

***Rhode Island Early Learning Council and
Early Learning Council Work Group Retreat***

Wednesday, January 25, 2012 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Lunch available at 11:30

Save the Bay
100 Save the Bay Drive
Providence, RI

Agenda

Lunch	All
Welcome /Retreat Overview	Deborah Gist Elizabeth Burke Bryant
Early Learning Council Strategic Plan	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Deborah Gist
<i>Discussion</i>	All
Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Deborah Gist Michele Palermo
<i>Small Table Discussions with Report Out</i>	All
Review: State Targets and Goals	Tammy Camillo Karen Beese Leslie Gell Michele Palermo
<i>Discussion</i>	All
Public Comment	
Next Steps	Elizabeth Burke Bryant

**RHODE ISLAND
EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL
AND EARLY LEARNING
COUNCIL WORK GROUP
RETREAT**

January 25, 2012

11:30-3:00 p.m.
Save the Bay





MEETING AGENDA

Lunch

Welcome/Retreat Overview

Discussion: Early Learning Council Strategic Plan

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

Review: State Targets and Goals

Public Comment

Next Steps

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN



Rationale for a Strategic Plan

- ❖ As a recipient of State Advisory Council funding from the Administration for Children and Families, the Council is required to create a strategic plan by June 2012.
- ❖ The plan will articulate the Council's vision for what it plans to accomplish over the next five years. It should be comprehensive and overarching.
- ❖ The plan will outline an integrated set of goals and document the direction of the Council's work over the next five years.
- ❖ The plan will be a tool for communicating the Council's vision and plan to our stakeholders.



Scope of the Plan

- ❖ The strategic plan will integrate all of the Council's work to date into a single, comprehensive plan:
 - ❑ State Early Learning Council ARRA application
 - ❑ Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application
 - ❑ Early Learning Council Access Recommendations
 - ❑ Early Learning Council Kindergarten Assessment Recommendations
 - ❑ Early Learning Council Data Team Recommendations
- ❖ See the "Strategies At A Glance" document for an overview of the strategies articulated by the Council to date.



NEXT STEPS

- ❖ Draft the strategic plan
- ❖ Ensure alignment with other state agency plans and priorities. *(The “Crosswalk of Council Strategies To Date with Other Agency Plans and Priorities” in your packet, will provide a foundation for this work when it is completed)*
- ❖ Hire a designer to visually lay out the plan/products for publishing.
- ❖ Present the draft to the ELC/ELCWG for review.
- ❖ Determine a plan for creating awareness and buy-in among key stakeholders and the general public.

RTT-ELC UPDATE



GOAL OF RACE TO THE TOP – EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE

Build a comprehensive and coherent early learning and development system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High needs, including low income children, children with disabilities, English Learners, and children in the child welfare system so that they enter Kindergarten ready to succeed.



RACE TO THE TOP – ELC: KEY STRATEGIES

High-Quality, Accountable Programs

- ❖ Aligned quality measurement and improvement standards (licensing, BrightStars, RIDE approval).
- ❖ Participation in BrightStars QRIS required for all licensed centers, family child care homes, and public schools serving preschoolers.
- ❖ Increased frequency of routine licensing inspections for family child care homes.
- ❖ Program improvement grants to support advancement in BrightStars.
- ❖ Focused technical assistance to support advancement in BrightStars for centers serving infants/toddlers, centers and public schools serving preschoolers and family child care providers.
- ❖ Tiered quality incentive payments tied to quality levels in BrightStars for programs serving low-income children receiving a child care subsidy.



RACE TO THE TOP – ELC: KEY STRATEGIES

Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children

- ❖ Strengthen Early Learning Standards for preschoolers.
- ❖ New Early Learning Standards for infants and toddlers.
- ❖ Expanded professional development opportunities on the RI Early Learning Standards.
- ❖ Expanded developmental screening for children.
- ❖ Expanded use of statewide formative child assessment system (Teaching Strategies GOLD).
- ❖ Expanded professional development on child assessment and using Teaching Strategies GOLD.



RACE TO THE TOP – ELC: KEY STRATEGIES

A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

- ❖ New Workforce Knowledge and Competencies frameworks for early childhood educators.
- ❖ New, aligned, high-quality professional development opportunities.
- ❖ Expanded access to aligned, high-quality professional development.
- ❖ Aligned higher education coursework and credentials.
- ❖ Expanded access to higher education.

Measuring Outcomes and Progress

- ❖ New, statewide, comprehensive Kindergarten Entry Assessment
- ❖ New, cross-departmental, shared Early Learning Data System



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: RIDE

Responsibility As Lead Agency:

- ❖ Administer and serve as fiscal agent for the grant.
- ❖ Ensure that the work plan of the grant is effectively carried out.
- ❖ Ensure the budget is properly managed.
- ❖ Ensure the MOU's executed between RIDE and the Participating Agencies is carried out according to the timelines set forth in the application.

Responsibility As a Participating Agency:

- ❖ Manage the implementation of the set of activities articulated in RIDE's scope of work, as articulated in the Memorandum of Understanding.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: PARTICIPATING STATE AGENCIES

❖ Participating State Agencies include:

❖ RIDE

❖ DHS

❖ DCYF

❖ DOH

❖ EOHHS (Early Intervention)

❖ Manage the implementation of the set of activities articulated in the participating agency's scope of work, as articulated in the Memorandum of Understanding.

❖ Ensure senior leadership participation in the Early Learning Council.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL AND WORK GROUP

- ❖ Provide leadership and oversight to the grant implementation to ensure the development of cross-sector and cross-departmental systems and programs.
- ❖ Facilitate overarching policy decisions to ensure the effective implementation of the grant.
- ❖ Ensure public updates on the progress of grant implementation.
- ❖ Solicit broad-based public input and feedback on key aspects of the grant implementation.
- ❖ Send representatives of the Council to periodically meet with important groups and associations.
- ❖ Will work to build appropriate linkages so that key stakeholders, including Council and Work Group members, are effectively engaged in the work.



RTT-ELC UPDATE: GRANT MANAGEMENT STATUS – 90 DAY PLAN

- ❖ Coordinating Team
 - ❖ Lead – Clark Greene
 - ❖ Deliverables
 - ❖ Reporting structure for Governor's Office and Agency Directors
 - ❖ General communications plan
 - ❖ Coordinated hiring processes
 - ❖ Develop RFP writing process
 - ❖ Develop project performance management process
 - ❖ Federal progress reporting process



RTT-ELC Update: Grant Management Status – 90 Day Plan

- ❖ Scopes of Work Team

- ❖ Lead – Michele Palermo

- ❖ Deliverables

- ❖ Complete detailed scopes of work for each project (due to USDOE March 30th)
 - ❖ Report on required RFPs
 - ❖ Confirm budget

- ❖ Finance Team

- ❖ Lead – Alda Rego

- ❖ Deliverables

- ❖ Governor's FY2013 budget request
 - ❖ Federal financial reporting structure
 - ❖ FTE approvals
 - ❖ DOA hiring pipeline
 - ❖ DOA purchasing pipeline



KEY STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK AND INPUT

- ❖ During implementation, the Early Learning Council will sponsor periodic public forums and focus groups to obtain input and feedback.
- ❖ The first forum will be held in early March and will be an opportunity for the public and providers to provide feedback on the draft scopes of work for the RTT-ELC grant.
- ❖ The Council will receive the draft scopes of work in early March and have an opportunity to hear the feedback from the public forum and provide feedback on the scopes of work at the March 22nd Council meeting.
- ❖ In addition, the Council will continue to send representatives to meet periodically with important groups and associations.



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

- ❖ Given the work of the Council through its strategic plan and the acceleration of that plan through the RTT-ELC grant:
 - ❖ What opportunities are you most excited about?
 - ❖ What are you worried or concerned about?
 - ❖ Are there additional early learning strategies we should consider including in the Council's plan?
 - ❖ What are ways that we can engage key constituencies?

REVIEW: STATE GOALS AND TARGETS



FOCUS GOAL/TARGET AREAS

Focus for this retreat:

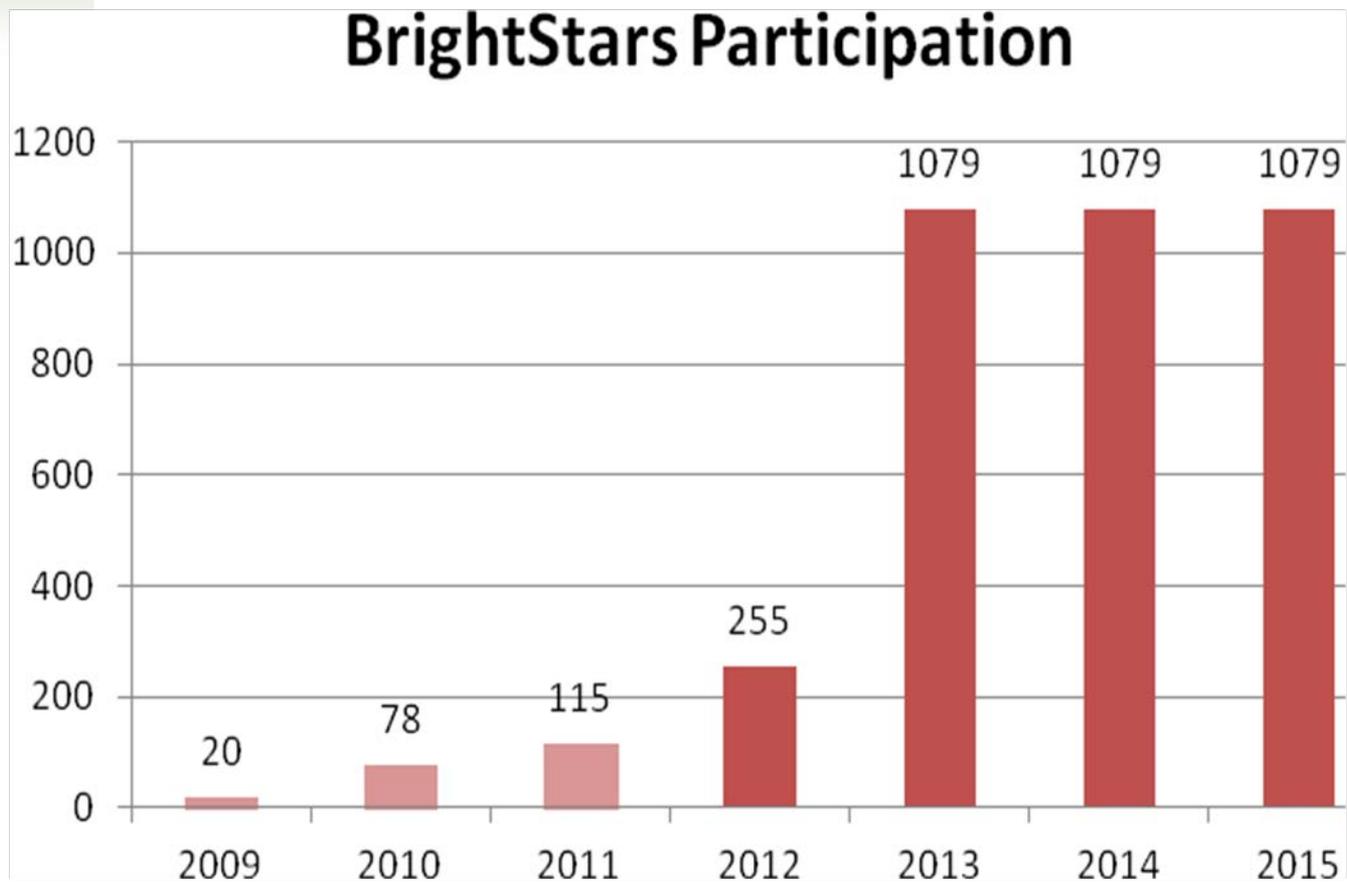
- ❖ Program Quality
- ❖ Workforce
- ❖ Child Outcomes and School Readiness

Focus for next meeting:

- ❖ Access
- ❖ Measurement of Outcomes and Progress



STATE GOALS AND TARGETS: PROGRAM'S PARTICIPATING IN BRIGHTSTARS





STATE GOALS AND TARGETS: PROGRAM'S PARTICIPATING IN BRIGHTSTARS

Programs	12/2012	12/2013	12/2014	12/2015
Total#	255	1,079 (all)	1,079 (all)	1,079 (all)
IDEA, Part B	0	55 (100%)	55 (100%)	55 (100%)
Title I	0	6 (100%)	6 (100%)	6 (100%)
DCYF Centers	82 (25%)	330 (100%)	330 (100%)	330 (100%)
DCYF Family	172 (25%)	688 (100%)	516 (<i>sic</i>) (100%)	688 (100%)
<i>State PreK</i>	8 (100%)	14 (100%)	20 (100%)	26 (100%)
<i>EHS & HS</i>	20 (26%)	44 (100%)	44 (100%)	44 (100%)
<i>CCDF</i>	233 (25%)	933 (100%)	933 (100%)	933 (100%)

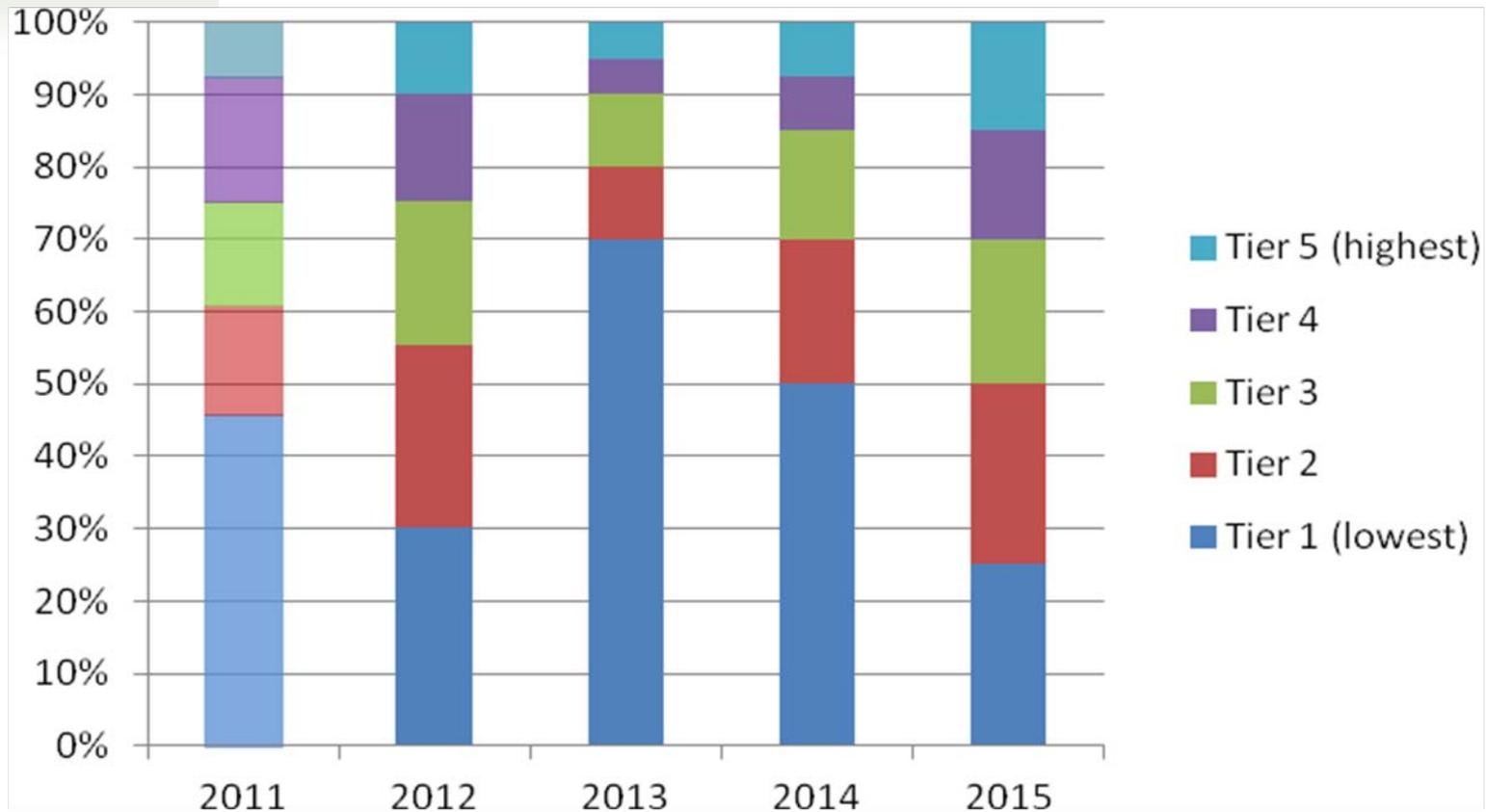
STATE GOALS AND TARGETS: PROGRAM'S MEETING QUALITY BENCHMARKS

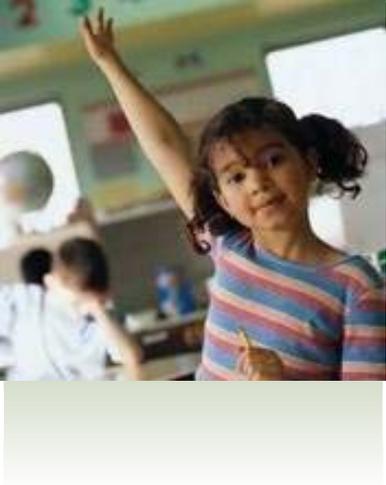


Programs*	12/2012	12/2013	12/2014	12/2015
Tier 1 (lowest)	77 (30%)	755 (70%)	540 (50%)	270 (25%)
Tier 2	64 (25%)	108 (10%)	216 (20%)	270 (25%)
Tier 3	51 (20%)	108 (10%)	162 (15%)	216 (20%)
Tier 4	38 (15%)	54 (5%)	81 (7.5%)	162 (15%)
Tier 5 (highest)	25 (10%)	54 (5%)	80 (7.5%)	161 (15%)

* The numbers in this table are derived from the Performance Measure on page 140. There is a discrepancy between these numbers and the targets listed in the narrative on page 62.

STATE GOALS AND TARGETS: PROGRAM'S MEETING QUALITY BENCHMARKS



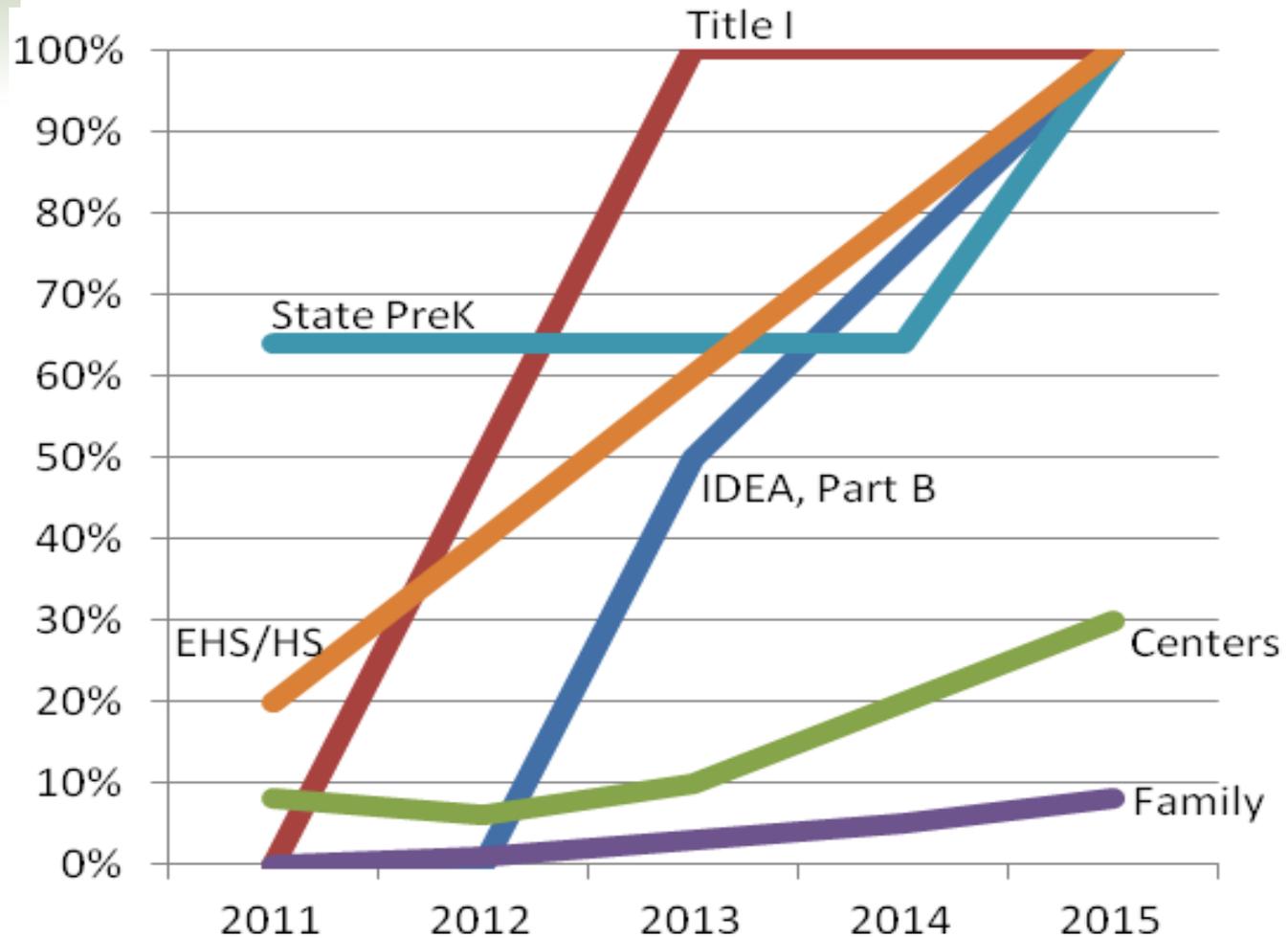


STATE GOALS AND TARGETS: CHILDREN AT TIER 4 & 5

Children at Tiers 4 & 5	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
IDEA, Part B	0%	0%	50%	75%	100%
Title I	0%	50%	100%	100%	100%
DCYF Centers	8%	6%	10%	20%	30%
DCYF Family	0%	1%	3%	5%	8%
State PreK	64%	64%	64%	64%	100%
EHS & HS	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
CCDF*	6%	6%	10%	20%	30%



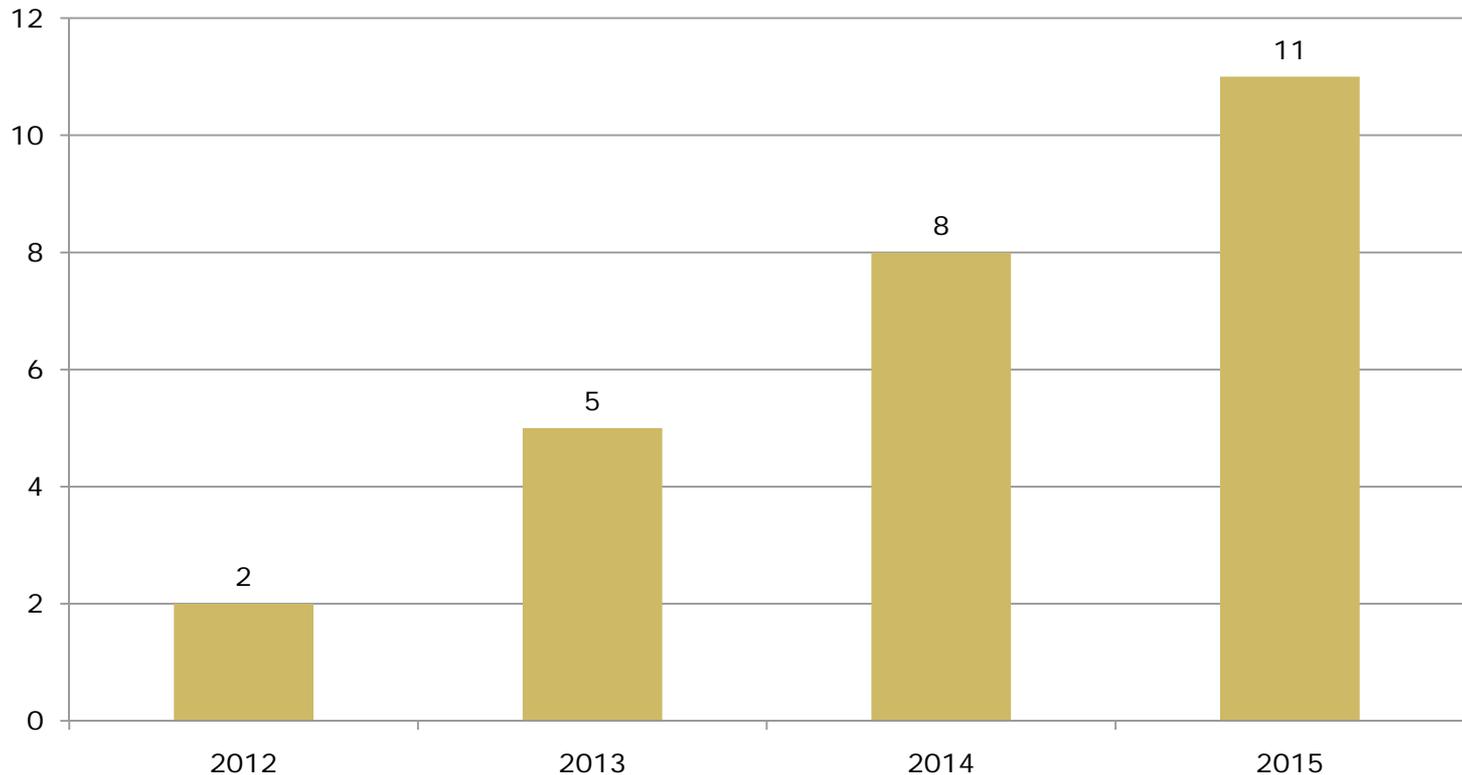
STATE GOALS AND TARGETS: CHILDREN AT TIER 4 & 5



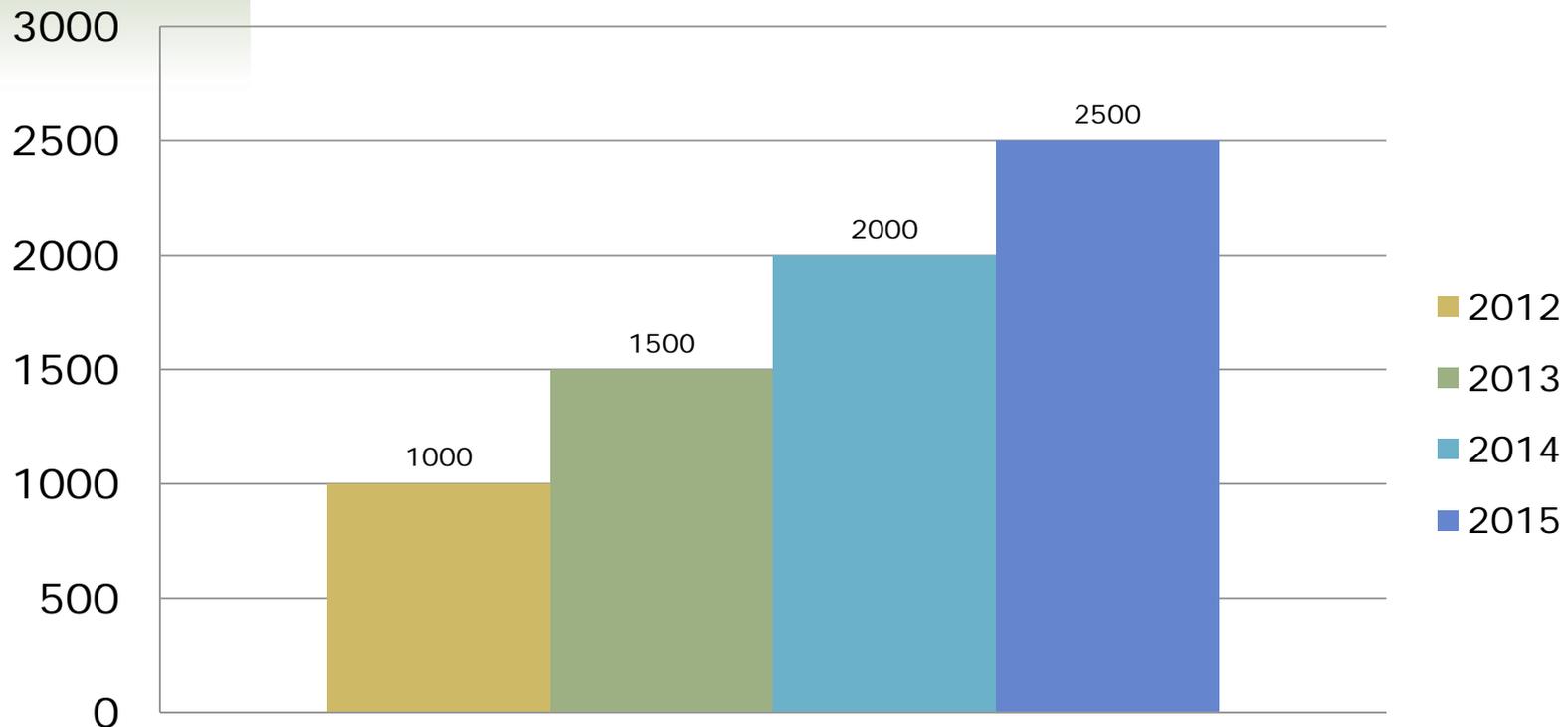
WORKFORCE GOALS AND TARGETS



Total Number of Institutions and Providers Aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competencies

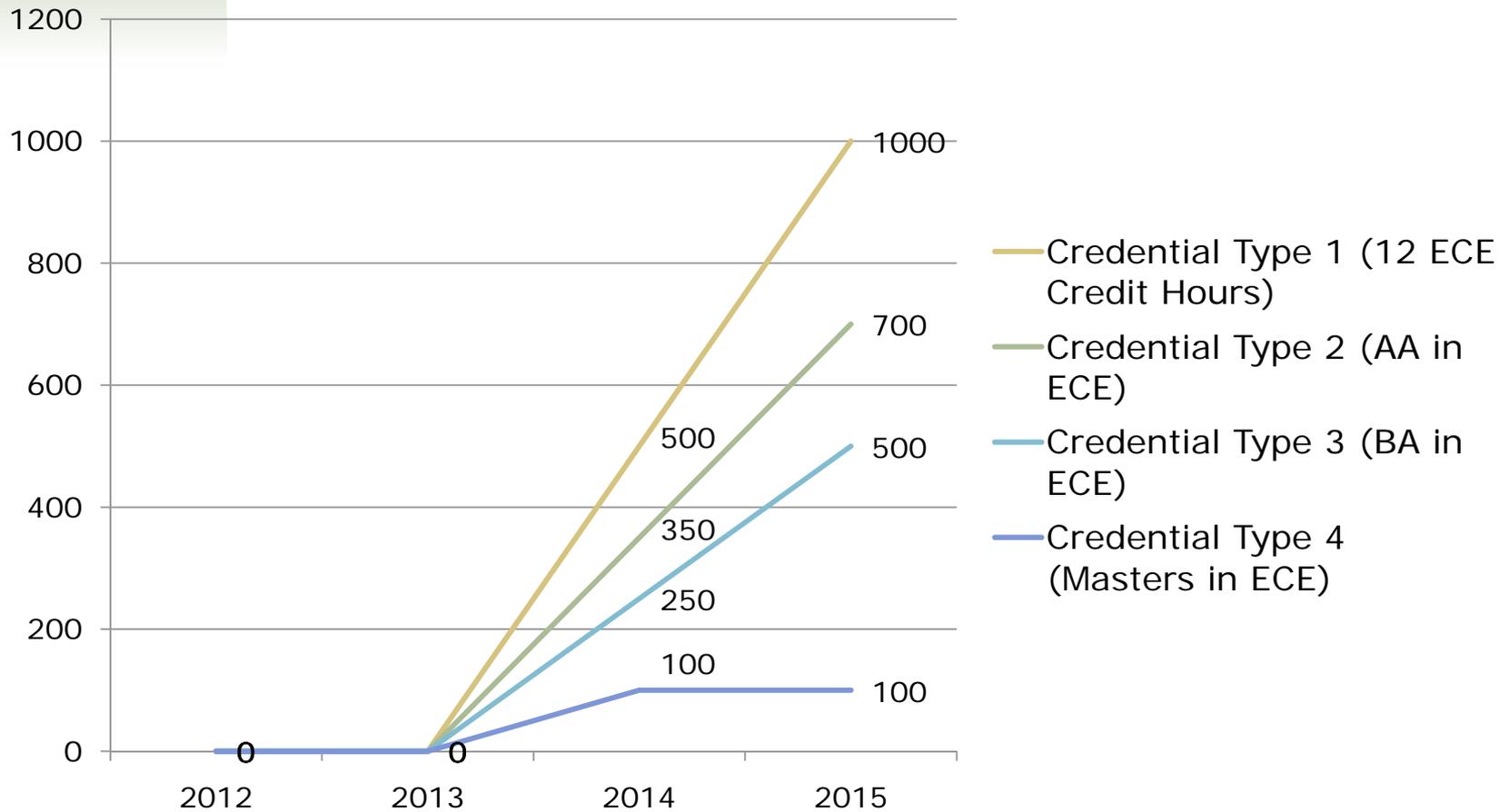


WORKFORCE GOALS AND TARGETS



**Total Number of Early Childhood Educators
credentialed by an "aligned" institution or
provider**

WORKFORCE GOALS AND TARGETS





STATE GOALS AND TARGETS: CHILD OUTCOMES & SCHOOL READINESS

The State's specific goals for improving child outcomes and school readiness statewide over the period of this grant are as follows:

- ❖ By December 31, 2015, Rhode Island will have a cross-departmental, shared **Early Learning Data System** that includes all of the Essential Elements and is fully integrated with the State Longitudinal Data System and KIDSNET (the universal health and development database).
- ❖ By December 31, 2015, Rhode Island will have a **statewide formative child assessment system** to track children's development and learning from birth to kindergarten entry.
- ❖ By December 31, 2015, Rhode Island will have identified, piloted and begun to phase-in a **statewide comprehensive kindergarten entry assessment** to measure the status of children's knowledge and skills at school entry. This will provide the infrastructure needed to monitor "school readiness" so Rhode Island can better align resources to close the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers.

PUBLIC COMMENT



NEXT STEPS

- ❖ **Next ELCWG Meeting:** February 16, 2012
9:30-11:30 a.m.
- ❖ **Next ELC Meeting:** March 22, 2012 1:00-3:00
p.m.

Rhode Island Early Learning Council and Early Learning Council Work Group Retreat Summary

Wednesday, January 25, 2012 12:00-3:00 p.m.
Save the Bay

Council Members In Attendance: Co-Chair, Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Co-chair Deborah Gist, Tammy Camillo, Colleen Dorian, Maryann Finamore-Allmark, Leslie Gell, Kristen Greene, Pamela High, Cindy Larson, Khadija Lewis Khan, Aimee Mitchell, Susan Dickstein, Jim Berson, Regina Costa, Charlotte Moretti, Larry Pucciarelli, Colleen Jermain (attending on behalf of Susan Lusi), and Sue Warford

Council Work Group Members in Attendance: Brenda Almeida, Chris Amirault, Leanne Barrett, Blythe Berger, Brenda Duhamel, Rhonda Farrell, Ruth Gallucci, Jerry Hatfield, Denise Jenkins, Mindy Mertz, Joseph Morra, Terese Curtin, Larry Pucciarelli, Ana Novais and Michele Palermo

Other Participants: Carol Patnaude, Kristen Caine, Maureen Manion, Allan Stein, Joyce Ruppell, Lisa Hildebrand, Clark Greene, Jessica Hedges, Rosanne DeConto, Kimberly Ash, Kate Begin, Tracy Cheny, Amy Vogel, Sue Connor, Jaime Dice, Lisa LeDew, Grace Diaz, Angela Ankoma, Lori Cruise, and Laura Zeisler.

Facilitator: Kristin Lehoullier

Welcome/Retreat Overview

The retreat began with a celebration of the state's winning a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant which will bring \$50 million to the state to improve early learning opportunities for young children.

The Rhode Island Early Learning Council and Early Learning Council Work Group Retreat was called to order at 12:20 p.m. by Co-chairs Deborah Gist and Elizabeth Burke Bryant. The Council and Work Group members celebrated Rhode Island's recent Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge award.

Elizabeth and Deborah reviewed the retreat agenda.

Early Learning Council Strategic Plan

Deborah said that as a recipient of State Advisory Council funding from the Administration for Children and Families, the Council is required to create a strategic plan by June 2012. The plan will articulate the Council's vision for what it plans to accomplish over the next five years and will be comprehensive and overarching. It should outline an integrated set of goals and document the direction of the Council's work over the next five years. We want the plan to be an effective tool for communicating the Council's vision and plan to our stakeholders.

The strategic plan will integrate all of the Council's work to date into a single, comprehensive plan, including strategies identified in the following documents:

- State Early Learning Council ARRA application
- Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Application
- Early Learning Council Access Recommendations
- Early Learning Council Kindergarten Assessment Recommendations
- Early Learning Council Data Team Recommendations

See the “Strategies At A Glance” document for an overview of the strategies articulated by the Council to date.

Elizabeth explained that over the next six months we will be drafting the strategic plan. A key piece of the work will be to ensure alignment with other state agency plans and priorities. This will be worked on in the Early Learning Council Work Group. As part of the process we will also hire a designer to visually lay out the plan/products for publishing and determine a plan for creating awareness and buy-in among key stakeholders and the general public. All along the way, the Council and Workgroup members will be asked to help review and refine the plan.

Several discussion points and questions were raised on the presentation:

- We need to revisit the question of governance of RTT-ELC implementation and the governance of the Council and how they are related to each other.
- It will be important that State Department Directors are kept apprised of the alignment work so that there is effective top-down and bottom-up communication.

Elizabeth noted that the RTT-ELC grant is highly aligned with the work of the Council and it will actually help accelerate the work of the Council. Leanne emphasized that it will be very important to keep Directors in the loop as we develop the strategic plan and ensure its alignment with other agency plans and priorities, especially since there is usually not just one division within an agency focused on early learning. There should be someone within each agency who is looking at the big picture.

Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge

Elizabeth reviewed the goal of Rhode Island’s Early Learning Challenge Application and the key reform strategies (see meeting slides for more detail).

The following question was raised on the presentation:

- Why are we planning to increase the frequency of inspections for only family child care homes? And how will DCYF have the capacity to do this?

Leanne explained that there was a lot of discussion about this during the grant development process because we knew that improving licensing was something highlighted in the federal RFP. Nationally we are known for having high quality regulations on paper, but we rank very low for our monitoring efforts. One key reason is that Rhode Island only visits family child care homes once every two years. Our baseline quality studies also show that our quality is low in family child care homes and we know that increasing licensing visits will help us improve that. A basic national standard is that programs receive a routine licensing inspection at least one per year. In Rhode Island, centers are already being inspected at least two times per year. Increasing the frequency of licensing inspections of family child care homes brings us more into line with national best practices.

Brenda Almeida (DCYF) explained that DCYF will be hiring two FTEs for licensing and an IT person to help with the integrated data system to support this effort.

Deborah reviewed the roles and responsibilities of RIDE and the Participating Agencies (see meeting slides for more detail). There were no questions or comments.

Elizabeth reviewed the role and responsibility of the Council. (see meeting slides for more detail). There were no questions or comments.

Michele reviewed the process being used to get the implementation of RTT-ELC up and running. She explained that we immediately have access to 10% of the funding so they are moving quickly to develop an interim plan for the first 90 days to get each State Agency off the ground and hire the people who are going to do the work. The structure they have put in place is based on the lessons learned from the first Race to the Top award.

There are three teams: 1) a Coordinating Team led by Clark Greene. 2) a Scopes of Work Team led by Michele Palermo and 3) the Finance Team led by Alda Rego.

The Coordinating Team will be working on a coordinated hiring effort, creating a common RFP process, tracking project performance and managing federal reporting requirements. This team includes membership from each of the Participating State Agencies as well as Elizabeth representing the Council.

The Scopes of Work team is developing detailed scopes of work which are due to the Federal government by March 30th. This team will identify the RFPs that will be needed as part of this grant and will confirm that the budget will support the work. The draft Scopes of Work will be ready in early March which will allow time to ensure that the Early Learning Council and Workgroup members have a chance to provide feedback before the documents are finalized. This team includes project level staff from each participating agency and Leanne from the Council.

The Finance Team is responsible for ensuring that the FTE's built into the grant along with the funding for those FTE's made their way into the Governor's budget so that it would be available in the state budget. This team is also responsible for federal financial reporting and getting the FTE approvals through DOA. They are also responsible for managing the purchasing pipeline through DOA.

The following concerns were raised:

- We have had lots of direct access to Michele around RIDE preschool approval and we are wondering how that will change now that we have the grant. It seems like you will be very busy.
- What is the earliest that the money will flow specifically for program improvement grants?
- Will all of the RFPs being released by state agencies be done in a similar way?

Michele explained that the Coordinating team is looking at issues of staff capacity. The goal is to immediately get the FTEs posted so that they can start hiring people to help with the work. In the meantime, she has a lot of support from Ruth, Stephanie and Courtney.

She also noted that there were fairly detailed timelines in the application and it would be safe to say that one of the first priorities is to figure out what RFPs are needed and get the process moving. We won't know for sure until we complete the scopes of work documents but she estimates that it will be around 3 to 6 months before the RFPs are released. In the meantime, there are ELC ARRA funds that are highly

aligned with the work committed to in the RTT-ELC application so we are looking to see what we can get up and running now with that funding while we are waiting.

Clark noted that it will be important to take a moment after the scopes of work are completed to step back and look at the overall timeline. He shared that in the first RTT-ELC it took longer to write the RFP's than they had planned. This time around, RIDE is prioritizing this and is working as quickly as they can.

Elizabeth noted that it is important to remember that we are not re-doing the plan through the scopes of work. The application includes a high quality plan for each project along with a budget summary. The scopes of work are coming right from the high quality plans in the grant. It is just being translated into a more detailed template. She also said that some work might be bundled in RFPs if it is determined that that would be the most efficient way to do the work.

Elizabeth asked the group to break into small groups and talk about the following question:

Given the work of the Council through its strategic plan and the acceleration of that plan through the RTT-ELC implementation:

- What opportunities are you most excited about?
- What are you worried or concerned about?
- What are ways that we can engage key constituencies?

The group reconvened after 20 minutes and shared the following comments with the large group:

We are excited by the following:

- Everyone will benefit from the alignment of licensing systems, policy and standards across agencies.
- The increased focus on supporting and monitoring family child care. Family child care is a unique environment and needs some specialized supports.
- That quality throughout the entire system will be a reality and that children will have a whole new experience in early education.
- The integrated early learning data system.
- The meaningful focus on infant/toddlers (birth to 3) – particularly around the kids with high needs and the professional development that will come along with that focus.
- TEACH expansion
- The connection that we can make between early learning and schools through this work (e.g. extending the educational continuum from neonatal to higher education.)
- The recognition of early learning educators as professionals. This will help them develop an identity as being something other than babysitters.
- That providers will have access to higher education and professional development.
- That reimbursement rates will be enhanced through the quality incentive payments.
- The increased focus on access.
- The alignment of all the plans including Successful Start.
- The reduction in duplication of services that will be a result of this work.
- The promotion of a shared set of core knowledge and competencies.
- Higher Education alignment, both with each other and with the workforce knowledge and competencies.
- The influx of resources that will flow into the system.

- The opportunity to build on our existing initiatives.
- That all agencies and providers were heard and valued in the grant development process.
- Better readiness at Kindergarten entry.
- The opportunity to develop a model professional development system.

We are concerned about the following:

- Who will do all of this work? Will there be a lot of poaching of high quality people to do the work? Do we have enough people with sufficient expertise to fulfill all of the needs of the grant?
- How will we sustain the work – particularly for quality supports and tiered payments to programs?
- The targets we have set for higher education assumes rapid implementation of the core competencies into our credential systems. Is this feasible?
- We do not have a plan for family and parent engagement built into the grant – we need to go beyond Fun Family Activities.
- The first RTT was predicated entirely on the idea that school districts would provide a lot of support for the grant implementation. But in early learning, we do not have districts to help get this work done.
- We need to add in the compensation of the workforce as one of the issues we address - otherwise we won't achieve our goals.
- We need to ensure continuity between infant, toddler, preschool, after school programs, K-2 etc.
- We need to make sure we do not reinvent the wheel. We should make sure we build on existing work wherever possible.
- How will Teaching Strategies GOLD be integrated into home-based programs and early intervention?
- We need to ensure that resources are available to provide follow-up on screenings.
- Increased pressure on providers to achieve quality standards must be accompanied with support
- Our quality benchmarks are aggressive. Improvement takes time – have we been realistic enough?
- We need to effectively support and engage providers in the quality improvement process and take the time to customize the process for each provider.
- Many children do not have access to high quality early learning programs so higher quality programs will not help them unless we also expand access.
- How can we reach providers who are not well connected and make sure they are aware of what is happening?
- Will we have budget flexibility? Did we ask for adequate amounts of funding? Did we budget it correctly?
- How will we support the workforce over the long term?
- Did we get our timelines right?
- How will we ensure accessibility to this system for family child care providers and Spanish speaking providers?
- Do we have enough budgeted to fund program improvement?
- How will we reach out to the most vulnerable families? e.g. pregnant teens

Opportunities/Additional Strategies

- Early Intervention has a strong connection to parents and families – we can tap into that as we try to engage parents and families.
- When we revise the early learning standards we have an opportunity to look at social and emotional health and to bring the whole child concept into our early learning standards.
- We should add in mentoring and coaching for family child care providers.

Engagement Strategies

- We should have a huge media campaign to get providers excited about what we are doing and assuage their fears.
- We should have online video clips for providers and make sure the videos are in multiple languages.
- How can we use social media?
- How can we use webinars to build awareness?
- We should look at other states for best practices.

Review: State Targets and Goals

Tammy reviewed the goals for Program Quality that were in the RTT-ELC application (see presentation for more detail).

The following questions and comments were raised on the presentation:

- What will happen to programs who are not engaged in BrightStars?
- We do not want the targets to drive the instrument yet we are accountable to those targets.

Tammy explained that part of the work will be to determine how we will program that are at the beginning stages of quality improvement. States do it differently – some have Pre Stars, others give Zero stars. We need to decide what makes sense for Rhode Island. We have put a lot of emphasis on recognizing stars and saying that what is important is that you are on the path to quality. We need to keep that message in mind as we make a decision.

Elizabeth noted that thanks to long standing support from the United Way and the Rhode Island Foundation we have a BrightStars system that is evidence-based. There has been a lot of testing of the reliability of the BrightStars system all along the way and this continues to be a fundamental priority for the system. Systems change is the overall goal. We are accountable to the goals that we set out in the application but at no time would the goals take apart the foundation of the BrightStars model. As we go forward, the Early Learning Council will be the vehicle for giving the feedback and guiding this alignment work.

Leslie and Michele reviewed the goals for the Workforce that were in the RTT-ELC application (see presentation for more detail).

The following questions and comments were raised on the presentation:

- Will workforce data be collected in the first year?
- If you are someone who got your associates degree last year when CCRI wasn't aligned with the workforce knowledge and competencies, will that count towards our outcomes?

- TEACH will allow us to begin working towards our AA and BA targets. We will have to build this while we fly it. The expectation is that we will have people start in a BA program by September.
- We need to factor in attrition. Most people will be doing this part-time and it will take a long time. Plus not everyone will finish.
- Will the Child Development Associate credential be recognized in this? Should we be pointing people towards a CDA credential? Right now the CDA is recognized in Bright Stars and the RIDE program approval standards.

Michele explained that the workforce study will be completed in the first year. She also noted that the targets for credentials include the entire workforce. Leanne further explained that we said in the grant that we did not know how many people are in the workforce or what degrees they have. We also noted that we do not yet have finalized workforce knowledge and competencies. So the important thing about this slide is that it shows progress over time. We expect the workforce study to give us baseline data on this.

Michele noted that CDAs are now included in the current draft of the career lattice. Leslie further explained that the career lattice includes people who already had their CDA as of a certain date.

Michele said that it is important that people build their college credit. So we should encourage people to work toward a CDA in a way that includes college credit. She also noted that the targets do not include the early intervention workforce. The targets are focused on center-based and family child care programs as well as educators working in early childhood programs run by the public schools.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Next Steps

Elizabeth reminded everyone of the following dates:

- Next ELCWG Meeting: February 16, 2012 9:30-11:30 p.m.
- Next ELC Meeting: March 22, 2012 1:00-3:00 p.m. at CCRI Warwick, Room 4090 (NOTE: this meeting has been changed from March 28th).