

# **State of Preschool 2014-2016**

**Request for approval of a collection of information  
Supporting Statement Part A  
OMB Paperwork Reduction Act Submission**

**OMB# 1850-0895 v.2**

**Submitted by:  
The National Center for Education Statistics  
Institute of Education Sciences  
U.S. Department of Education**

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## PART A. JUSTIFICATION

### **A.1. Circumstances Necessitating Collection of Information**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education (ED), is seeking clearance for conducting an annual survey focused on publicly provided early childhood education in 2014 through 2016. The collection of this information is authorized by law under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S. Code Section 9543a) which stipulates that *The Statistics Center shall collect, report, analyze, and disseminate statistical data related to education in the United States and in other nations, including -- (1)(L) access to, and opportunity for, early childhood education.*

Data collected by NCES through other surveys has helped address the need for information about early childhood education, including prekindergarten, through household surveys and through the Common Core of Data (CCD). The household surveys focus on the demand side of early childhood education in terms of collecting information from families about their experiences finding such education opportunities. Information about the supply of such opportunities has primarily been obtained through CCD. However, CCD focuses only on programs provided through public schools. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) fields a comprehensive supply study, but the study is done once a decade at most and is not state representative. Filling this information void have been the State of Preschool annual data collections.

Prior to the State of Preschool collections, comprehensive information about publicly supported preschool education programs was not readily available in a single source on a regular basis. A range of different federal programs, such as Head Start and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), support early childhood education opportunities. At the same time, states provide support for public early childhood education through numerous state-level programs housed in different state agencies. Reporting of information from these disparate programs was not coordinated, making evaluation of publicly provided early childhood education difficult. The State of Preschool centralizes data about publicly provided educational opportunities from across federal and state sources. Data and annual reports from the State of Preschool have been used to provide comparable information from across the states since 2003.

The data collection system and related reports were developed by Rutgers University's National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), using funds from grants awarded by the Pew Charitable Trusts. Pew Charitable Trust grants are awarded for finite time periods and those used to support NIEER's work expired. With the expiration of the grants, NCES worked with NIEER to continue support for the State of Preschool data collections and annual reports. More information about the study can be obtained at <http://nieer.org/yearbook>.

The terms of clearance for the State of Preschool Survey 2013-2015 approval (OMB# 1850-0895) are:

“OMB appreciates that NCES is taking over an existing collection rather quickly in order to avoid a lapse in the availability of the data deemed useful by many. However, now that this collection is a Federal statistical collection, subject to OMB and NCES statistical standards, and given high public and policy interest (as evidenced in part by the number of public comments received), OMB approves this collection for only 18 months. Prior to resubmission, OMB appreciates that NCES plans to conduct a thorough content review and consult stakeholders including at OMB, to ensure that the survey meets as many data needs as is feasible and appropriate in the future.”

In 2013, NCES held a number of conference calls and meetings with OMB and other offices concerned with preschool education, which suggested content areas and item word reviews and revisions. The contract needed to support and manage the data collection was awarded after a full review period was possible for 2014, and now that the contract is in place, a more comprehensive review of the study content will be conducted. Meetings with the data providers are scheduled for the summer of 2014 to discuss instrument changes, which will allow time for items to be considered and tested for inclusion in the 2015 State of Preschool data collections.

## **A.2 Purposes and Uses of the Data**

Data collected through the State of Preschool system form the basis of the “State of Preschool” annual report, which was first released in 2003. These reports are cited widely and provide a regular and comprehensive picture of publicly provided early childhood education across the United States. Data collected through the system focus on enrollment counts in state-funded early childhood education programs, funding provided by the states for these programs, and program monitoring and licensing policies. The data collected through the system are reported separately and in combination with extant data available from federal agencies supporting early childhood education programs such as the Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Census Bureau. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau form the basis for some of the rates developed for the “State of Preschool” reports. Apart from supporting updates to the “State of Preschool” report series, the data will be used in related NCES reports on the subject of early childhood education. The resulting data set will also be made available to policy makers and researchers, providing them with data about early childhood education opportunities not regularly available elsewhere.

## **A.3 Use of Information Technology**

The collection will be completed using a web-based computer assisted interview (CAI) form. The web-based data collection tool is already developed and has facilitated state respondent cooperation by minimizing respondent burden. The tool allows respondents to fill in information as it becomes available and at their convenience. It also reduces burden by routing respondents around questions that are not germane based on answers to prior questions. Edit checks and data verification procedures that prompt respondents for clarification during data collection are built into the CAI form. This reduces time used to contact respondents to update possibly erroneous entries and improves data quality. Several CAI features also automate much of the dataset development. This in turn leads to timelier access to the complete data set and, ultimately, release of the related “State of Preschool” reports.

## **A.4 Efforts to Identify Duplication**

NCES staff evaluated existing data collections focused on early childhood education and development, attended meetings organized by the National Academy of Sciences to develop consistent indicators of educational progress, canvassed the literature, and undertook a series of on-line searches to study options for alternative sources of information to that provided in the State of Preschool data collections. NCES staff also drew on a wealth of experience within the Department of Education more generally to determine if extant sources were available. No existing sources of information that were also available on a regular basis were discovered.

## **A.5 Collection of Data from Small Businesses**

Small business may support some early childhood program enrollment using publicly provided funds. However, the kind of information collected through the State of Preschool data system is information that small businesses provide to state and local government entities for reasons other than this data collection. Further, the respondents to the data collection are state employees who are gathering data from small businesses for internal state reporting purposes. Thus this data collection does not increase burden on small businesses.

## **A.6 Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection**

There are a wide range of state and federal policies that, at least in part, provide resources to support early childhood education opportunities. Changes in any one of them can significantly affect the number of children who can access early childhood education programs. As policies are in regular flux, the loss of annual data on the topic would provide incomplete information on this policy issue and could mislead

policy makers and the public about the availability of early childhood education in the states and the country as a whole.

#### **A.7 Special Circumstances**

None of the special circumstances apply to this data collection.

#### **A.8 Consultations Outside of the Agency**

The data collection has been in place since 2003, providing the public with extensive opportunities to comment on the content of the collection and on how the data are reported. Likewise, state agencies contributed to the development of the content of the data collection and have had over 10 years of experience filing the requested information through the State of Preschool data collection system. As noted, NCES attended meetings convened by the National Academy of Sciences that, in part, focused on early childhood education indicators. In addition, NCES discussed the utility of continuing the data collection with staff from components of HHS that also study early childhood development and participated in expert review panels on related studies supported by HHS. By December of each year, state and federal agencies that provide support for preschool services will be contacted directly to determine whether new content or changes to existing content are advisable. Should the content of the questionnaires be subject to changes, requests for amendments to clearance will be submitted to OMB.

#### **A.9 Payments to Respondents**

There are no payments or gifts offered to respondents.

#### **A.10 Assurance of Confidentiality**

Data collected through the State of Preschool data system are public domain data in the reporting states. As such, the data collection does not provide a unique disclosure risk and therefore does not provide or include a pledge of confidentiality.

#### **A.11 Sensitive Questions**

Sensitive data are not collected through the State of Preschool data system.

#### **A.12 Estimated Response Burden**

The time to fill out the form is estimated based on direct questions asked of state officials who have provided the data over the previous 10 year period. The reported time needed to gather the information from across state offices and to fill out the on-line form varied from 6 hours up to 24 hours, depending on the number of programs in the state supporting early childhood education and the capabilities of the state data systems. Only one state reported using 24 hours of staff time and most reported using approximately 10 hours. For purposes of developing the burden level estimate, NCES assumes an average time to collect the needed information and to enter it into the data collection system to be 12 hours per state report. Including the District of Columbia and one or two states that had multiple reporting agencies, there are expected to be 53 respondents for the 2014 through 2016 data collections. The burden in terms of hours is estimated to be 636 hours total per annual collection.

The estimated cost per hour for each state is based on a weighted average for state employees in the NAICS labor categories 13-1111 available for 2012 (see [http://bls.gov/oes/current/naics4\\_999200.htm#13-0000](http://bls.gov/oes/current/naics4_999200.htm#13-0000)). Approximately 80 percent of the burden was assumed to be experienced by analysts and the other 20 percent by managers for a weighted hourly cost, after adjusting for inflation, of \$31.04 in 2013. A 1.5 percent cost of living adjustment was applied for the 2014 (\$31.51), 2015 (\$31.97), and 2016 (\$32.45) burden estimates.

**Table 1. Estimated Response Burden for State of Preschool Data Collection**

Collection year	Number of respondents	Average burden hours per respondent	Estimated total burden hours for all respondents	Average cost per respondent hour	Estimated Total time (hours)
2014	53	12	636	\$31.51	\$20,040.36
2015	53	12	636	\$31.97	\$20,338.13
2016	53	12	636	\$32.45	\$20,637.91

**A.13 Annualized Cost to Respondents**

There are no costs beyond those presented in section A.12.

**A.14 Annualized Cost to the Federal Government**

The total cost to the federal government in 2014 will be \$294,000, then \$309,000 in 2015, and \$324,000 in 2016.

**A.15 Reasons for Change in Burden**

This is an extension of an existing collection with no changes.

**A.16 Publication Plans and Project Schedule**

One objective of the State of Preschool collections is to collect and make available for secondary analyses data from state agencies responsible for providing early childhood education. A second objective is to release a report summarizing data from the collection in conjunction with data obtained about federal programs that support early childhood education and about the number of preschool aged children in the country and across the states gleaned from Census Bureau data collections.

**Table 2. Annual schedule of major activities**

Task	Date of Scheduled Conduct/Completion
State respondents are sent answers to previous year's collection and a preview of CAI survey instrument	July
Data collection	August through December
State respondents are sent final data for their state from the current collection for review	January
Draft report delivered for review	January
Draft full data set delivered for review	February
Final data delivered	March
Final report delivered	May
Data released	May
Annual conference of the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS-SDE)	June

**A.17 Approval for Not Displaying the Expiration Date for OMB Approval**

The OMB authorization number and expiration date will be displayed on the initial screen of the CAI, which program respondents will see when they log in to fill out the State of Preschool on-line forms.

**A.18 Exceptions to the Certification Statement**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.