

Rhode Island Early Learning Council Meeting and Early Learning Council Workgroup Meeting

Wednesday, June 13, 2012 11:30-2:00 p.m.
Save the Bay

Agenda

11:30-11:35	Welcome /Meeting Overview	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Deborah Gist
11:35-12:00	Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Implementation Update	Elizabeth Burke Bryant Deborah Gist Sandra Powell Susan Dickstein Michele Palermo
12:00-12:15	Children with High Needs: Young Children in DCYF Care & Access to High Quality Early Learning	Janice DeFrances
12:15-1:15	Program Quality Improvement: Early Learning Finance and QRIS	Karen Beese & Leanne Barrett Anne Mitchell, Alliance for Early Childhood Finance
1:15-1:25	Early Learning Council Strategic Plan Update	Kristin Lehoullier
1:25-1:45	Rhode Island's Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System Plan	Karen Beese Tammy Camillo
1:45-1:55	Public Comment	Public Participants
1:55-2:00	Next Steps	Elizabeth Burke Bryant

Early Learning Finance & QRIS:

A presentation to the Rhode Island

Early Learning Council

June 13, 2012

Anne Mitchell



Alliance for
**Early
Childhood
Finance**

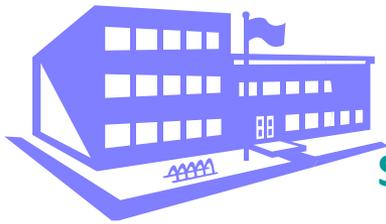


Flow of the conversation

- Early childhood finance basics
- The cost-quality gap
- QRIS financial incentives

EC&E Basics: The Early Care and Education Market

After-school program



School-based PreK



Family Child Care Home



Non-Profit Child Care Center



Head Start Center

Private preschools



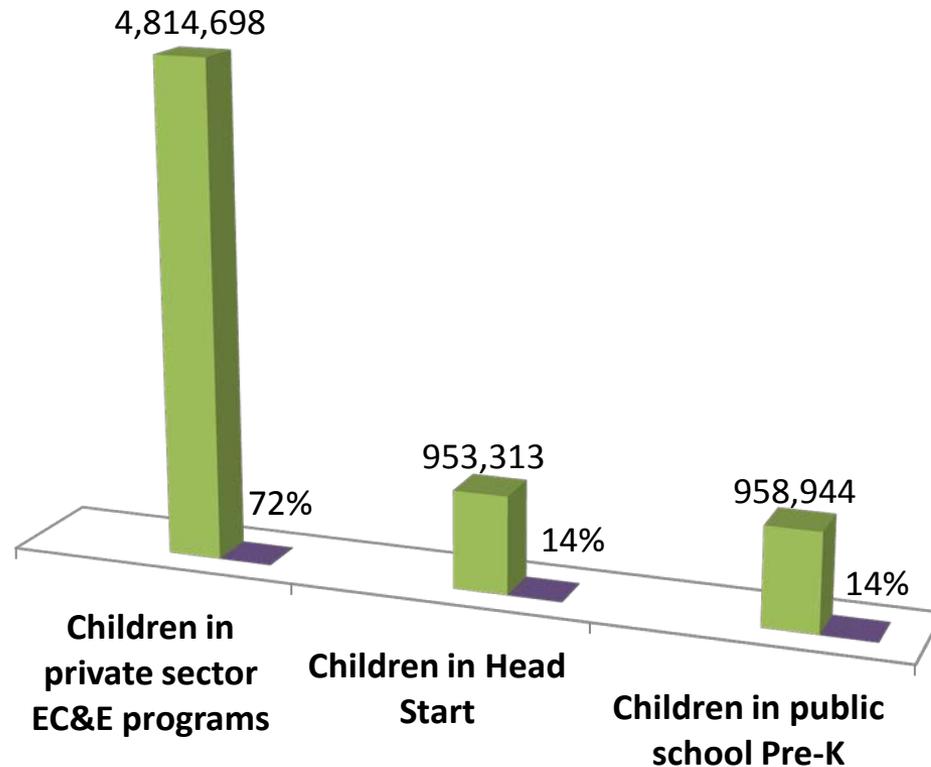
Proprietary Child Care Center



Relative, Neighbor or Nanny



EC&E Services: Most Providers are Independent Businesses (profit and non-profit)



Children 0-5 years in Public and Private ECE Programs, 2010

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

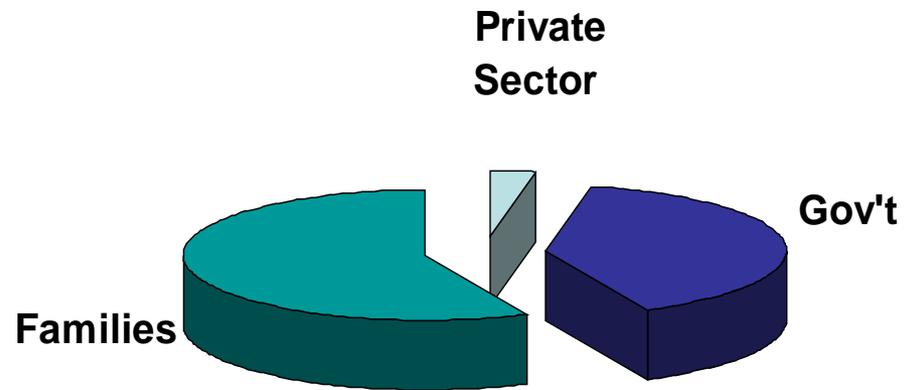
EC&E Basics: Parents Pay the Lion's Share

Consumer tuition is the largest source of revenue, roughly **57%** of total industry receipts

Private sector revenue has increased dramatically but still less than **4%** of total

Government funding

39% of total, and is primarily portable funding (vouchers or tax benefits)

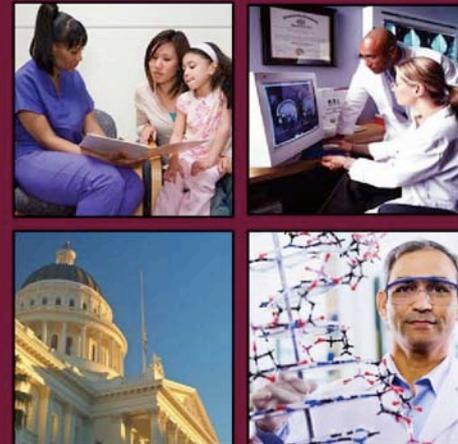


EC&E Basics: Quality Matters

There is strong, scientific evidence for the fact that high quality ECE can have a lasting effect on brain architecture, and child development

A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy

Using Evidence to Improve Outcomes in Learning, Behavior, and Health for Vulnerable Children

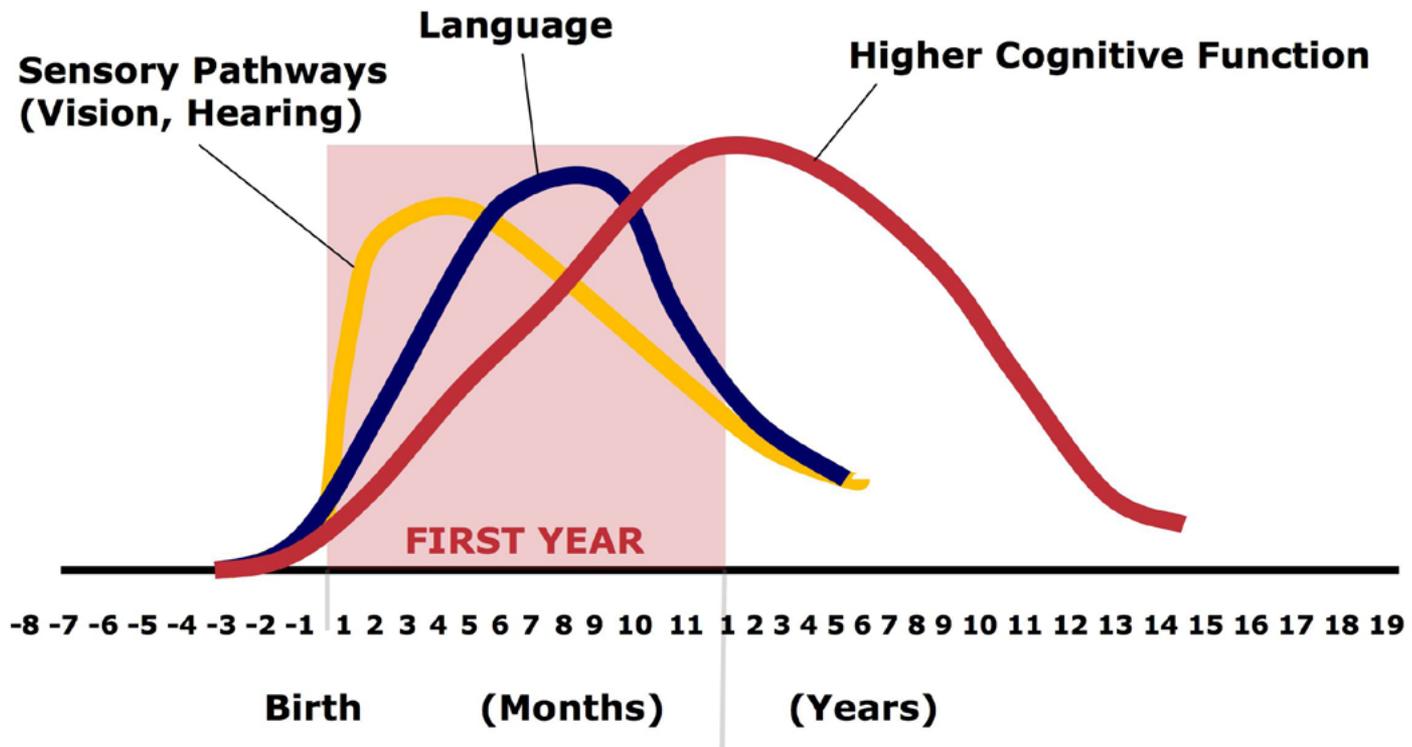


Center on the Developing Child  HARVARD UNIVERSITY
NATIONAL FORUM ON EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM EVALUATION
NATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL ON THE DEVELOPING CHILD



Human Brain Development

Neural Connections for Different Functions Develop Sequentially





The Cost-Quality Gap

- Higher quality ECE costs more than most families can afford
- Market-based ECE encourages price competition – low tuition fees – and discourages investments in quality



Cost Methodology

- Baseline cost estimates based on cost of licensing
- Cost to achieve given level of quality based on analysis of cost-related components of QRIS system



Considerations for Estimating Costs

- Expense drivers:
 - Ratios
 - Group size
 - Staff compensation (salary and benefits)
- Revenue drivers:
 - Parent tuition fees/other revenue
 - Revenue collection
 - Enrollment efficiency

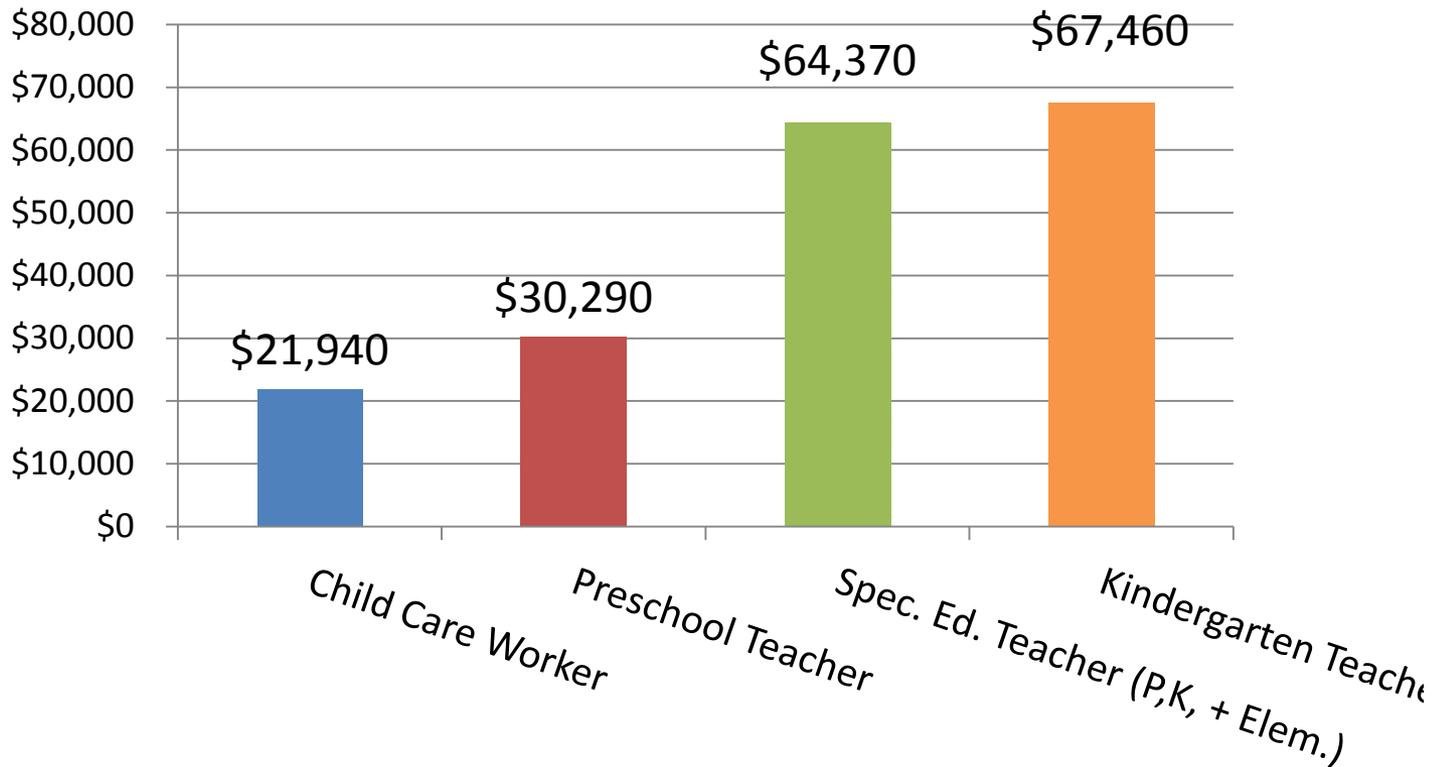


Considerations for Estimating Cost of quality: QRIS

- Requirements in licensing rules
- QRIS expectations increase by levels
- Primarily ***better qualified staff*** as quality increases (higher compensation)
- ***More staff time*** for assessment, family activities and conferences, curriculum planning, staff meetings
- ***One-time*** costs for equipment

Early Learning Staff Wages

**BLS Occupational Wage Estimates
Rhode Island, 2010**



Example Provider-Level Output (NOT Rhode Is.)

Center: 106 children, infants, toddlers and preschoolers

QUALITY			Net Income as % of Expense	Annual Gap/Child
Regulated	\$828,943	Expense		
	<u>\$847,626</u>	Revenue		
	\$18,683	Net Income	2%	\$176
Star 2	\$846,319	Expense		
	<u>\$847,626</u>	Revenue		
	\$1,307	Net Income	0%	\$12
Star 3	\$890,845	Expense		
	<u>\$855,825</u>	Revenue		
	(\$35,020)	Net Income	-4%	(\$330)
Star 4	\$946,116	Expense		
	<u>\$873,394</u>	Revenue		
	(\$72,722)	Net Income	-8%	(\$686)
Star 5	\$1,014,520	Expense		
	<u>\$882,765</u>	Revenue		
	(\$131,756)	Net Income	-13%	(\$1,243)

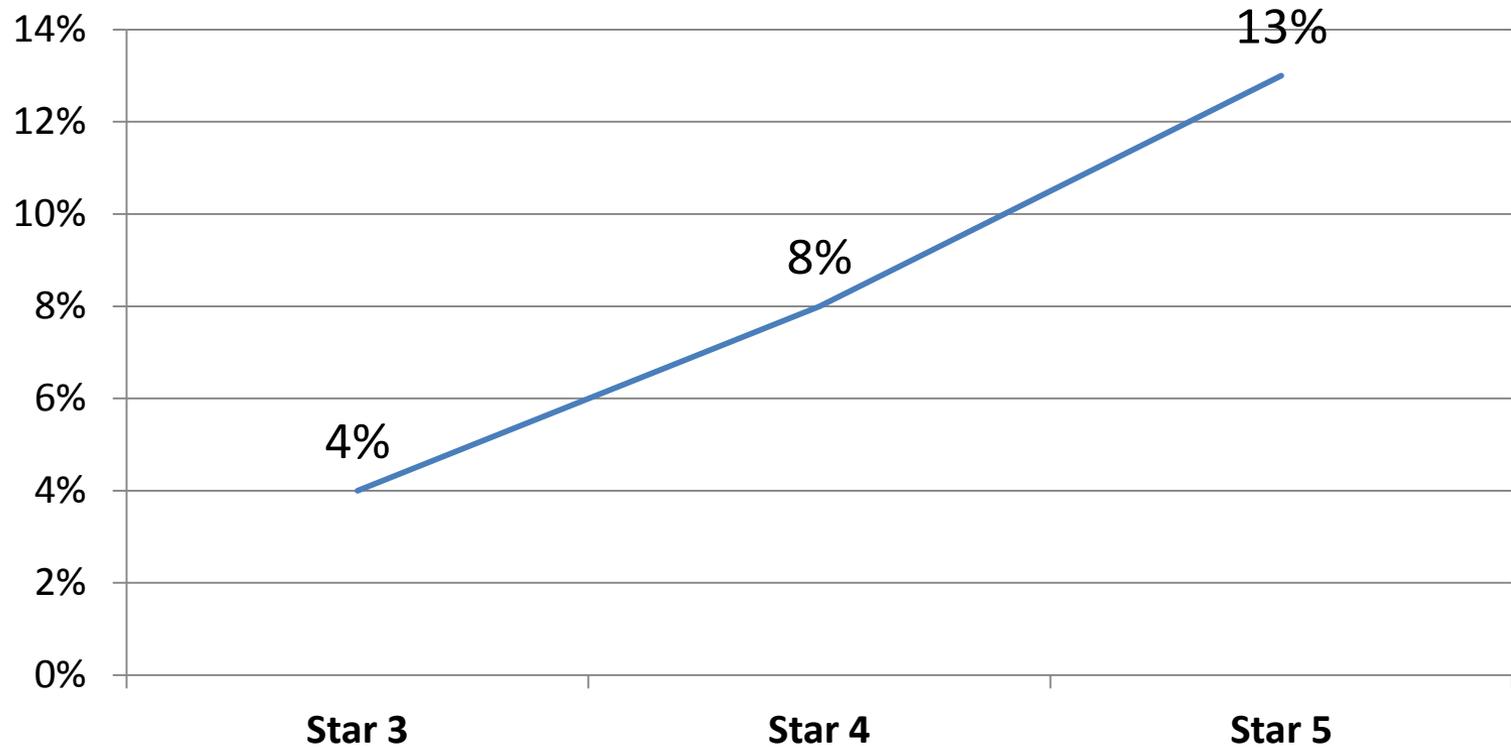
Quantify the Gap in \$

Annual Profit or Loss (\$/Child)



Quantify the Gap as %

**Revenue Increase Needed to Close The Gap
as Percentage of Current Revenue**





Current Gap-closing Strategies in Use

Financial incentives commonly used in statewide QRIS programs:

- Subsidy payments at higher rates (tiered reimbursement)
- Bonuses tied to quality levels
- Quality grants or merit awards for participating programs
- Practitioner wage initiatives
- Scholarships or other professional development initiatives linked to QRIS participation
- Loans linked to quality rating
- Tax credits linked to quality rating



Incentive Strategies

- **Incent participation:** funds linked to participation, e.g., equipment grants
- **Incent quality:** quality bonuses, achievement awards, wage/retention awards, health insurance matching fund...
- **Share the cost of quality:** Pre-K, CACFP, Head Start partnerships...
- **Promote program efficiency:** policy changes, Shared Service Alliances...

QRIS = Framework for Unified Reform

- Voluntary accountability system and infrastructure to support and sustain quality in all early learning settings
- Funding to help early learning settings improve and sustain quality
- Benchmarks to measure progress and inform parent consumers about quality early learning
- A framework to align policy and finance across a range of funding streams and initiatives
- A powerful national movement



Questions, comments?



For more info...



Alliance for
**Early
Childhood
Finance**

Anne@earlychildhoodfinance.org



Children's
FRIEND

childrensfriendri.org

Early Childhood Child Welfare Partnership Grant

Core Partners:

Children's Friend, Rhode Island Foster Parents Association, Bradley Hospital Children's Research Center

Key Collaborators:

Rhode Island Child Welfare Advisory Committee
Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families
Rhode Island Early Learning Council
Rhode Island Head Start Association
Rhode Island Interagency Coordinating Council
Meeting Street
Prevent Child Abuse Rhode Island
Successful Start

The vision of this project is to ensure that young children in foster care have access to high quality learning environments that promote children's health, social and emotional well being, and educational success. This grant will specifically focus on improving access to Head Start and Early Head Start for children in foster care.

Goal 1: Identify and address pragmatic barriers to foster child participation in Early Head Start and Head Start.

Objective 1: Involve stakeholders in collaborative planning to identify policies and procedures that are preventing linkages between child welfare and early learning programs.

Objective 2: Develop joint policies and procedures within child welfare and Head Start organizations that support foster child enrollment and attendance.



Goal 2: Identify strengths and gaps in knowledge and competencies of the workforce involved with children in foster care and recommend evidence based programs to meet the outstanding workforce needs.

Objective 1: Assess current workforce knowledge of child welfare and early child development concepts and best practices, and their ability to apply best practices as they work with young children in foster care.

Objective 2: Evaluate and select existing evidence-based programs and practices to address gaps in workforce capacity.

Goal 3: Disseminate findings and lessons learned.

Objective 1: Develop and complete process evaluation of the project.

Objective 2: Share results of project with key Rhode Island and regional stakeholders, and the Children's Bureau.

Contact Information

Children's Friend
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dmullen@cfsri.org

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Lorette Dussault
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Lorette.dussault@rifpa.org

Bradley Hospital Children's Research Center
Rebecca Silver
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Rebecca_silver@brown.edu

RHODE ISLAND EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL MEETING

June 13, 2012

11:30-2:00 p.m.
Save the Bay





MEETING AGENDA

Welcome/Meeting Overview

Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Implementation Update

Children with High Needs: Young Children in DCYF Care & Access to High Quality Early Learning

Program Quality Improvement: Early Learning Finance and QRIS

Early Learning Council Strategic Plan Update

Rhode Island's Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System Plan

Public Comment

Next Steps

**RACE TO THE TOP EARLY
LEARNING CHALLENGE
IMPLEMENTATION - UPDATE**



RTT-ELC Update

- ❖ Hiring
 - ❖ All Departments are in the process of conducting interviews
- ❖ RFPs
 - ❖ DOA granted sole source approval for TEACH
- ❖ SOW Feedback received 5-15
 - ❖ RI's response will be submitted 6-15
 - ❖ Clarifying questions
 - ❖ Timeline details
 - ❖ Budget justifications



RTT-ELC Update

- ❖ Sub-Committees
 - ❖ Early Learning and Development
 - ❖ Program Standards Alignment/Revision
 - ❖ Improving Program Quality



RTT-ELC Roles and Responsibilities: Alignment and Leadership

Projects	Core Project Management Team - Staff Lead	Corresponding Council Sub-Committee - Co-Chairs*
Early Learning Workforce Development	DHS Administrator or Karen Beese	Professional Development & Higher Education <i>Karen Beese and Khadija Lewis Khan*</i>
Program Quality Improvement	DHS Administrator or Karen Beese	Program Quality Improvement <i>Karen Beese and Leanne Barrett*</i>
Program Quality Standards Alignment and Measurement	Michele Palermo Karen Beese Brenda Almeida	Program Standards Alignment <i>Michele Palermo and Elizabeth Burke Bryant*</i>
Early Learning and Development Standards	RIDE New Hire – ELC Standards	Rhode Island Early Learning Standards <i>RIDE Hire and Susan Dickstein*</i>
Child Assessment	RIDE New Hire – ELC Assessment Blythe Berger	Early Childhood & Kindergarten Assessment <i>RIDE Hire and Mindy Mertz*</i>
Early Learning Data System	Ed Giroux	Early Learning Data System <i>Ed Giroux and Tammy Camillo*</i>
Grant Management	RTT ELC Grant Officer RTT ELC Associate Director	N/A
N/A	N/A	Improving Access to Early Learning Subcommittee Larry Pucciarelli & Elizabeth Burke Bryant

*Will be the Council Work Team's representative on the Core Project Group



COMMUNICATIONS

- ❖ www.earlylearningri.org and Early Learning Council E-News
- ❖ June 1, 2012 - Letter to all licensed early childhood programs, EI providers, and contacts in public schools providing an overview of RTT-ELC
- ❖ July 1, 2012 – Letter from DCYF and DHS to all licensed providers to explain goal of maximizing participation in BrightStars and providing an outline of quality improvement resources.
- ❖ Community Forum planning

**CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS:
YOUNG CHILDREN IN DCYF CARE
& ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY
EARLY LEARNING**

JANICE DEFANCES



CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS: CHILD WELFARE-EARLY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

- ❖ ACF 2011 Early Childhood-Child Welfare Partnership Grant to Children's Friend with DCYF as key collaborator. Goal is to improve access to Head Start and Early Head Start for children in foster care.
- ❖ October 2011 Rhode Island sends a team to the New England Early Development, Science, and Child Welfare Summit
- ❖ March 2012 Early Intervention – Child Welfare Work Group formed to develop recommendations re: policy, practice, and data.



CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS: CHILD WELFARE-EARLY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

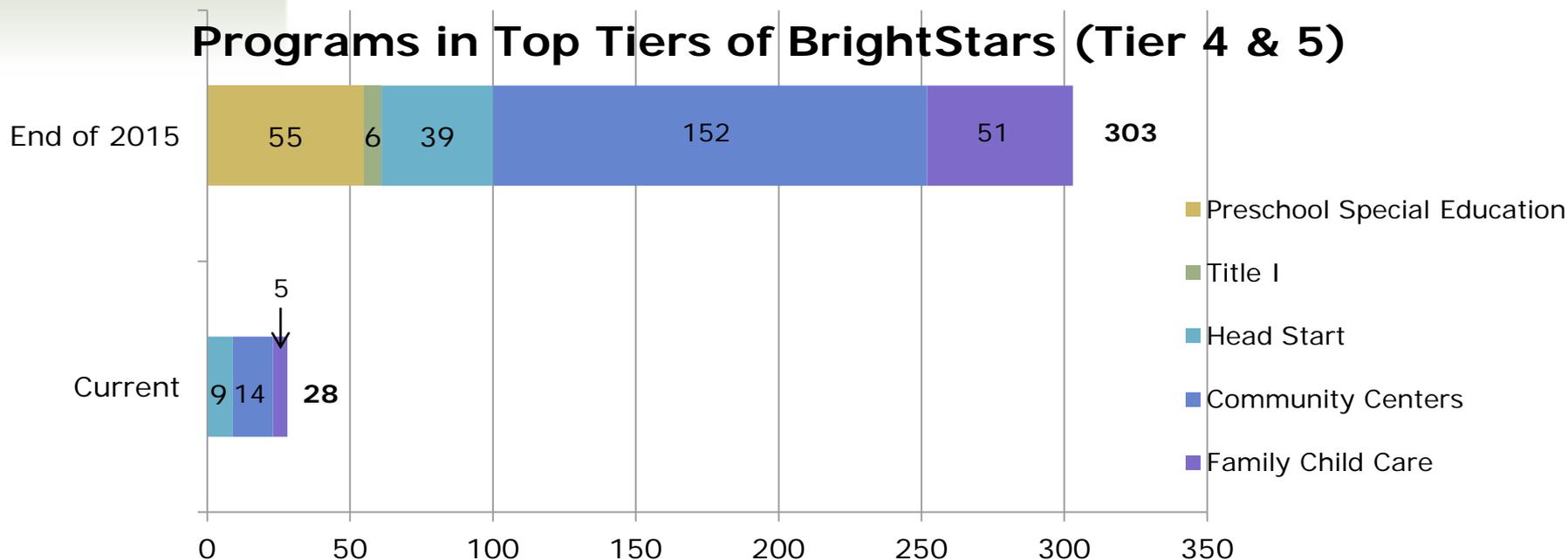
2012 DCYF Grant Application

- ❖ Link and coordinate an integrated statewide system of screening, assessment and collaborative service delivery across early care agencies
- ❖ Develop and implement a train-the-trainer model to establish a professional development program for early learning providers that is trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate within a positive behavioral supports framework.
- ❖ Implement recommendations from the Children's Friend grant designed to address system barriers.
- ❖ Establish a permanent governance structure through the Rhode Island Early Learning Council to include strategic oversight of the child welfare population's access to high-quality early learning programs.

**PROGRAM QUALITY
IMPROVEMENT: EARLY LEARNING
FINANCE AND QRIS**



PROGRAM QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PERFORMANCE TARGETS EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE



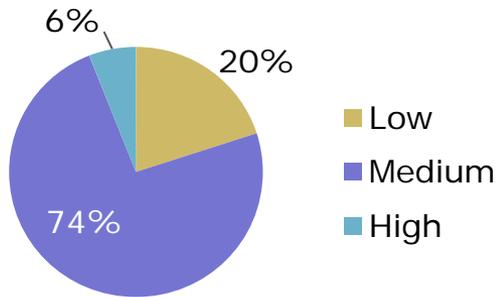
Our goal is to get 303 early learning programs in Rhode Island (30% of programs) to achieve Top Tiers of BrightStars by end of 2015:

- 100% of Preschool Special Education
- 100% of Title I
- 100% of center-based Head Start/Early Head Start
- 56% of centers that do not offer Head Start/Early Head Start
- 8% of family child care

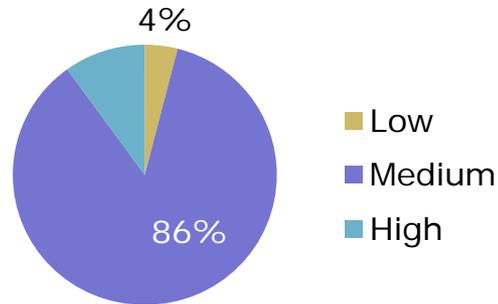


BASELINE QUALITY OF LICENSED EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS IN RHODE ISLAND

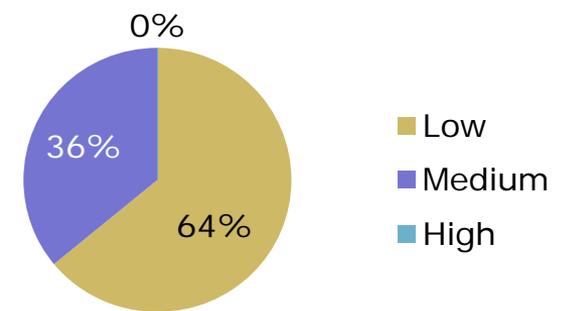
Infant-Toddler Quality



Preschool Quality



Family Child Care Quality



Source:

- *Rhode Island's 2009 Child Care Center & Preschool Quality Study*, FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- *Rhode Island's 2010 Family Child Care Quality Study*, FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



WHAT IS REQUIRED OF PROGRAMS IN TOP TIERS OF BRIGHTSTARS?

- ❖ Compliance with critical licensing standards
- ❖ Observed ratio and group size in compliance with licensing/BrightStars standards
- ❖ Average Environmental Rating Scale Scores above a 4.0 or NAEYC/NAFCC accreditation
- ❖ Preschool curriculum aligned with RIELS
- ❖ Evidence of child assessment system
- ❖ Evidence of family communication strategies
- ❖ Parent-teacher conferences 2x year
- ❖ All lead group teachers have an Individual Professional Development Plan
- ❖ All lead group teachers have a CDA or an Associate's degree AND 12 college credits in ECE or a related field
- ❖ 50% of preschool lead group teachers have a RIELS certificate
- ❖ Director has a BA AND 18 college credits in ECE or a related field
- ❖ Program Quality Improvement Plan



RESOURCES FOR PROGRAM QUALITY IMPROVEMENT THROUGH RTT-ELC

PROGRAM QUALITY IMPROVEMENT: \$21 million

- ❖ Focused technical assistance: \$4.6 million
- ❖ Program improvement grants/contracts: \$5.7 million
- ❖ Quality incentive payments: \$10.5 million

PLUS

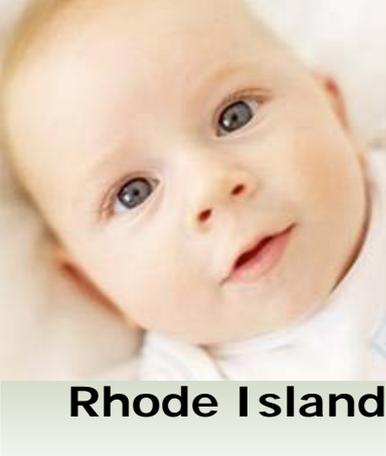
- ❖ Professional Development (including RIELS)
- ❖ Higher Education

EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



Plan Sources

- ❖ 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
- ❖ Rhode Island Early Learning and Professional Development System Plan



Plan Table of Contents

Rhode Island Early Learning Council Members

Rhode Island Early Learning Council Work Group Members

Letter from the Rhode Island Early Learning Council Co-Chairs

Role of the Early Learning Council

Development of the Strategic Plan

Rhode Island Early Learning Council Focus Areas

Strategies at a Glance

- A. Promoting Access to High-Quality Early Learning and Development Programs, particularly for Children with High Needs (PA)
- B. Ensuring High-Quality, Accountable Programs (HQP)
- C. Fostering a Great Early Childhood Workforce (GW)
- D. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children (OC)
- E. Ongoing Measurement of Outcomes and Progress (MOP)

Definitions



CURRENT STATUS: WHAT'S NEW AND WHAT'S NOT

	Goal	Targets	Strategies
Promoting Access to High Quality Programs	EXISTING	Need Further Review	Need Revision
Ensuring High-Quality, Accountable Programs	EXISTING	EXISTING	EXISTING
Fostering a Great Early Childhood Workforce	EXISTING	EXISTING	Pending Council Endorsement of PD Plan
Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children	EXISTING	Need Further Review	EXISTING
Ongoing Measurement of Outcomes and Progress	EXISTING	EXISTING	EXISTING



STRATEGIC PLAN – NEXT STEPS

- ❖ Access Sub-Committee will meet over the summer to review targets and revise Access strategies to support targets.
- ❖ Early Childhood & Kindergarten Assessment Core Project Team will meet to review Child Outcome targets over the summer.
- ❖ The plan will be presented for endorsement to the Council in September.

RHODE ISLAND'S EARLY LEARNING AND SCHOOL-AGE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM PLAN

**SUBMITTED TO THE RHODE ISLAND EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL
JUNE 2012**



PD WORK TEAM: A CROSS-SECTOR APPROACH

- ❖ The Work Team's **purpose** is to develop an executable plan for RI's child care professional development system.
- ❖ **Representatives** from:
 - ❖ Child Care (including family child care)
 - ❖ Head Start
 - ❖ Pre-K
 - ❖ Early Intervention
 - ❖ Preschool Special Education
 - ❖ School Age
- ❖ **Understand** how each sector's current PD is structured and key resources available; **coordinate** services.



PD WORK TEAM: AREAS OF PLANNING

- ❖ Contracted **Anne Mitchell**; TA from **Kim Keiser, NCCIC**.
- ❖ Key Resource: ***Workforce Designs**, A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development System* (NAEYC)
- ❖ **Policies that connect** and make possible effective implementation of a **state system** of professional development
 - ❖ Professional Standards
 - ❖ Career Pathways
 - ❖ Articulation
 - ❖ Advisory Structure
 - ❖ Data
 - ❖ Financing



PD WORK TEAM: GOAL STATEMENT

Rhode Island's professional development system supports the adults who educate and nurture infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families, and those who work with school-age children in out-of-school time programs. Through guidance and high quality opportunities for learning, it supports professionals to advance their skills and knowledge, to develop sustainable careers and ultimately improves child outcomes.

PUBLIC COMMENT



NEXT STEPS

- ❖ **Next ELCWG Meeting:** Thursday, August 16, 2012 9:30-11:00 a.m. (TBD)
- ❖ **Next ELC Meeting:** Wednesday, September 26, 2012 12:00-2:00 p.m. (TBD)

***Rhode Island Early Learning Council
and
Early Learning Council Work Group Meeting Calendar
2012-2013***

Date	Meeting	Time	Location
Thursday, August 16, 2012	Work Group	9:00-11:00 a.m.	TBD
<i>Wednesday, September 26, 2012</i>	<i>Early Learning Council</i>	<i>12:00-2:00 p.m.</i>	TBD
Thursday, October 18, 2012	Work Group	9:00-11:00 a.m.	TBD
<i>Wednesday, December 5, 2012</i>	<i>Early Learning Council</i>	<i>12:00-2:00 p.m.</i>	Save the Bay 100 Save the Bay Dr. Providence
Thursday, February 7, 2013	Work Group	9:00-11:00 a.m.	TBD
<i>Wednesday, March 20, 2013</i>	<i>Early Learning Council</i>	<i>12:00-2:00 p.m.</i>	Save the Bay 100 Save the Bay Dr. Providence
Tuesday, May 2, 2013	Work Group	9:00-11:00 a.m.	TBD
<i>Wednesday, June 5, 2013</i>	<i>Early Learning Council</i>	<i>12:00-2:00 p.m.</i>	Save the Bay 100 Save the Bay Dr. Providence

Rhode Island's Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rhode Island's professional development system supports the adults who educate and nurture infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families, and those who work with school-age children in out-of-school time programs. Through guidance and high quality opportunities for learning, it supports professionals to advance their skills and knowledge, to develop sustainable careers and ultimately improves child outcomes.

This plan for Rhode Island's Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System is the work of the Professional Development System Planning Work Team of Rhode Island's Early Learning Council. The Work Team's purpose was to develop an executable plan for RI's professional development system for the child care, early education and school-age workforce. The Work Team was guided by the expectations set forth in the scope of work for the RI Child Care Resource and Referral Center and informed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) *Workforce Designs, A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems* and the National Child Care Information Center's *Elements of a Professional Development System for Early Care and Education*.

Essential Policy Areas and System Elements

- ❶ Professional Standards
- ❷ Career Pathways
- ❸ Articulation
- ❹ Advisory Structure
- ❺ Data
- ❻ Financing



The plan is presented using the above policy areas and system elements as its framework. In each policy area, the Work Team considered the current status and unique opportunities in Rhode Island as well as the characteristics of an optimal system. This plan addresses the diverse workforce in every setting, first by examining the requirements and opportunities in each sector. The sectors addressed in this plan correspond to the major regulatory and/or public funding sources for early care and education and out-of-school time programs. The sectors considered are: child care (both centers and family child care homes), Early Head Start/Head Start, Early Intervention, early childhood special education, prekindergarten (state-funded) and school-age care.

Professional Standards: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Credentials, degree programs, and certifications are recognized across sectors.
- ★ Licensing regulations, state education and other agencies require professionals to meet state standards specific to child age/development and role.
- ★ Teacher licensure is available for early care and education professionals, recognizing the specific skills and knowledge early childhood educators need to be effective.
- ★ Leadership preparation and development programs include early childhood content.

Recommendations:

- Support the release of the draft Core Knowledge and Competency (CKC) documents for Center Teachers and Teacher Assistants, and develop CKCs and Career Lattices for Preschool Special Education, for Directors/Administrators, for Family Child Care providers and for providers of Professional Development.
- PD offerings should consist of a consistent set of proven, evidence-based and data-informed opportunities for all child care and school-age providers that build core competencies and incorporate adult learning strategies.
- Only PD that meets the above requirements should be included in program standards, such as licensing.

Career Pathways: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Career lattice or ladder guides professionals in their careers.
- ★ PD advising is accessible and well-used.
- ★ Continual improvement and/or individual PD planning is the norm.
- ★ Mentoring programs and initiatives support professionals.
- ★ Compensation and rewards accompany career advancement.

Recommendations:

- Develop one clear resource (website/calendar) for access to information – PD information, registration, CKCs, career lattice, career advising, etc.
- Incorporate strategies to support the transfer of skills and knowledge gained through PD to actual practice in programs (e.g. require teams of teachers to attend training together with program administrators).
- Consider alternate pathways to teacher certification.

Articulation: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Professional development advising and counseling available to all.
- ★ Articulation of career education into certificate programs, associate degree programs, and bachelor degree programs.
- ★ Program to program agreements and institution to institution agreements with common core content and numbering.
- ★ College and university early childhood teacher preparation programs accredited.

Recommendations:

- Continue to support articulation agreements and policies and procedures among higher education institutions that are formal, transparent, active and easily accessible to students.
- Work with organizations who offer PD to connect community-based PD to higher education.

Advisory Structure: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Communication and coordination policies or agreements, including common nomenclature, are in place across departments and sectors.
- ★ Task forces focusing on PD systems work with the state Early Learning Council.
- ★ The PD advisory structure includes representatives from the various early childhood education sectors, across agencies and quality initiatives.
- ★ Vision and mission statements and guiding principles demonstrate commitment to implement policy that promotes cross-sector integration; assures quality; supports diversity, inclusion and access; and achieves compensation parity.

Recommendations:

- Create an advisory structure that is sufficiently representative to benefit from multiple viewpoints, small enough to be efficient, and well-connected to authority so as to get the right decisions to the right levels for effective action.

Data: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ A unique identifier is assigned to each practitioner.
- ★ Data system has capacity to verify, record, update, and track individuals' demographic characteristics, experience in the field, educational attainment, qualifications and ongoing development.
- ★ Data is collected on the location and distribution of training offerings, PD providers, and higher education institutions.

- ★ Data on staff retention, compensation, and turnover rates (by reason, geographical area, role, and other factors) is collected and used.
- ★ Data is collected cross-sector, disaggregated appropriately, and analyzed and reported regularly to stakeholders, funders and the public.
- ★ Data is used to improve the PD system and track progress toward its goals.

Recommendations:

- Support the development of a state-wide comprehensive Early Learning Data System.
- Develop a Trainer and Workforce Registry.
- Use national research to identify effective PD models in areas of high need identified through data system, registry and workforce study.
- Develop systems to evaluate and assess learning outcomes for participants.

Finance: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Financial support is available for education and ongoing development, based on need.
- ★ Rewards are paid for educational attainment leading to compensation parity.
- ★ Financial support is available for programs/workplaces that facilitate professional development through resources for release time and substitute staff, teacher mentors and coaches, purchase of materials and equipment, and other supports.
- ★ Financing of the professional development system infrastructure is embedded in the state's larger early childhood system.
- ★ All potential funding sources, public and private, federal, state and local are explored to support the PD system. Co-funding partnerships are encouraged.

Recommendations:

- Work cross-sector to provide PD opportunities and to combine funding streams to more effectively match PD needs.
- Identify resources to support staff participation in comprehensive PD (e.g. scholarships, funds for substitutes to cover release time, stipends for staff to attend training on weekends or at night).
- Develop staff retention incentives to ensure a high-quality, stable workforce for early care and school-age care settings.

This report was prepared by Rhode Island AEYC/BrightStars through the RI Child Care Resource and Referral Center contract funded by the RI Department of Human Services and corporate partners. We thank the following partners: RI Early Learning Council and Professional Development Systems Planning Work Team, RI Department of Human Services, RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, RI Department of Children, Youth & Families, RI Department of Health, and Anne Mitchell at Early Childhood Policy Research. We also thank the many educators, administrators, policymakers, and advocates that contributed their time and ideas to this report.

Rhode Island Early Learning Council

June 4, 2012

Janice DeFrances, Director
Department of Children, Youth and Families
101 Friendship Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Director DeFrances:

The Rhode Island Early Learning Council is delighted to provide this letter of support for your application to the Administration for Children and Families Child Welfare-Early Education Partnerships to Expand Protective Factors for Children with Child Welfare Involvement (HHS-2012-ACF-ACYF-CO-0315).

The Rhode Island Early Learning Council facilitates the development and enhancement of high-quality systems of early childhood education and care, from birth to age 8, with the goal of improving school readiness and success in school. Rhode Island's Early Learning Council was formed in June 2010 according to the guidelines for State Early Care and Education Advisory Councils outlined in the federal 2007 Head Start Reauthorization Act.

The Rhode Island Early Learning Council is providing overarching leadership for the implementation of Rhode Island's *Race to the Top –Early Learning Challenge*. Our grant application clearly articulates that young children in foster care and young children who have been victims of child maltreatment are priority populations that require special attention to ensure that they have access to high-quality early learning opportunities. The Council is providing leadership and oversight to the grant implementation to ensure the development of cross-sector and cross-departmental systems and programs and to facilitate overarching policy decisions to help ensure the effective implementation of the grant.

In 2011, the Council enthusiastically supported the successful ACF Child Welfare-Early Education partnership grant application submitted by Children's Friend & Service to support planning and system building to improve young children in foster care's access to Rhode Island Head Start programs. Currently, the Council's Access Sub-Committee is working to develop performance targets and monitoring systems to track this population's participation in high-quality early learning programs (child care, Head Start, Early Head Start, Pre-K, Early Intervention, and preschool special education).

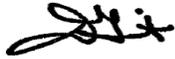
The Department of Children, Youth and Families' proposal has four primary goals: 1) to link and coordinate a statewide integrated system of screening, assessment and collaborative service delivery system across early care agencies; 2) to develop and implement a train-the-trainer model to establish a professional development program; 3) to implement recommendations from the Children's Friend grant designed to investigate system barriers and 4) to establish a permanent governance structure for the ongoing work within the Rhode Island Early Learning Council to include strategic oversight of the child welfare population's access to high-quality early learning programs and participation in developmental

screenings as well as the integration of the DCYF-developed professional development series into the State's Comprehensive Professional Development System for the early learning workforce.

We fully support the proposed Early Education-Child Welfare grant application. The DCYF is uniquely situated in this state to convene all key stakeholders and to lead collaborative efforts to improve our early education partnerships. We are optimistic about the proposed system enhancements and are equally eager to ensure that Rhode Island's young children involved with DCYF receive high quality early care and education services.

Thank you for submitting this proposal and leading this important initiative.

Sincerely,



Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner,
RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Co-Chair, RI Early Learning Council



Elizabeth Burke Bryant
Executive Director,
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
Co-Chair, RI Early Learning Council



Rhode Island's Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System Plan

Submitted to the Rhode Island Early Learning Council

June 2012

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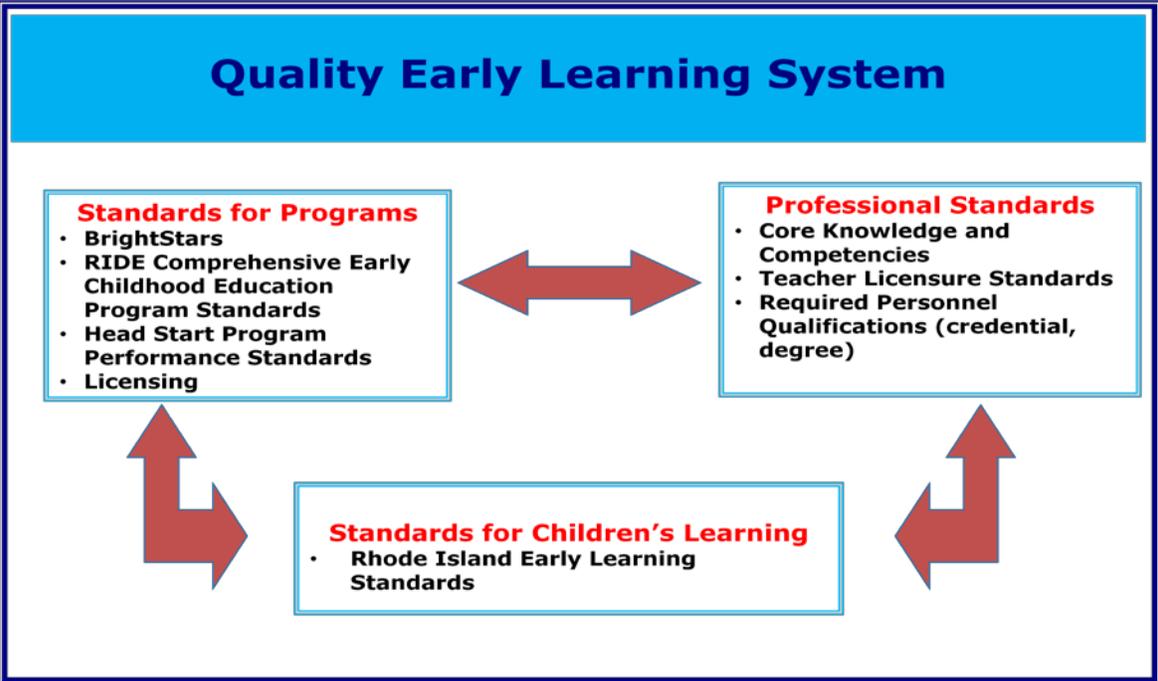
This report was prepared by Rhode Island AEYC/BrightStars through the RI Child Care Resource and Referral Center contract funded by the RI Department of Human Services and corporate partners. We thank the following partners: RI Early Learning Council and Professional Development Systems Planning Work Team, RI Department of Human Services, RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, RI Department of Children, Youth & Families, RI Department of Health, and Anne Mitchell at Early Childhood Policy Research. We also thank the many educators, administrators, policymakers, and advocates that contributed their time and ideas to this report.

Rhode Island's professional development system supports the adults who educate and nurture infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families, and those who work with school-age children in out-of-school time programs. Through guidance and high quality opportunities for learning, it supports professionals to advance their skills and knowledge, to develop sustainable careers and ultimately improves child outcomes.

Introduction

Professional development (PD) is defined in this document as the continuum of learning opportunities that prepares an adult to work with young children and their families in all settings and sectors and with school-age children in out-of-school settings. PD also includes the learning opportunities that enhance and improve one's skill, knowledge and competence as a professional over time. Thus, PD is both initial and ongoing; it is both training and education.

Professional standards are one of the three essential sets of standards that, together with standards for programs and standards for children's learning, are the foundation of a strong early learning system.



Rhode Island has established the RI Early Learning Standards (RIELS) for preschoolers and learning standards for children ages birth to three are scheduled to be developed. BrightStars is Rhode Island's primary framework for quality program standards¹; its criteria include RIELS and professional qualifications, modeling optimal interaction among standards. Professional, program, and children's learning standards are most effective when they are aligned, mutually supportive, and well-implemented. Offering quality improvement supports for practitioners that are grounded in standards is essential to produce improved learning and development outcomes for children.

This plan for Rhode Island's Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System is the work of the Professional Development System Planning Work Team² of Rhode Island's Early Learning Council (ELC). The Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children (RIAEYC)/BrightStars, through its work as the RI Child Care Resource and Referral Center managed the project. The Work Team was charged with supporting the work of the RI Early Learning Council and the RI Child Care Resource and Referral Center. The Work Team's purpose was to develop an executable plan for RI's professional development system for the child care, early education and school-age workforce.

The Work Team was guided by the expectations set forth in the scope of work for the Resource Center and informed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) *Workforce Designs, A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems* and the National Child Care Information Center's *Elements of a Professional Development System for Early Care and Education*. NAEYC's plan, created in 2008 by Sarah LeMoine, states that "an integrated early childhood professional development system is a comprehensive system of preparation and ongoing development and support for all early childhood education professionals working with and on behalf of young children."

The Resource Center expectations from their contracted deliverables are clear: "Create a sequenced system of evidence-based, culturally appropriate, and sequential professional development opportunities that are explicitly tied to recognized and emerging standards for Professionals, Programs, and/or Children...and that address the needs of the full range of diverse practitioners working with children of all ages, in every setting, and at every career level". It is the intention of the redesigned PD System not to only provide training, but to deliver

¹ The foundation for BrightStars is the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) child care licensing standards. BrightStars also includes elements of the RI Department of Education (RIDE) Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Program Standards, Head Start Program Performance Standards and national accreditation.

² For a list Work Team members, see the Appendix.

support for continuous improvement for both professionals and programs that is evidence-based and guided by state and national standards; in short, a collaborative and comprehensive professional development system.

Delivering effective professional development that improves child outcomes requires a well-organized system that uses resources efficiently in support of all who work with Rhode Island's young children. The features of effective professional development that are associated with positive impact (Fixsen, D. L., & Blase, K. A., 2009; Joyce and Showers, 2002) are:

- Content and sequence
- Intensity and duration
- Follow-up support and technical assistance from a high-quality consultant
- Competence demonstrated in the classroom or program
- Program leadership and supervision

Essential Policy Areas and System Elements

Guidance and information from *Workforce Designs* and *Elements* are integrated and summarized below:

① Professional Standards

- Required and preferred qualifications, initial preparation and continuing development in each/all sectors of the profession are specified.
- Core knowledge base and/or core competencies underlie all standards in all sectors.

② Career Pathways

- Accessible routes for continuous progress of professionals, usually illustrated by a career lattice, show connections among and requirements for various roles in all settings.
- Professional development advising, individual professional development plans.
- Workforce registry contains data on all practitioners for system use and for each practitioner to track own progress.

③ Articulation

- Transfer of professional development credentials, courses, credits, degrees, and student performance-based competencies from one program or institution to another without loss of credit, i.e., via articulation agreements at the program, institution, and/or statewide levels.

④ *Advisory Structure*

- Coordinated oversight, at the state level, with authority itself or direct link to authority in state governance.

⑤ *Data*

- Data for accountability, quality assurance, system impact and system improvement.

⑥ *Financing*

- For professionals to access preparation and continuing education, e.g., scholarships.
- For workplaces to facilitate on-the-job preparation and continuing professional development and support compensation parity.
- For the infrastructure of the system to ensure its stability, quality and effectiveness.

To support the above framework, *Workforce Designs* offers four key principles for policymaking to build an integrated professional development system and guide its outcomes. These principles are:

- *Integration*: The system works across sectors (e.g. child care, Head Start and Pre-K), unifies the profession, and aligns with the program standards, (e.g., BrightStars and child learning standards, i.e., RIELS).
- *Quality assurance*: Every element of the system meets high standards and improves effectiveness of the system.
- *Diversity, inclusion, and access*: Policy and practice support inclusion and access among diverse groups, e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, language, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status; and among the sectors, e.g., homes, schools, centers.
- *Compensation parity*: Progress is demonstrated toward achieving parity among equivalently qualified practitioners in different sectors.

Applying these four principles as system measures can help determine the effectiveness of policies and system elements. For example, are the professional standards constructed and communicated in a manner to unify the profession? Is the content of the professional standards in harmony with the RI Early Learning Standards and with program quality standards? Do periodic workforce data reports show increasing parity in compensation among sectors such as child care, Head Start and state-funded pre-K?

The Professional Development System plan is presented using the above policy areas and elements as its framework. In each policy area, the Work Team considered the current status and unique opportunities in Rhode Island as well as the characteristics of an optimal system.

This plan addresses the diverse workforce in every setting, first by examining the requirements and opportunities in each sector. The sectors addressed in this plan correspond to the major regulatory and/or public funding sources for early care and education and out-of-school time programs. The sectors considered are: child care (both centers and family child care homes), Early Head Start/Head Start, Early Intervention, early childhood special education, prekindergarten (state-funded) and school-age care. Each policy area is discussed in turn.

Characteristics of an Optimal Professional Development System

This section presents the elements of an effective early learning and school-age professional development system and discusses the current status of these elements in Rhode Island.

Professional Standards: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Credentials, degree programs, and certifications are recognized across sectors.
- ★ Licensing regulations, state education and other agencies require professionals to meet state standards specific to child age/development and role.
- ★ Teacher licensure is available for early care and education professionals, recognizing the specific skills and knowledge early childhood educators need to be effective.
- ★ Leadership preparation and development programs include early childhood content.

Professional Standards in Rhode Island

Required qualifications. The range of acceptable qualifications is wide and variable, as the following examples illustrate:

- A high school diploma and three years of supervised teaching qualifies an adult to be a teacher assistant in a licensed child care center (a teacher assistant may be in charge of a group of children as the lead classroom teacher).
- Family child care providers licensed after 2007 must have a high school diploma or equivalency and completion of a pre-service orientation course.
- Qualified professionals in Early Intervention must have at least a Master's Degree relevant to early intervention, at least four 3-credit courses relevant to early intervention, and at least one year of experience working in the early intervention field or with infants and toddlers with special needs.
- Preschool special education teachers must have a Special Educator Early Childhood Teaching Certificate (which requires a minimum of a bachelor's degree). If the classroom also includes typically developing children, the classroom must also have a teacher with

a general Early Childhood Teaching Certificate (may be two teachers or one who holds both certificates).

- Head Start teacher qualification requirements have been increasing over time; the current minimum is an associate's degree in early childhood and soon will be a bachelor's degree.
- A teacher in a state-funded Pre-K program must have a bachelor's degree and an Early Childhood Teaching Certificate.

Core knowledge and competencies. The status of RI's core knowledge and competencies (CKCs) can be described as "in progress". Much work has been done over many years to develop and update core competencies. A comprehensive approach addressing settings for children from birth to age sixteen was undertaken during the last decade through a contract managed by the RI Department of Human Services. Reports were written but recommendations were not implemented due to the detail in the report and a change in contracting. Rhode Island decided to revisit the draft competencies and develop three sets of CKCs for each sector of the child care field: center-based staff, family child care providers and school-age professionals. The School-Age CKCs were finalized and released in 2009. Between 2009 and 2011, the Center Teacher and Teacher Assistant CKCs were drafted by a work group convened by the RI Department of Education using funds provided by the RI Department of Human Services. CKCs for family child care providers, special educators, program administrators, and professional development providers are planned to be developed. Core knowledge and competencies already exist for Early Intervention, although dated, and CKCs were recently developed for the Infant/Toddler Consulting Professional through the RI Department of Health's Child Care Support Network. A summary of each of the existing CKCs is included in the Appendix.

Career Pathways: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Career lattice or ladder guides professionals in their careers.
- ★ PD advising is accessible and well-used.
- ★ Continual improvement and/or individual PD planning is the norm.
- ★ Mentoring programs and initiatives support professionals.
- ★ Compensation and rewards accompany career advancement.

Career Pathways in Rhode Island

Access. Practitioners in Rhode Island can turn to many sources for professional development; for details, see the report *An Overview of Existing Professional Development Opportunities for Early-Care Educators in Rhode Island* compiled by Ready to Learn Providence. PD opportunities are offered by institutions of higher education, state agencies, community organizations, professional associations and in the workplace. Each of the state's public colleges (University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College and Community College of Rhode Island) offer early childhood courses and degrees.

Another aspect of access is information. While colleges typically do not alter their degree program offerings frequently, other sources of PD often do. Each sector may have its own listing of training and other PD opportunities. Having a comprehensive, up-to-date, easily accessible calendar of all PD offerings in the state and across sectors is one way to support practitioners' access. RIAEYC/BrightStars has developed an online training calendar, integrating information from other agencies. The concept of a central calendar is new; a systematic approach to reviewing content and updating it is being developed. To increase its usefulness to both professionals seeking PD and those who offer PD, the calendar itself must be widely promoted.

Career advising. Career advice can be provided in the workplace as part of the staff supervision process, through membership in a professional association, within higher education and in other ways. An individual professional development plan (IPDP) is a concrete example of a workplace policy that supports professional development and career advancement. Currently IPDPs are included in the standards and criteria of BrightStars and the RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Program; IPDPs are also used in Head Start programs. BrightStars staff currently provide practitioners and programs with PD advising that relates to their program quality improvement plans in support of an increased star rating.

Career lattice and career pathways. A comprehensive career lattice showing the connections among professional roles and work settings has not been developed in Rhode Island. Several career lattices exist in Rhode Island, including drafts for center teachers and teacher assistants and a school-age professional level assessment. Rhode Island's PD System will use these lattices and others as they are developed to advise child care providers in their careers.

Articulation: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Professional development advising and counseling available to all.
- ★ Articulation of career education into certificate programs, associate degree programs, and bachelor degree programs.
- ★ Program to program agreements and institution to institution agreements with common core content and numbering.
- ★ College and university early childhood teacher preparation programs accredited.

Articulation in Rhode Island

Ready to Learn Providence (R2LP) operates the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Rhode Island scholarship program and has formal interaction with institutions of higher education. R2LP is represented on both the RI Early Learning Council's PD Work Team and Higher Education Work Team. Several meetings were held in 2011-2012 with representation from Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI), Rhode Island College (RIC), and the University of Rhode Island (URI); discussion centered on several higher education issues, including articulation.

The current status of articulation between the RI Early Childhood Education and Training Project at CCRI (which offers the credit-bearing Early Childhood Specialist program) and bachelor degree programs at URI is somewhat favorable. Under certain conditions, all credits transfer course by course (a 60:60 transfer) whereby the CCRI graduate enters URI as a junior. This is possible only when a student entering CCRI declares their intent to transfer during their first semester and receives accurate advising at CCRI. At present URI is revising degree requirements which may result in the loss of transferability of 6 credits (a 60:54 credit transfer).

The status of articulation between CCRI and RIC is less favorable; generally fewer than 30 credits are transferable. RIC is developing a new content major for Early Childhood Education within its education department, which may result in more transferability. The early childhood teacher preparation programs at both URI and RIC are nationally accredited. The degree program at CCRI is not currently accredited, but the college will pursue NAEYC Early Childhood Associate Degree Accreditation in the near future.

Other articulation issues are the transferability of community-based training credits into higher education, the possibility of program to program articulation (instead of course by course), the time-limit on the value of credits (currently some credits expire after 10 years), and the desire for a credit-bearing school-age certificate program.

Advisory Structure: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Communication and coordination policies or agreements, including common nomenclature, are in place across departments and sectors.
- ★ Task forces focusing on PD systems work with the state Early Learning Council.
- ★ The PD advisory structure includes representatives from the various early childhood education sectors, across agencies and quality initiatives.
- ★ Vision and mission statements and guiding principles demonstrate commitment to implement policy that promotes cross-sector integration; assures quality; supports diversity, inclusion and access; and achieves compensation parity.

Advisory Structure in Rhode Island

Rhode Island's Early Learning Council (ELC) is the state governance structure currently charged with oversight, planning and direction for early learning. The ELC has three levels: the Council whose members are appointed by the Governor; the Council Work Group established by the Council to help the ELC accomplish its goals; and eight work teams designed to address specific elements of the ELC's charge and goals. As of April 2012, the work teams were re-structured as Council Subcommittees and were aligned with the state's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge projects. For major policy issues, such as approval of this plan for RI's PD System, the ultimate decision-making body is the Council since it is composed of the heads of state agencies and other key policymakers and reports to the Governor.

The PD Work Team has worked well and efficiently to develop this plan in the span of about six months. The members gave thoughtful consideration to the efficient deployment of Rhode Island's early childhood expertise and the need to represent a range of sectors and constituencies for an effective advisory structure. Representation includes practitioner sectors, e.g., family child care, centers, Head Start, Early Intervention, and after school programs; and PD delivery sectors, e.g. higher education, professional associations, community-based organizations with PD as a primary focus, as well as major funders of PD such as state agencies.

The PD System will need ongoing oversight. The goals for a PD advisory structure are that it be sufficiently representative to benefit from multiple viewpoints, small enough to be efficient, and well-connected to authority so as to get the right decisions to the right levels for effective action. Further, the advisory body needs to be trustworthy, meaning professionals believe that it is making correct decisions; this requires transparency and clear communication.

Data: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ A unique identifier is assigned to each practitioner.
- ★ Data system has capacity to verify, record, update, and track individuals' demographic characteristics, experience in the field, educational attainment, qualifications and ongoing development.
- ★ Data is collected on the location and distribution of training offerings, PD providers, and higher education institutions.
- ★ Data on staff retention, compensation, and turnover rates (by reason, geographical area, role, and other factors) is collected and used.
- ★ Data is collected cross-sector, disaggregated appropriately, and analyzed and reported regularly to stakeholders, funders and the public.
- ★ Data is used to improve the PD system and track progress toward its goals.

Data in Rhode Island

Interoperable data systems. The ELC established the Early Learning Data System Work Team which has focused primarily on child and program data. The ELC's Data System Work Team has significant member overlap with the PD System Work Team. The Data System Team has been actively meeting and has arrived at a set of priorities and action steps presented to the ELC in June 2011 (Early Learning Data System Recommendations, Early Learning Council, June 2011). Their report offers policy questions to guide design of RI's data system including several related to program quality and the workforce:

- What percentage/how many of the early childhood workforce is qualified, by meeting specific established standards, to prepare children to succeed at school entry (e.g. core competencies, career lattice education levels)?
- What are workforce characteristics and patterns (turnover, compensation, diversity, education, etc.)?
- What percentage/how many early care and education programs are high-quality?
- Does program quality improve over time?

The PD System Work Team offers an additional question: What percent/how many PD specialists (consultants, trainers) are qualified to deliver effective PD/technical assistance, e.g., have credentials related to content and to adult learning?

Through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, Rhode Island will develop and build an early learning data system. In terms of workforce data, the ELC recommends that the state

establish a central storage place for data on Rhode Island’s early learning workforce. This work should build on data collected and systems in place at DCYF, BrightStars, RIDE, and R2LP (T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood RI) and consider using licensing data as the foundation by requiring programs applying for and renewing a DCYF license to enter/update workforce data in a registry where they can also track annual professional development.

The PD System Work Team believes that child care programs are also a customer for RI’s data system(s) and would benefit if such systems can streamline/automate documentation of compliance with program standards that have practitioner elements, e.g., Head Start, Pre-K, national accreditation and BrightStars. Practitioners are best positioned to provide the data that are then connected (via a unique program identifier) to the program in which they work, thus facilitating the data system to create a staff profile by workplace.

Workforce registry: Recognizing that workforce data is essential to a well-functioning PD System, DHS included in the Resource Center contract a deliverable related to a registry for trainers, or more broadly, professional development specialists/consultants for the purposes of quality assurance. Currently, 31 other states do have early childhood/school-age workforce registries of some kind and several other states are in the design phase.³ The National Registry Alliance (TNRA) is a membership organization of these state registries and is a repository of useful information on registry design, construction and best practices.⁴ TNRA does offer guidance on how to build registries and may be able to offer some assistance to Rhode Island. The federal Offices of Child Care and Head Start are jointly funding a new National Technical Assistance Center on Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives, which may also be able to help.

Through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge, a new statewide early learning data system will be created to include key data on the workforce and will incorporate key data elements recommended by TRNA. The PD System Work Team believes the parameters of RI’s registry design should be comprehensive, matching the full range of roles and levels of the CKCs.

To support the use of IPDPs, the registry needs to be accessible to individuals to set up and check their own records, and use the data to plan their own PD pathway. A tangible benefit of a registry is having a central location and dedicated expertise in transcript review using standard

³ <http://www.registryalliance.org/about-the-alliance/registry-map>

⁴ See *State of Early Childhood and School-Age Workforce Registries 2009* at <http://www.registryalliance.org/resources-briefs/alliance-resources>

protocols. This can support and align with the state's regulatory functions and any other system that needs practitioner data. One concern with a voluntary registry is having sufficient provider participation to report confidently on the state's early childhood/school-age workforce. Registry participation can be a condition of public funding, e.g., Pre-K, BrightStars, and/or can be a licensing requirement. Once the registry has been piloted, consideration can begin of how and whether to require participation.

The registry needs to be able to export data in the form of staff profiles of qualification levels and the status of continuing education by workplace for use by licensors (the state regulatory function), BrightStars, RIDE, a program's application for national accreditation, and perhaps Head Start grantees reporting requirements. Conversely, agencies that hold data on practitioners, e.g., RIDE (teacher licenses) or DHS (EI staff credentials), will need to import data to the registry. These relationships need to be formal, clear and regularly reviewed to ensure efficiency and appropriate levels of confidentiality. Such interagency agreements will benefit from the support of the ELC.

Data on professional development capacity: Essentially the common calendar, augmented by comprehensive information on credential, certificate and degree programs in higher education, is the starting point for a database of training/PD offerings. Coupled with information on assessment of PD needs, the capacity and directions for expansion can be planned.

Data on professional development needs: While aggregated data on PD needs is a goal for the future, currently each sector has identified needs for PD for its workforce based on practitioner input, program monitoring and professional judgment of administrators and others involved in delivering PD. For example, analysis of BrightStars data indicates the need for professional development on global quality improvement (structural and process) targeted to centers serving infants/toddlers and for family child care providers, especially those who speak Spanish as a primary language. It may be beneficial to the state to use national research to identify effective PD models in areas of high need.

Looking across the sectors of early childhood special education, early intervention and child care in Rhode Island, there are several areas of common need, which include the following:

- child development (appropriate expectations)
- behavior management/discipline (positive guidance and prevention of negative behaviors)
- differentiated teaching and learning

- developmentally appropriate and effective practice, activities and curriculum, including appropriate materials and equipment
- child assessment (in general), using assessment to inform practice, and communicating assessment information to families
- program and classroom assessment tools, e.g., the Environment Rating Scales, the Classroom Assessment Scoring System

Finance: Characteristics of Optimal System

- ★ Financial support is available for early childhood professionals to obtain education and ongoing development, based on need.
- ★ Explicit rewards are paid for attainment of additional education and development leading to compensation parity.
- ★ Financial support is available for programs/workplaces that facilitate professional development through resources for release time and substitute staff, teacher mentors and coaches, purchase of materials and equipment, and other supports.
- ★ Financing of the professional development system infrastructure is linked and/or embedded in the state's larger early childhood system. Infrastructure pieces that require financing may include the advisory body, data systems, support to higher education institutions and training systems and quality assurance processes.
- ★ All potential funding sources, public and private, federal, state and local are explored to support the PD system. Co-funding partnerships are encouraged.

Finance in Rhode Island

Currently the majority of the funding for PD in Rhode Island is federal, coming from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) and the Head Start/Early Head Start program as well as the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs. With the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge award in 2012, funding for PD will be dramatically expanded. The RI Department of Human Services, with federal CCDF quality set-aside funding, supports the Community College of Rhode Island's Early Childhood Education and Training Project, the Resource Center, BrightStars, LISC Rhode Island's Child Care Facilities Fund, the RI Early Learning Standards project through the RI Department of Education and the Child Care Support Network, which is jointly funded by the RI Department of Health with federal Maternal and Child Health funds. The ELC has allocated some of its federal funds to support the launch of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood RI, devoting \$150,000 to the program over three years.

The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that Part C (for 0-3 year olds) and Part B, Section 619 (for 3-5 year olds) each have a comprehensive system of personnel development that is consistent with the other. Professional development designed to address the provision of special education may be opened to others. Federal special education (IDEA Part B, Section 619) funds managed by RIDE provide training for early childhood preschool special educators and support staff and consultants at RIDE to design and coordinate this PD. PD for Early Intervention professionals is supported by IDEA Part C via a contract with Rhode Island College through the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities. The focus is largely on providing technical assistance to provider agencies in meeting the federal and state requirements of IDEA as well as on providing support to the clinical supervisors within the programs to be able to provide effective and reflective supervision.

Training for Head Start staff is supported by federal Head Start and Early Head Start funds awarded to each grantee (these are referred to as PA 20 and PA 26 funds, respectively). Grantees may choose to invite staff from other types of programs to their training events. Additional federal funds support the Rhode Island State Head Start Training and Technical Assistance contract that is currently awarded to Education Development Center, Inc. Training opportunities can be offered to the larger early childhood community; onsite TA is limited to Head Start programs and their contracted child care partners.

Some synergy among federal funding is possible. Rhode Island is creatively and efficiently using funds cross-sector in support of PD. One example is the Child Care Support Network (CCSN), which works to improve child care programs via onsite consultation with staff (job-embedded PD). CCSN is co-funded by the RI Department of Health with federal Maternal and Child Health funds and the RI Department of Human Services with federal CCDF quality set-aside funds. Rhode Island could do more cooperative funding of PD, e.g., connecting Early Intervention and preschool special education funding, jointly funding PD for child care centers/family child care with Head Start grantees. Indeed, this kind of cooperation among state agencies is welcomed by federal agencies, who are also interested in synergy and efficiency. While flexibility and cost-sharing is possible, there are certain restrictions on the use of federal funds for PD, as noted above.

A moderate amount of private philanthropic funds support PD and other aspects of system development in RI. The United Way of Rhode Island, in addition to program grants to individual early childhood programs, has made system grants to support program quality improvement,

including BrightStars. The Rhode Island Foundation has played a critical role in providing funding to implement T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood RI.

Rhode Island is similar to nearly all states: the most common funding sources for PD are CCDF, IDEA Part C and B, and Head Start. Other federal funding sources such as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and several titles within Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) might be used for PD, but each is quite restrictive in terms of target population. A few states have used TANF Title IV-B and IV-E (child protection funds) to train providers who serve abused and neglected children. Maternal and Child Health funding, especially the new home visiting initiatives under the federal Health Care Act, may be an option for supporting training to child care providers on developmental screening and referral.

A comprehensive PD system cannot be supported solely with federal funding. A few states have appropriated state general revenue funds to PD initiatives and supports as well as to the system of higher education in the state (Alaska is one example). A few states have dedicated funding sources based on tobacco taxes which support broad early childhood initiatives that include funding for PD; Arizona and California are examples.

As in Rhode Island, state and local United Way organizations along with private foundations and other philanthropy provide support for PD. North Carolina and Vermont are examples of states where there has been consistent support for professional development initiatives from the private sector. Another source of support, though very modest, is fees charged to participants in otherwise publicly-funded training. Many states charge a nominal fee (\$5-\$25) for non-credit bearing PD.

Ultimately, Rhode Island can bring state agency and other funders together to explore how available funds can be used even more effectively to match PD needs. For example, can special education PD funds pay for RIELS training for special educators, using CCDF funding for other groups? Can Head Start funds be creatively combined to reach more practitioners? Are there as yet untapped federal funds for PD, such as Title I or the new home visiting initiative? What is a reasonable investment share for the state in support of a comprehensive PD system?

Moving Ahead

The RI Child Care Resource and Referral Center currently offers high quality and effective professional development of different delivery methods (e.g. credit-bearing courses; series-based training; on-site technical assistance, mentoring and coaching; communities of practice; and peer networks) that are linked to competencies and standards, that are based on identified need, and are informed by provider professional development plans. The Resource Center communicates opportunities to providers in various ways including the BrightStars website, a print calendar, email and mailings. Professional development is available in various locations throughout the state and in the primary language of the participant.

As key elements of this plan are developed (e.g. CKCs, trainer and workforce registry, data system), PD content will continue to embed program, professional, and learning standards and be data-driven and responsive to the needs of the field.

The draft version of *Rhode Island's Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System Plan* was integrated almost completely into Rhode Island's successful Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant application. The Professional Development Systems Work Team is pleased to present this plan and the following recommendations to the Rhode Island Early Learning Council and the early care and education community and looks forward to collaborative work on Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge and other state quality initiatives.

Contact Information

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Recommendations

Professional Standards

- Support the release of the draft Core Knowledge and Competency documents for Center Teachers and Teacher Assistants, and develop CKCs and Career Lattices for Preschool Special Education, for Directors/Administrators, for Family Child Care providers and for providers of Professional Development.
- PD offerings should consist of a consistent set of proven, evidence-based and data-informed opportunities for all child care and school-age providers that build core competencies and incorporate adult learning strategies.
- Only PD that meets the above requirements should be included in program standards, such as licensing.

Career Pathways

- Develop one clear resource (website/calendar) for access to information – PD information, registration, CKCs, career lattice, career advising, etc.
- Incorporate strategies to support the transfer of skills and knowledge gained through PD to actual practice in programs (e.g. require teams of teachers to attend training together with program administrators).
- Consider alternate pathways to teacher certification.

Articulation

- Continue to support articulation agreements and policies and procedures among higher education institutions that are formal, transparent, active and easily accessible to students.
- Work with organizations who offer PD to connect community-based PD to higher education.

Advisory Structure

- Create an advisory structure that is sufficiently representative to benefit from multiple viewpoints, small enough to be efficient, and well-connected to authority so as to get the right decisions to the right levels for effective action.

Data

- Support the development of a state-wide comprehensive Early Learning Data System.
- Develop a Trainer and Workforce Registry.
- Use national research to identify effective PD models in areas of high need identified through data system, registry and workforce study.
- Develop systems to evaluate and assess learning outcomes for participants.

Financing

- Work cross-sector to provide PD opportunities and to combine funding streams to more effectively match PD needs.
- Identify resources to support staff participation in comprehensive PD (e.g. scholarships, funds for substitutes to cover staff release time, stipends for staff to attend training on weekends or at night).
- Develop staff retention incentives to ensure a high-quality, stable workforce for early care and school-age care settings.

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Appendix I

Rhode Island Early Learning Council Professional Development Systems Planning Work Team

Karen Beese, RI Department of Human Services (team lead)

Tammy Camillo, RIAEYC/BrightStars (team lead)

Brenda Almeida, RI Department of Children, Youth & Families

Leanne Barrett, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

Blythe Berger, RI Department of Health

Angela Brightman, South County Community Action Head Start

Colleen Dorian, Family Child Care Homes of Rhode Island

Brenda DuHamel, RI Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Early Intervention

Leslie Gell, Ready to Learn Providence

Lisa Hildebrand, RIAEYC/BrightStars

Kim Keiser, National Child Care Information Center

Claudia Kelley, Woonsocket Head Start & Child Development Association

Ellen Kiron, RI Department of Health

Mindy Mertz, Providence Public Schools

Joseph Morra, Rhode Island After School Plus Alliance

Michele Palermo, RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Carol Patnaude, Community College of Rhode Island

Larry Pucciarelli, RI Department of Human Services, Head Start Collaboration Office

Sue Washburn, Education Development Center/RI Training and Technical Assistance Center

Anne Mitchell, Early Childhood Policy Research (facilitator)

Appendix II

Summary of Existing Core Knowledge and Competencies across Sectors

Domain/ Category	1. EARLY INTERVENTION	2. AFTERSCHOOL/ YOUTH DEVELOPMENT	3. CENTER-BASED TEACHERS; TEACHER ASSISTANTS	4. THE INFANT/TODDLER CONSULTING PROFESSIONAL
FAMILIES	Family Owned IFSPs and Intervention	Family, School and Community Relationships	Family, Community & Relationships	Relationship-Based Practice
HEALTH AND SAFETY		Health, Safety and Wellness	Health, Safety & Wellness	Systems, Sectors, and Settings for Infant and Toddlers
SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT		Creating the Learning Environment		
EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT	Evaluation and Assessment		Observation and Assessment	Infant/Toddler Developmental Screening & Assessment
CROSS-SECTOR	Service Coordination			
DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC		Youth Development, Curriculum & Program Design	Curriculum	
INDIVIDUALIZATION	Service Delivery Domains		Child Development & Learning	Infant/Toddler Curriculum and Individualization
MANAGEMENT		Administrator Competencies		
PROFESSIONALISM		Professional Growth and Leadership	Professionalism	The Consulting Professional

1. Rhode Island Early Intervention Competencies
2. Rhode Island Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals, <http://afterschoolri.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/RI-ASYD-Core-Competencies-document-FINAL.pdf>
3. Core Competencies for Rhode Island Early Childhood Teachers – DRAFT, http://www.ride.ri.gov/OSCAS/earlychild/pdf/DRAFT_Rhode_Island_Core_Competencies_7_15_11.pdf
4. A Guide to Effective Consultation with Settings Serving Infants, Toddlers, and their Families: Core Knowledge, Competencies, and Dispositions, http://transition.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2011_effective_consultation.pdf

***Rhode Island Early Learning Council and
Early Learning Council Work Group
Meeting Summary***

Wednesday, June 13, 2012 11:30-2:00 p.m.
Save the Bay

Council Members In Attendance: Co-chair, Deborah Gist, Co-chair, Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Jim Berson, Tammy Camillo, Susan Dickstein, Maryann Finamore-Allmark, Leslie Gell, Kristen Greene, Pamela High, Cindy Larson, Khadija Lewis Khan, Charlotte Moretti, Larry Pucciarelli, and Susan Warford.

Council Work Group Members in Attendance: Co-chair, Leanne Barrett, Co-chair, Michele Palermo and Co-chair, Larry Pucciarelli, Chris Amirault, Karen Beese, Blythe Berger, Tammy Camillo, Diane Cook, Terese Curtin, Susan Dickstein, Rhonda Farrell, Maryann Finamore Allmark, Ruth Gallucci, Leslie Gell, Kristen Greene, Jerry Hatfield, Cindy Larson, Khadija Lewis Khan, Mindy Mertz, Joseph Morra, Susan Orban, Leslie Sevey, and Susan Warford.

Other Participants: Carol Patnaude, Maureen Manion, Lisa Hildebrand, Clark Greene, Kimberly Ash, Lori Cruise, Mike Carbone, Sophia Cohen, Janet Anderson, Sara Mickelson, Sue Libutti, Linda Dickinson, Rachel Flum, Christine Chiacu-Forsythe, Lynn DeMerchant and Laura Zeisler.

Facilitator: Kristin Lehoullier

Special Guest Speaker: Anne Mitchell, Alliance for Early Childhood Finance

Welcome/Meeting Overview

The Rhode Island Early Learning Council and Early Learning Council Work Group Meeting was called to order at 11:40 a.m. by Co-chairs Deborah Gist and Elizabeth Burke Bryant. Deborah and Elizabeth reviewed the agenda and gave a short legislative update.

Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Implementation Update

Deborah gave an update on the Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge Implementation:

- All Departments are in the process of conducting interviews.
- DOA granted sole source approval for TEACH.
- We received our Scope of Work (SOW) feedback from the federal government in the middle of May. We need to submit a response by June 15th. Overall, we were pleased that they felt that the goals and steps we had articulated made sense. We were just asked to add more detail to our timelines and provide some additional budget justification – both of which will help us move the scope of work into project plan.
- Diane Cook spoke on behalf of Director Powell to share that DHS is interviewing for the Child Care Administrator position and they have selected an administrative assistant and extended a job offer to a candidate for the program and services officer role. The IT specialist interviews will be starting soon.

- Ana Novais spoke on behalf of Director Fine to share that DOH is also in the process of interviewing for their positions.

Elizabeth provided an update on the Council Sub-Committees and the RTT-ELC Communications Strategy:

- The Council is charged with providing robust feedback from the communities to the RTT-ELC core project teams. To do this effectively, the Council work groups have been re-configured into Sub-Committees (see chart for additional detail). Some of these Sub-Committees have started meeting (Early Learning and Development Standards, Program Standards Alignment and Revision, Program Quality Improvement) and others will start soon. All of the meetings will be public and will be posted on the Secretary of State's website and on the www.earlylearningri.org website.
- Two letters about RTT-ELC will be going out to the field as follows:
 - June 1, 2012 –A letter will be sent from RIDE on behalf of all the state agencies to all licensed early childhood programs, EI providers, and contacts in public schools providing an overview of RTT-ELC.
 - July 1, 2012 – A letter will be sent from DCYF and DHS to all licensed providers to explain goal of maximizing participation in BrightStars and providing an outline of quality improvement resources.
- There will be open forums in the fall to help keep people informed and to gather input from the community.

Susan Dickstein, co-chair of the Early Learning and Development Sub-Committee, gave an update on the Committee's work to date:

- The first meeting was held on June 1st.
- The committee members talked about the charge for the committee and oriented the consultant who was hired to help develop the early learning standards to Rhode Island's values, vision, and mission for the early learning standards.
- Before the next meeting he will look at early learning standards across the country, identify best practices and compile them together in a "point of departure" document that will be a starting point for the development efforts. At the next meeting on July 27th, the Sub-Committee will look at this document as a starting point from which to start revising/drafting new standards for Rhode Island.

The following questions and comments were raised:

- How will these standards apply to children who are not in child care settings?
- The pediatric community could be very helpful in getting the word out that there are resources and trainings available for parents on the early learning standards.

Michele explained that the Early Learning and Development Standards are guidelines for what children should know and be able to do at each age and stage. In 2003, when Rhode Island first developed standards for children ages 3-5, RIDE made a commitment to providing professional development on the

standards, particularly to providers. However, a few years ago RIDE developed a training series for parents to help them also understand what young children should know and be able to do, how to support that at home and how to collaborate with their child's teacher. The goal is to do the same thing with the new Early Learning and Development Standards.

Michele Palermo, co-chair of the Program Standards Alignment Sub-Committee, gave an update on the committees' work to date:

- The first meeting was held on May 30th and was focused on orienting the Sub-Committee members to each component of the tiered system and reviewing the scopes of work.
- The Sub-Committee also talked about engaging stakeholders including identifying who needed to be engaged and the best way to engage them.

Children with High Needs: Young Children in DCYF Care & Access to High Quality Early Learning

Janet Anderson, gave a short update on efforts at DCYF to improve children's access to high-quality early learning programs with a presentation on the ACF 2011 Early Childhood-Child Welfare Partnership Grant to Children's Friend as well as the 2012 DCYF Grant Application:

- DCYF is a key collaborator in the ACF 2011 Early Childhood – Child Welfare grant to Children's Friend with the goal of improving access to Head Start and Early Head Start for children in foster care.
- In October 2011 Rhode Island sent a team to the New England Early Development, Science, and Child Welfare Summit.
- An Early Intervention – Child Welfare Work Group was formed in March 2012 to develop recommendations re: policy, practice, and data.
- DCYF is submitting a grant application this week to link and coordinate an integrated statewide system of screening, assessment and collaborative service delivery across early care agencies.
- The grant would provide \$250,000 each year for 2 years and will be awarded to 10 applicants across the country. We are hoping that because we have a lot of other system building initiatives going on in the state that we will have a leg up.
- DCYF is proposing to develop and implement a train-the-trainer model to establish a professional development program for early learning providers that is trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate within a positive behavioral supports framework.
- DCYF would also implement recommendations from the Children's Friend grant designed to address system barriers and establish a permanent governance structure through the Rhode Island Early Learning Council to include strategic oversight of the child welfare population's access to high-quality early learning programs.

Early Learning Council Strategic Plan

Kristin gave a brief update on the Council's Strategic Plan:

- The strategic plan will provide an overarching, collaborative roadmap for early learning in Rhode Island.

- The Council Work Group has been working on refining the strategies and specifying some additional targets in areas where the Council had not yet set them (Child Development Outcomes and Access.) More work needs to be done on this before the plan can be reviewed:
 - The Access Sub-Committee will meet over the summer to review targets and revise Access strategies to support targets.
 - The Early Childhood & Kindergarten Assessment Core Project Team will meet to review Child Outcome targets over the summer.

- The final draft plan will be presented for endorsement to the Council in September.

Program Quality Improvement: Early Learning Finance and QRIS

Leanne Barrett reviewed the performance targets included in the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant to increase program quality. Karen Beese introduced Anne Mitchell, a consultant working with the Program Quality Improvement Core Project Management team, who gave a presentation on early learning finance and quality rating and improvement systems (see presentation for more detail). Anne shared some best practices for supporting program quality improvement by connecting financing strategies with BrightStars, the state’s Quality Rating and Improvement System

Rhode Island’s Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System Plan

Karen Beese and Tammy Camillo presented Rhode Island’s Early Learning and School-Age Professional Development System Plan recommendations for Council endorsement (see presentation for more detail).

The Council endorsed the plan.

Public Comment

The following public comments were raised:

- Will it work to have just one system of program quality standards considering our multi-sectored system and the challenges we have with workforce compensation?
- We need to look at the cost of quality for family child care homes as well. Many family child care providers are reducing rates to compete with unlicensed providers in their area and they cannot feasibly invest in quality.
- We need to remember that parents are an important professional in the development of their children and we need to have clear strategies to reach out to them – for example, using the pediatric community as an outreach network.

Deborah noted that Rhode Island is committed to a multi-sectored system and will need to work through the challenges of that multi-sector system. Elizabeth shared that the RTT-ELC grant intentionally includes funding to engage pediatricians in the assessment process. Blythe noted that there is also a clear understanding that we need to reach kids in the system as well as kids who are not in the system. Anne Mitchell closed by telling the group that Rhode Island is seen as an innovator nationally and a lot of people are very excited that Rhode Island was one of the state’s who was awarded RTT-ELC funding.

Next Steps

Elizabeth reminded everyone of the following dates:

- **ELCWG Meeting:** August 16, 2012 9:00-11:00 a.m. (CCRI, Room 4090)
- **ELC Meeting:** September 26, 2012 12:00-2:00 p.m. (CCRI, Room 4090)