a Preschool Promise partner, demographics of children/families served). The project will attempt to match classrooms within the same center so that there will be both treatment and comparison classrooms within the same center, assuming there may be multiple teachers per classroom, and at least 1 - but not always all - teachers in the treatment classrooms will be implementing CD; the study will not be tracking teacher or child attrition because participant attrition is not a relevant quality metric for QED according to WWC standards.

In these 100 classrooms, 2 cohorts of matched treatment and comparison children will be studied, each with 1 year of exposure to CD. Children will be matched using baseline achievement and demographic characteristics. The first cohort will be studied in 2025-26 and the second cohort in 2026-27. Although classroom size averages 10 children 3- to 4-year-olds, the project assumes that after parents' consent to participate in the study as part of their Preschool Promise application, there will be an average of 7 children per classroom participating. Pre-test data on children and classrooms will be conducted in fall 2025 and fall 2026. Post-test impact data on children and classrooms will be collected in spring 2026 and spring 2027. Many of the 2-

year-olds in the 2025-26 year will also continue into participating classrooms as 4-year-olds, whether treatment or comparison, in the 2026-27 year. Because the primary interest is in the impact of the intervention on child outcomes after one year of exposure, the impact sample in the 2026-27 year will not include these returning children. The analysis of effects on child outcomes will look at the 2 cohorts of children combined and use a 2-level model, with children nested within classrooms, with blocks for cohorts. The model for each outcome will include pre-test data on that outcome and a set of child-level covariates. The models will include classroom-level covariates and indicators for matching blocks, where within blocks, classrooms are matched on staff demographics, years of experience with Preschool Promise, and demographics of children/families served. The analysis model for classroom outcomes will be conducted via a single-level regression predicting classroom instructional quality after 2 years of CD implementation from treatment condition, comparison for baseline classroom instructional quality and classroom/teacher-level covariates as well as an indicator for matching blocks.

Preliminary statistical power calculations indicate that a sample of 40 treatment classrooms and 40 comparison classrooms, accounting for some expected classroom attrition, and a total of 800 consented children (7 per classroom on average in the first cohort/year of implementation and 3-4 per classroom on average in the second cohort/year of implementation because returning 3-year-olds will not be included in that year) results in a minimum detectable effect size of 0.20 for academic outcomes and 0.47 for classroom quality outcomes.

(3) Evaluation Plan Articulates the Key Project Components, Mediators, and Outcomes, as well as a Measurable Threshold for Acceptable Implementation: The implementation study is based on the program logic model, which articulates the program's key components, mediators, and outcomes. It is assumed that if the key components – summer professional development, classroom set up technical assistance, coaching, PLC, representation of people of

color on the development team, and resource distribution – are implemented with fidelity, teacher practice will improve, leading to increases in children’s skills. Abt will work closely with Preschool Promise to revise the logic model’s components, mediators, or outcomes if needed, and to develop appropriate and systematic measures of fidelity of implementation for each of the key components of the program logic model. Abt and Preschool Promise will also establish thresholds for what constitutes adequate fidelity at the program level for each key component.

Table-16 shows each of CD’s key components, examples of the types of indicators to be measured to assess fidelity of those components, the data sources that can be used for measurement, and the acceptable thresholds for fidelity of implementation. Abt will conduct analyses for program implementation using data from, for example, teacher surveys, PD attendance records, and program documents. The project will combine the indicators for each component, compare the scores to the predetermined threshold to determine the level of implementation fidelity for each classroom and for all classrooms combined, and report results to Preschool Promise at the end of each year to provide feedback on implementation progress and to identify program strengths and weaknesses. Abt will leverage delivery data and implementation success data obtained from the teacher surveys to address lessons learned, explore barriers to adequate implementation, and provide formative feedback to Preschool Promise. Abt will also conduct exploratory analyses to examine the relationship between the implementation of fidelity measures and child outcomes. Although these last analyses are not causal, they will provide important information to explain variation in outcomes across schools.

TABLE-16 LOGIC MODEL COMPONENTS, INDICATORS AND THRESHOLDS FOR MEASUREMENT OF FIDELITY			
Key Component	Indicators	Data Sources	Thresholds for fidelity
Summer Professional Development (5 days)	How many of the 5 days of summer PD a teacher attends	Summer PD attendance records	85% of teachers attend at least 3 days of summer PD

Classroom Setup Technical Assistance (2 hrs consultation/teacher)	Whether teacher attended consultation during the summer	Consultation attendance records	85% of teachers attend the 2- hour consultation
Job-embedded individual coaching (60 hrs/teacher)	Proportion of hours of coaching teacher attended throughout the year	Coaching logs with attendance information	85% of teachers attend at least 80% of offered hours
PLC (monthly for 9 months)	What proportion of the PLC meetings a teacher attended	PLC attendance records	85% of teachers attend at least 75% of offered for PLC meetings
Representation of People of Color in Development Team	Whether developer team includes at least 2 People of Color	Developer team member information	Program has at least 2 People of Color on developer team
Resource Distribution	Proportion of teachers that receive curriculum and additional resources from grantee	Grantee resource delivery reports	100% of teachers received all relevant resources

Power analysis. The minimum detectable effect size for the child academic outcomes analyses is 0.20. The power analysis used to estimate the minimum detectable effect size was conducted using PowerUp! program and assumed: 1) 0.80 statistical power, 2) an ICC of 0.20, 3) 50% of the classrooms assigned to treatment status, 4) the level-1 covariates account for 60% of the child-level variation in outcomes, and 5) classroom characteristics explain 65% of the between classroom variation. The power analysis also assumed an average of 7 students enrolled in each classroom in the 1st year and 3-4 students per classroom in the 2nd year (analysis will combine cohorts); the study includes at least 80 classrooms. The PowerUp! calculation table is:

Model 3.1: MDES Calculator for Two-Level Cluster Random Assignment Design (CRA2_2)— Treatment at Level 2		
Assumptions		Comments
Alpha Level (α)	0.05	Probability of a Type I error
Two-tailed or One-tailed Test?	2	
Power ($1-\beta$)	0.80	Statistical power (1-probability of a Type II error)
Rho (ICC)	0.20	Proportion of variance in outcome that is between clusters
P	0.50	Proportion of Level 2 units randomized to treatment: $J_T / (J_T + J_C)$
R_1^2	0.60	Proportion of variance in Level 1 outcomes explained by Level 1 covariates
R_2^2	0.65	Proportion of variance in Level 2 outcome explained by Level 2 covariates
g^*	5	Number of Level 2 covariates
n (Average Cluster Size)	10	Mean number of Level 1 units per Level 2 cluster (harmonic mean recommended)
J (Sample Size [# of Clusters])	80	Number of Level 2 units
M (Multiplier)	2.84	Computed from T_1 and T_2
T_1 (Precision)	1.99	Determined from alpha level, given two-tailed or one-tailed test
T_2 (Power)	0.85	Determined from given power level
MDES	0.203	Minimum Detectable Effect Size

The MDES for classroom outcomes analyses is 0.47. The power analysis used to estimate the MDES was conducted using the PowerUp! program and assumed: 1) 0.80 statistical power, 2) 50% of the classrooms assigned to treatment status, 3) and the covariates account for 45% of the classroom-level variation in outcomes. The power analysis also assumed the study would include at least 80 classrooms. The PowerUp! calculation table is:

Model 1.0: MDES Calculator for Individual Random Assignment (IRA) Designs—Completely Randomized Controlled Trials		
Assumptions		Comments
Alpha Level (α)	0.05	Probability of a Type I error
Two-tailed or One-tailed Test?	2	
Power (1- β)	0.80	Statistical power (1-probability of a Type II error)
P	0.50	Proportion of the sample randomized to treatment: $n_T / (n_T + n_C)$
R ²	0.45	Percent of variance in outcome explained by covariates
k*	5	Number of covariates used
n (Total Sample Size)	80	
M (Multiplier)	2.84	Computed from T ₁ and T ₂
T ₁ (Precision)	1.99	Determined from alpha level given two-tailed or one-tailed test
T ₂ (Power)	0.85	Determined from given power level
MDES	0.471	Minimum Detectable Effect Size

Impact Analysis: Analyses of the effect of CD on child outcomes will be estimated with a 2-level regression model as specified below:

Level 1 (student level):
$$Y_{cj} = \pi_{0j} + \pi_{1j}X_{cj} + \pi_{2j}Y_{cj} + \varepsilon_{cj}$$

Where

- Y_{sj} is the outcome of interest for child c in classroom j
- X_{cj} is a vector of child demographic and baseline characteristics (e.g., prior achievement, gender, race/ethnicity, eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch, English learner status) grand-mean centered;
- π_{0j} is the average outcome across children in classroom j ;
- π_{1j} is the relationship between child characteristics and outcome for children in classroom j ;
- π_{2j} is the relationship between cohort and outcome for children in classroom j ; and
- ε_{sj} is a random error associated with child c in classroom j .

Level 2 (classroom level):
$$\pi_{0j} = \beta_{00} + \beta_{01}W_j + \beta_{02}CD_j + r_{0j}$$

$$\pi_{1j} = \beta_{10}$$

Where

- β_{00} is the average child outcome across all study classrooms;
- β_{01} is the relationship between classroom characteristics and classroom average achievement;
- β_{02} is the pooled child outcome difference between treatment and comparison classrooms;
- β_{10} is the average relationship between child characteristics and achievement across all children in study classrooms; and
- r_{0j} is a random error associated with classroom j.

The estimate of primary interest from the above model is β_{02} , which represents a precision-weighted overall CD effect on a given child outcome. Analysis of the effect of CD on classroom quality will be estimated with a single-level linear regression model as specified below:

$$Y_j = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CD + \beta_2 \text{Baseline} + \beta_3 X + \varepsilon$$

Where

- Y_j is the classroom outcome at the end of Year 3;
- β_0 is the average classroom outcome across study classrooms (i.e., the intercept);
- β_1 is the treatment estimator;
- β_2 is the effect of baseline classroom quality;
- β_3 is the effect of a vector of classroom/teacher covariates; and
- ε is a random error term.

Data Sources. *Table-17* presents the variables that will be used in the impact evaluation data sources, and *Table-18* demonstrates the implementation evaluation data sources.

TABLE-17 DATA SOURCES AND DESCRIPTIONS	
Source File	Description of Data
Student direct assessment data	Student-level scores on direct assessments (MEFS, Woodcock Johnson subtests)
Teacher ratings data	Student-level scores on eDECA
District data	Student-level Kindergarten Readiness Assessment scores and student-level demographics (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, economic disadvantage) and special program participation (e.g. limited English proficient)
Classroom observation data	Classroom-level interactional quality scores from the CLASS

TABLE-18 IMPLEMENTATION DATA COLLECTED IN THE TREATMENT CONDITION			
Instrument	Collection Time	Respondent	Instrument Description
Teacher survey	Fall and spring of each implementation year	Teachers	Survey includes items focused on teacher satisfaction with training
Week-long Professional development attendance records	Summer 2025	Professional Development Lead	Attendance at week-long CD training
Classroom set-up consultation attendance records	Fall of each implementation year	Coaches	Log submitted electronically by each Coach after the classroom setup session is completed
Coaching logs	Monthly during each implementation year	Coaches	Logs submitted electronically that capture classroom teachers, hours, topics of coaching

PLC attendance records	Monthly during each implementation year	Lead Coach	Attendance collected by PLC facilitator at each session and uploaded in database
Team member information	Fall of each implementation year	Project Team	Survey given to each project team member to capture the race/ethnicity of team members delivering the intervention components
Resource delivery reports	Fall of each implementation year	Coaches	Teacher-level information about who received resources from grantee
CD Fidelity Rubric	Fall and Spring of each implementation year	Coaches	Rubric developed by CD originators

Evaluation Timeline: As denoted in *Table-8*, the evaluation follows a timeline for planning, data collection, analysis and reporting that begins on January 1, 2024, and ends on December 31, 2028. The primary implementation and impact evaluation follows 2 cohorts of children in participating classrooms for 1 year (Cohort 1 starting in 2025, Cohort 2 in 2026). In each year, the evaluation focuses on implementation of the CD curriculum for the original cohort of teachers in the treatment group, following that group of teachers for 2 consecutive years.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY #1

Preschool Promise proposes to utilize guidance and support from Sinclair College, a 5-campus community college, in Dayton, Ohio. Sinclair College was established in 1887 and with 30,500 students enrolled and 10,000 degrees and certificates conferred in the fiscal year 2022 - 2023. In 2022, Sinclair College instituted a certificate program that provides students an overview of how adverse childhood experiences impact child development, social emotional development, and how early childhood trauma impacts brain development. Coursework also includes opportunities to explore social determinants of health, disparities, and equitable access to education and economic opportunities through internships and volunteer projects. These courses inform potential and current teachers in preschool through grade 12 in assessing and addressing the needs of children who have experienced trauma and provide strategies to develop a trauma-sensitive classroom environment. Additionally, the certificate program was designed to specifically examine historical and current racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, linguistic, and social class stereotypes and biases related to youth in the United States and globally.

Preschool Promise will engage [REDACTED], Education Department Instructor, at Sinclair College, as a key member of its Advisory Council, joining a group comprised of experienced professors and researchers who have expertise in large scale research projects, social-emotional learning, executive function, early childhood education, and culturally relevant teaching practices. [REDACTED]' experience with Sinclair College's newly instituted trauma-informed certificate program will also inform and benefit the Advisory Council and in turn the Preschool Promise EIR. [REDACTED] will also serve as an Advisor for the Black Boy Brilliance portion of the initiative, supporting the work of the Black Boy Brilliance Leader, Christopher James, through design and recruitment of ambassadors. Preschool Promise has also engaged Swapna Purandare at Sinclair College to serve on the Advisory Council. Swapna teaches in the

EIR-Preschool Promise project period.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) associate degree program, which will enable her to integrate learning from this project into the curriculum for Sinclair's ECE students.