

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

Thursday, September, 15, 2011, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

United Way of Rhode Island, 50 Valley Street, Providence, Conference Room

Agenda

3:00-3:05 (15 mins)	Welcome /Meeting Overview	Deborah Gist/ Elizabeth Burke Bryant
3:05-3:15 (10 mins)	Public Comment	Public Participants
3:15-3:30 (15 mins)	Report from Professional Development Team	Tammy Camillo/ Karen Beese
3:30-3:40 (10 mins)	Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant – Theory of Action and Guiding Principles	Grant Team/Early Council Members and Work Group Members
3:40-4:55 (75 mins)	Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant – Key Strategies and Plans	Grant Team/Early Council Members and Work Group Members
4:55-5:00 (5 mins)	Next Steps Next Meeting: September 28, 2011 12:00-2:00	Deborah Gist/ Elizabeth Burke Bryant

RHODE ISLAND EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL & WORK GROUP JOINT MEETING

September 15, 2011

3:00-5:00 p.m.

United Way of Rhode Island





MEETING AGENDA

3:00-3:05	Welcome /Meeting Overview
3:05-3:15	Public Comment
3:15-3:30	Report from Professional Development Team
3:30-3:40	Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant: Theory of Action and Guiding Principles
3:40-4:55	Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Grant: Key Strategies and Goals
4:55-5:00	Next Steps

PUBLIC COMMENT

REPORT FROM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM



PD WORK TEAM: CHARGE

- ❖ The Professional Development System Work Team will **support the work of:**
 - ❖ RI Early Learning Council
 - ❖ RI Child Care Resource & Referral Center

- ❖ The Work Team's **purpose** is to develop an executable plan for RI's early childhood/child care professional development system.



PD WORK TEAM: A CROSS-SECTOR APPROACH

- ❖ **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: PROCESS

- ❖ Contracted **Anne Mitchell**; TA from **Kim Keiser, NCCIC**.
- ❖ Conducted **individual meetings with stakeholders** across sectors to gather input/needs information to inform the Work Team.
- ❖ Monthly **work team meetings** to develop the plan.



PD WORK TEAM: AREAS OF PLANNING

- ❖ 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** and develop **sustainable careers**.



PD WORK TEAM: PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- ❖ *Characteristics of optimal systems:*
 - ❖ Core Knowledge and Competencies (**CKCs** or **WKCs**) - the foundation of the PD system
- ❖ *Recommendations:*
 - ❖ Support the release of the **Center Teacher and Teacher Assistant** Core Knowledge and Competencies.
 - ❖ Develop **CKC's** for Directors and Family Child Care providers.
 - ❖ Use the CKC's available to **design and code PD** opportunities.



PD WORK TEAM: CAREER PATHWAYS

- ❖ *Characteristics of optimal systems:*

- ❖ **Access**
- ❖ **Career advising**
- ❖ **Career Lattice**

- ❖ *Recommendations:*

- ❖ Support **access opportunities** and information sharing.
- ❖ Offer **career advisors**.
- ❖ Develop all needed **career lattices** make widely available.



PD WORK TEAM: ARTICULATION

❖ *Characteristics of optimal systems:*

- ❖ Higher ed will have a clear **advising policy** and related **procedures** to support their articulation agreement(s).
- ❖ The procedure for receiving credit for **PD delivered by community-based** organizations is clear and publicized.
- ❖ Develop procedures for credit for **prior learning**.

❖ *Recommendations:*

- ❖ T.E.A.C.H. RI, Resource Center, and ELC responsible for working with **higher ed**.
- ❖ The agreement(s), **policies and procedures** will be formal, transparent and active.
- ❖ **Information** easily accessible to students.



PD WORK TEAM: ADVISORY STRUCTURE

❖ *Characteristics of optimal systems:*

- ❖ Communication and coordination policies or agreements are in place **across departments and sectors.**
- ❖ Task forces work with the state **ELC.**
- ❖ The structure includes **representatives** from the various early childhood education sectors, agencies and quality initiatives.
- ❖ **Vision and mission** statements and guiding principles

❖ *Recommendations:*

- ❖ TBD



PD WORK TEAM: DATA

❖ *Characteristics of optimal systems:*

- ❖ Data system has capacity to verify, record, update, and track **individuals'** characteristics, experience, educational attainment, qualifications and ongoing development.
- ❖ Data are collected on **training offerings**, PD providers, and higher education institutions, also includes type, attendance, content focus, and student performance.
- ❖ Data are used to **improve** the PD system and track progress.

❖ *Recommendations:*

- ❖ Work with the **ELC Data Work Team** to develop a state-wide comprehensive Data System.
- ❖ Develop a **trainer registry**.
- ❖ Explore **workforce registry**.



PD WORK TEAM: FINANCING

- ❖ *Characteristics of optimal systems:*
 - ❖ Financial support is available for:
 - ❖ **professionals** for education/development, based on need
 - ❖ **programs/workplaces** to facilitate professional development
 - ❖ **rewards** for educational attainment

- ❖ *Recommendations:*
 - ❖ Work **cross-sector** to provide PD opportunities, and combine funding streams.
 - ❖ Expand T.E.A.C.H. RI.
 - ❖ Develop **education/retention bonuses**



PD WORK TEAM: NEXT STEPS

- ❖ *To finalize plan:*

- ❖ Complete remaining system elements sections.
- ❖ Complete action plan to implement recommendations.
- ❖ Review with DHS; review with ELC.

- ❖ *To begin implementation (Jan 2012):*

- ❖ Build capacity to offer services.
- ❖ Continue to work on systems elements already in progress; begin work on system elements not yet started.

RHODE ISLAND'S RACE TO THE TOP – EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE GRANT APPLICATION

Background, Theory of Action and Goals





WHAT IS THE EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE?

- ❖ A **\$500 million federal competitive grant program** that helps states build more efficient and effective early learning systems for young children--infants, toddlers & preschoolers—and their families.
- ❖ Focus is on **improving, linking & aligning systems to improve access to high-quality programs for children with high needs.**
- ❖ “Challenge states to build a coordinated system of early learning and development that ensures that many **more children from low-income and disadvantaged families, from birth to age 5, have access to dramatically improved early learning and development programs** and are able to start kindergarten with a strong foundation for future learning.”



How It Works: Timeline and Funding Levels

- ❖ **Grant period:** December 31, 2011 to December 31, 2015.
- ❖ **Funding Levels:** (based on population of low-income young children)
 - ❖ Up to \$100 million CA, FL, NY, TX
 - ❖ Up to \$70 million AZ, GA, IL, MI, NC, OH, PA
 - ❖ Up to \$60 million AL, CO, IN, KY, LA, MO, NJ, OK, PR, SC, TN, VA, WA, WI
 - ❖ Up to \$50 million AK, AR, CT, DE, DC, HI, ID, IA, KS, ME, MD, MA, MN, MS, MT, NE, NH, NM, NV, ND, OR, RI, SD, UT, VT, WV, WY
- ❖ **Timeline:** Applications due October 19, 2011.
- ❖ **Total Funding Available for the Challenge:** \$500 million



WHAT IS THE EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE?

States must commit to improving the quality of their early learning and development programs through five key levers of change:

- ❖ Successful State Systems
- ❖ High-Quality, Accountable Programs
- ❖ Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children
- ❖ A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and
- ❖ Measuring Outcomes and Progress



KEY DEFINITIONS: EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

- ❖ Any state-licensed or state-regulated program or provider that provides early care and education for children from birth to Kindergarten entry,
- ❖ Any program operated by a **child care center** or in a **family child care home**.
- ❖ Any preschool program funded by the federal government or state or local education agencies (including any IDEA-funded program) – **Early Intervention (Part C of IDEA), Preschool Special Education (Part B, Section 619 of IDEA), State-funded Pre-K, Title I funded programs for young children, CCDF funded programs**
- ❖ **Early Head Start and Head Start**
- ❖ **Non-relative child care providers who regularly care for 2 or more unrelated children for a fee**



KEY DEFINITIONS: CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS

Children from birth to kindergarten entry who:

- ❖ Are from low-income families (defined as $\leq 200\%$ of FPL or $\leq \$44,700$ for a family of 4 in 2011)
- ❖ Have disabilities or developmental delays
- ❖ Are English Language Learners (defined as home language other than English)
- ❖ Reside on “Indian lands”
- ❖ Are migrant
- ❖ Are homeless
- ❖ Are in foster care
- ❖ Other children as identified by the state



KEY DEFINITIONS: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR

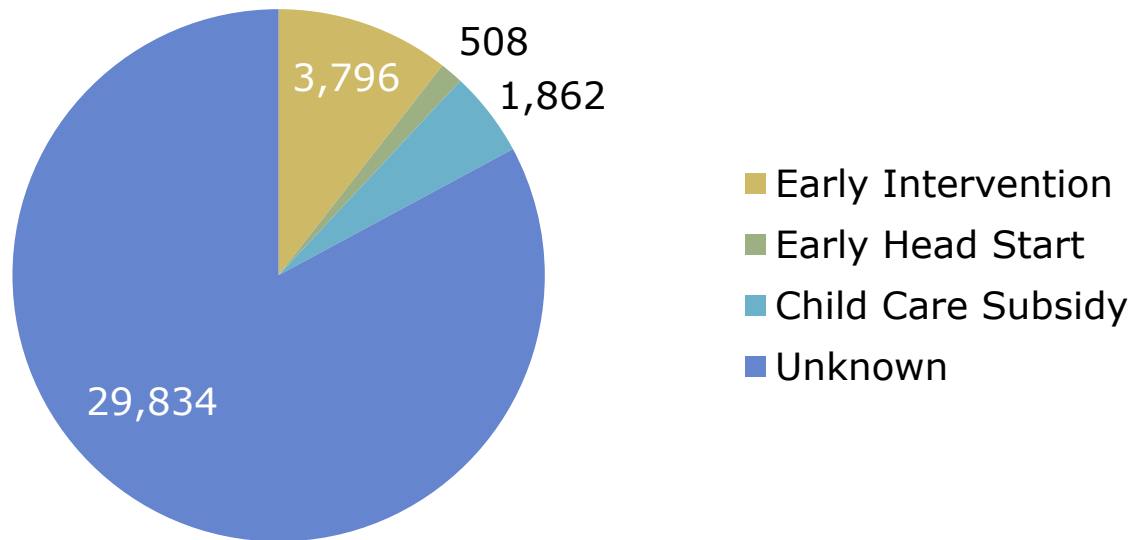
Any professional working in an Early Learning and Development Program, including, but not limited to:

- ❖ Center-based and family child care providers
- ❖ Infant and toddler specialists
- ❖ Early intervention specialists
- ❖ Early childhood special educators
- ❖ Home visitors
- ❖ Related service providers
- ❖ Administrators such as directors, supervisors and other leaders
- ❖ Head Start and Early Head Start teachers
- ❖ Preschool and other teachers
- ❖ Teacher assistants
- ❖ Family service staff
- ❖ Health Coordinators



RHODE ISLAND CHILDREN IN EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

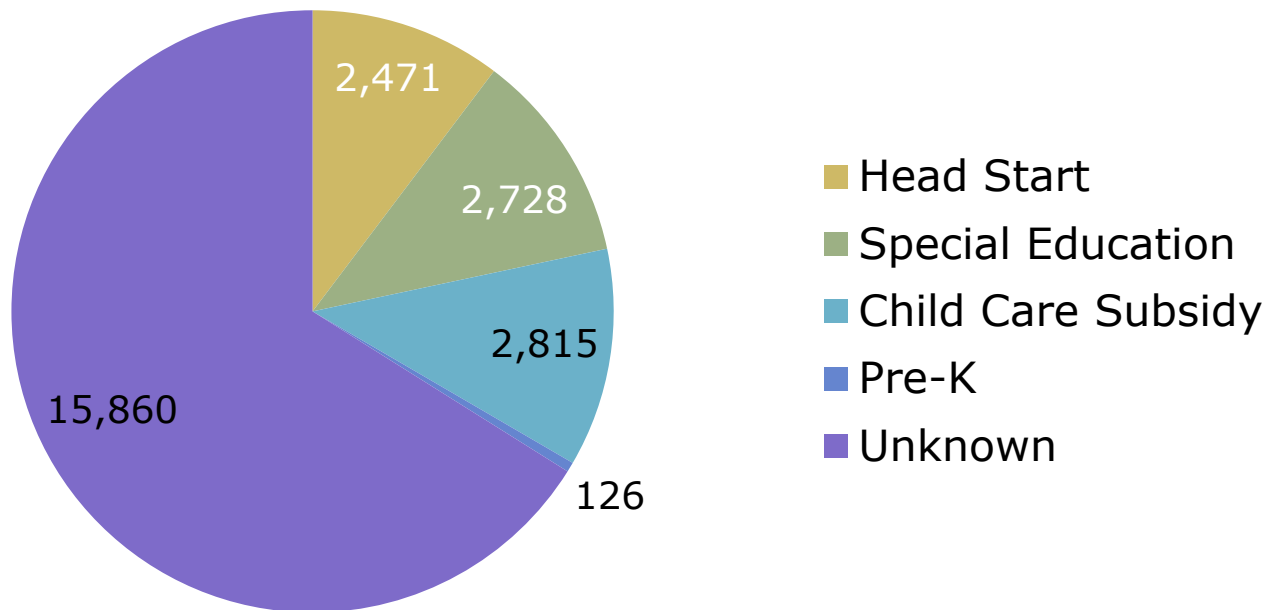
RI Infants & Toddlers in Early Learning Programs





RHODE ISLAND CHILDREN IN EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS

RI Preschoolers in Early Learning Programs





HOW IT WORKS: ABSOLUTE, COMPETITIVE & INVITATIONAL PRIORITIES

Absolute Priority: Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs

- ❖ State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how State will **build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development programs** by integrating and aligning resources and policies across participating State Agencies and by designing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.
- ❖ State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly **improve program quality and outcomes for children with high needs.**



HOW IT WORKS: ABSOLUTE, COMPETITIVE & INVITATIONAL PRIORITIES

Competitive Priority/Adds Points to Scoring:

1. Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System
2. Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry

Invitational Priority/No Points added to Scoring:

1. Sustaining Program Effects in the Early Elementary Grades.
2. Invitational Priority–Encouraging Private-Sector Support.



HOW IT WORKS: 5 AREAS THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED

1. *Successful State Systems* that include: demonstrated commitment to early learning and development; rationale for reform; aligned and coordinated system; and sustainable budget.

2. *High-Quality, Accountable Programs* with a statewide, validated QRIS and access to high quality programs for *children with high needs*.

3. *Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children* through early learning and development standards, comprehensive assessment system, screening and addressing health, behavioral and developmental needs and family engagement.

4. *A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce* that includes a clear ladder of knowledge and competencies and support for providers to move up that ladder.

5. *Measuring Outcomes and Progress* including kindergarten entry assessment and/or building an early learning data system.



OUR PROCESS & TIMELINE

July

- ❖ Governor identifies RIDE as the lead agency for application.
- ❖ Because the Early Learning Council (ELC) is cross-departmental and includes key system representatives, the ELC will help develop the state application and gather additional community input.
- ❖ State applies for technical assistance from the Early Learning Challenge Collaborative (BUILD and First Five Years Fund). State is selected for technical assistance.

August

- ❖ Special combined Council/Work Group meeting held on Friday, August 19
- ❖ Form Grant Leadership Team (Department Directors from RIDE, DHS, DCYF, HEALTH plus the co-chairs of the Rhode Island Early Learning Council) and identify core grant writing team.
- ❖ Initial planning retreat held on Tuesday, August 30 with core grant planning team and leaders from the Work Group's 8 planning teams to craft theory of action, guiding principles and begin to gather "big ideas" for application.



OUR PROCESS & TIMELINE

September

- ❖ Grant Team develops strategies and high-quality plans for each section:
 - ❖ High-Quality Accountable Programs
 - ❖ Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children
 - ❖ Great Early Childhood Education Workforce
 - ❖ Measuring Outcomes and Progress
 - ❖ Successful State Systems
- ❖ September 15 combined meeting of RI Early Learning Council/Council Work Group to review theory of action, guiding principles and key strategies and plans
- ❖ Regional Community Input Forums (to be scheduled for week of September 19 and 26).
- ❖ September 28 combined meeting of RI Early Learning Council/Council Work Group



OUR PROCESS & TIMELINE

October

- ❖ October 5, 2011 combined meeting of RI Early Learning Council/Work Group
- ❖ Final signed MOUs and grant application signatures
- ❖ Letters of support from Early Childhood Intermediary Organizations
- ❖ October 7, 2011 final draft submitted to Governor for review
- ❖ October 10, 2011 final draft submitted to RI Attorney General's office for review
- ❖ October 17 grant submission.



EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE COMMUNITY INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

- ❖ September 15, 2011 – 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at United Way of Rhode Island, 50 Valley Street, Providence, Conference Room
- ❖ Community Forums (to be scheduled for week of September 19 and 26)
- ❖ September 28, 2011 – 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. at Community College of Rhode Island – Knight Campus, Room 1130
- ❖ October 5, 2011 – 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at United Way of Rhode Island, 50 Valley Street, Providence, Conference Room



THEORY OF ACTION

Children in Rhode Island will enter kindergarten with a strong foundation for learning as a result of access to high quality early learning and development programs staffed with effective early childhood educators.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Develop a high quality system for all children with intentional strategies to serve high need children.
2. Ensure sustainability by investing in initiatives that will have a lasting impact.
3. Build, expand upon and better coordinate existing effective state assets and create new initiatives where needed.
4. Create a unified, comprehensive system guided by shared vision, accountability, governance and aligned resources and support.
5. The system must include supports and partnerships with families to achieve positive outcomes for the education, health and wellbeing of children.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES (CONT'D)

6. Use data to identify a baseline, monitor progress, drive improvement and regularly report publically.
7. Create realistic, achievable pathways to align increased expectations for the workforce with equitable compensation, incentives and supports.
8. Create a seamless continuum between ECE and K-2 systems.

RHODE ISLAND'S RACE TO THE TOP – EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE GRANT APPLICATION

Criteria and Key Strategies



**DEVELOPING HIGH QUALITY,
ACCOUNTABLE PROGRAMS
(75 POINTS)**





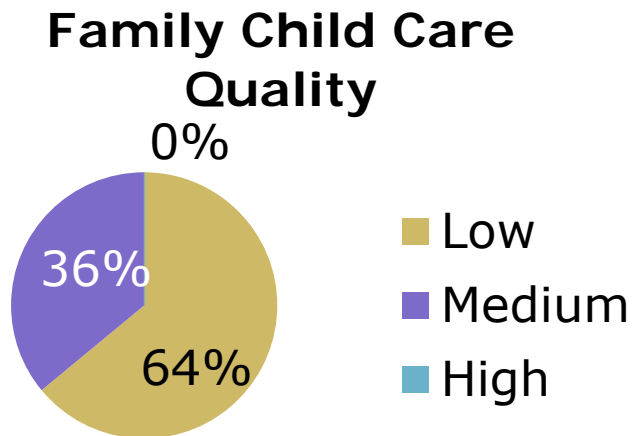
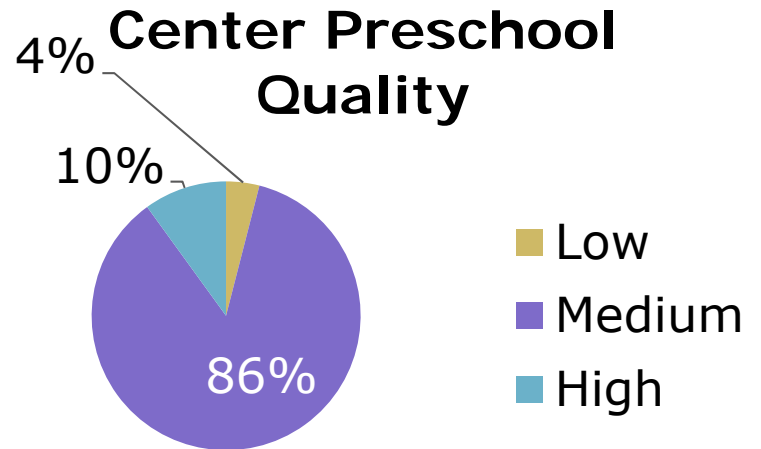
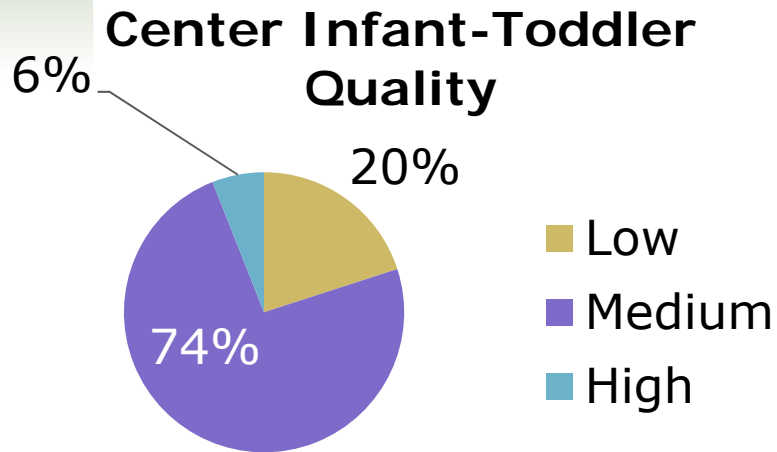
THE STATE PLAN TO DEVELOP A TIERED QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (QRIS)

Definition:

Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System means the system through which the State uses a set of progressively higher Program Standards **to evaluate the quality** of an Early Learning and Development Program and **to support program improvement**. A QRIS includes

- ❖ Tiered Program Standards with **multiple rating categories** that clearly and meaningfully differentiate program quality levels
- ❖ **Monitoring to evaluate program** quality based on the Program Standards
- ❖ **Supports to help programs** meet progressively higher standards (e.g. training, technical assistance, financial support)
- ❖ Program **quality ratings that are publicly available** and a process for validating the system.

RI BASELINE QUALITY STUDIES



Source: FPG Child Development Institute, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, 2009, 2010



THE STATE PLAN TO DEVELOP A TIERED QUALITY RATING AND IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (QRIS) (B1 – 10 POINTS)

Criteria:

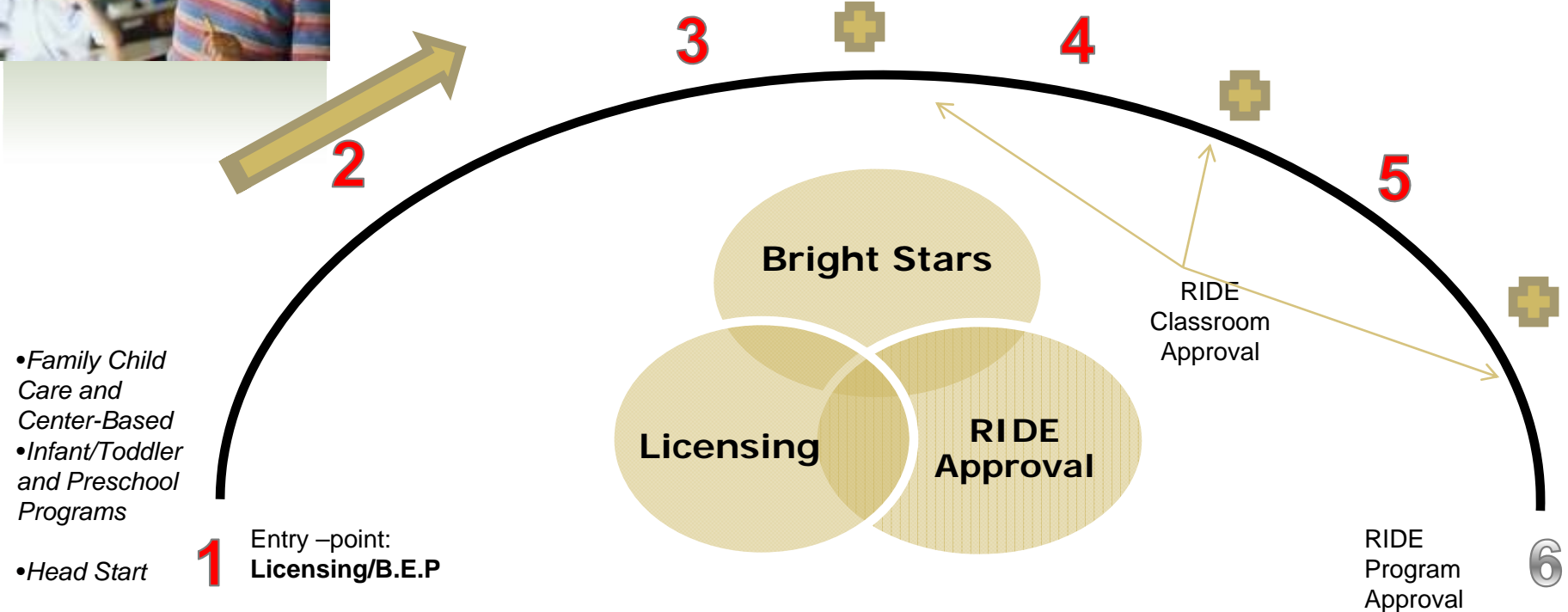
Develop and adopt a **common, statewide** QRIS with a statewide set of tiered Program Standards.

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Build on work already accomplished designing program standards and measurement systems for BrightStars program ratings and RIDE preschool classroom approval
- ❖ Embark upon a shared program standard revision process to improve alignment of DCYF licensing standards, BrightStars and RIDE preschool classroom approval standards with a clear quality improvement pathway toward a common vision of program quality (include updated health safety, nutrition and physical activity standards)
- ❖ Re-design and clarify the roles and responsibilities of state agencies and organizations regarding program quality measurement and program quality improvement to improve effectiveness and efficiency and to streamline process for programs
- ❖ Develop and promote a unified, aligned, and clear Quality Rating and Improvement message to families and providers



Common, Statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System



- Common vision for quality
- Single point of entry for programs
- Clear and common pathway for programs
- Unified message to parents
- Aligned and integrated standards between agencies



THE STATE PLAN FOR PROMOTING PARTICIPATION IN QRIS (B2 – 15 POINTS)

Criteria: Promote participation in the State's QRIS

- ❖ Implement policies and practices to reach the goal of **having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in the QRIS**, including state-funded preschool, Early Head Start and Head Start, IDEA funded programs, Title I funded programs, and CCDF funded programs.
- ❖ Implement policies and practices to **help more families afford high-quality child care** and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with concentrations of Children with High Needs
- ❖ **Set ambitious yet achievable targets** for the numbers and percentages of programs that will participate in the QRIS

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Require programs to participate in the QRIS through licensing and/or as a condition for licensed programs receiving DHS Child Care Assistance Program payments.
- ❖ Require early learning programs receiving state or federal funding from RIDE to participate in the QRIS with clear timeline for RIDE preschool approval.
- ❖ Implement a child care subsidy reimbursement system with rates tied to the quality levels.



THE STATE PLAN FOR RATING AND MONITORING EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS (B3 – 15 POINTS)

Criteria:

- ❖ **Use valid and reliable tools for monitoring programs**, have trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, monitor/rate programs with appropriate frequency in state tiered QRIS.
- ❖ **Provide quality rating and licensing information to parents** with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Build on the work of BrightStars and RIDE to ensure measurement tools are valid and reliable and program assessment staff are trained to nationally-acceptable standards with regular reliability checks.
- ❖ Examine frequency of monitoring and ratings as well as the #/% of classrooms participating in in-depth, observation-based assessments.
- ❖ Build on work of BrightStars to provide quality rating information to families.
- ❖ Develop systems to share licensing compliance history with families.



THE STATE PLAN FOR PROMOTING ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS (B4 – 20 POINTS)

Criteria:

Promote access to high-quality programs for Children with High Needs

- ❖ Implement policies and practices that **provide support and incentives for programs to continuously improve**
- ❖ Provide support to **help working families** who have children with high needs access high-quality programs that meet those needs
- ❖ **Set ambitious yet achievable targets** for increasing the number and percentage of programs (and children with high needs enrolled in programs) in the top tiers of the QRIS.



THE STATE PLAN FOR PROMOTING ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS (B4 – 20 POINTS)

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Build on and expand the work of BrightStars and RIELS technical assistance project re: program improvement planning and individualized technical assistance for programs.
- ❖ Offer intensive, individualized technical assistance and Program Quality Improvement Grants to support quality improvement activities for all programs in the QRIS (prioritize programs serving Children with High Needs).
- ❖ Provide focused support to centers serving infants and toddlers with High Needs.
- ❖ Provide focused support to family child care providers serving Children with High Needs.
- ❖ Implement a child care subsidy reimbursement system with rates tied to the quality levels to ensure Children with High Needs (eligible for DHS child care subsidy) can access programs in top tiers of QRIS.
- ❖ Expand availability of high-quality professional development opportunities.
- ❖ Expand access to higher education for early childhood educators (including family child care and educators serving infants/toddlers).
- ❖ Ensure state-funded Pre-K is accessible to working families (housed within/connected to full-day/full-year high-quality child care programs)



THE STATE PLAN FOR VALIDATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STATE QRIS (B5 – 15 POINTS)

Criteria: Validating the effectiveness of QRIS

- ❖ Determine whether the tiers in the QRIS accurately reflect differential levels of program quality
- ❖ Determine to what extent quality ratings are related to progress in children’s learning, development and school readiness.

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Build on the work with the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill to validate the differential levels of BrightStars
- ❖ Work with an independent evaluator to design and conduct a study of child development and learning outcomes among children participating in programs at different quality tiers.



COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY – INCLUDE ALL EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS IN THE TIERED QRIS (10 POINTS)

Criteria: Increase the # and % of children participating in programs that are governed by the State’s licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate.

- ❖ State has a licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that regularly care for 2 or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting.
- ❖ State has a tiered QRIS in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning Programs participate

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Expand regulation of family child care providers to include providers regularly caring for 2 or more unrelated children for a fee (current regulations start with 4 or more unrelated children)
- ❖ Include all Early Learning and Development Programs (except EI, home-based Head Start and home visiting programs) in the State’s tiered QRIS.

**PROMOTING EARLY LEARNING
AND DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES
FOR CHILDREN
(60 POINTS)**



THE STATE PLAN FOR DEVELOPING AND USING STATEWIDE, HIGH QUALITY LEARNING STANDARDS (C1 – 20 POINTS)



Criteria: Develop and use statewide, high-quality Early Learning Standards that are:

- ❖ Developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers and preschoolers and that cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness
- ❖ Aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics
- ❖ Incorporated into Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities.
- ❖ State has supports in place to promote understanding and use of Early Learning Standards across programs.

THE STATE PLAN FOR DEVELOPING AND USING STATEWIDE, HIGH QUALITY LEARNING STANDARDS (C1 – 20 POINTS)



Key Strategies:

- ❖ Ensure standards are aligned horizontally (i.e. with Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, curriculum, and child assessments), and vertically with K-2 Common Core standards in math and literacy.
- ❖ Expand RIELS training to include Birth-3 training opportunities.
- ❖ Revise existing RIELS trainings to reflect new 3-5 standards.
- ❖ Incorporate RIELS B-3 training into Tiered QRIS
- ❖ Revise existing program standards to reflect Birth-3 standards.
- ❖ Ensure WKC Framework, which currently includes a reference to B-3 standards, appropriately reflects the new B-3 standards.
- ❖ Develop a mechanism to approve curriculum resources which are aligned with new standards.



THE STATE PLAN FOR SUPPORT EFFECTIVE USES OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT (C2 – 20 POINTS)

Criteria: Support effective use of Comprehensive Assessment Systems (CAS)

- ❖ Select assessment instruments and approaches that are appropriate for the target population and purposes
- ❖ Strengthen educator's understanding of the purposes and uses of each type of assessment included in the CAS
- ❖ Align and integrate assessments and share assessment results, as appropriate, in order to avoid duplication of assessments and to coordinate services for Children with High Needs served by multiple programs
- ❖ Train educators to appropriately administer assessments and interpret and use assessment data in order to inform instruction, programs and services.

THE STATE PLAN FOR SUPPORT EFFECTIVE USES OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT (C2 – 20 POINTS)



Key Strategies:

- ❖ Develop and implement general training on comprehensive assessment systems focused on the different purposes and uses of assessment information at the classroom and program level and on selecting assessment systems and approaches which are appropriate for target populations and purposes (B-5).
- ❖ Develop and implement comprehensive training in formative child assessment practices (B-5) including; using appropriate authentic assessment strategies, planning for ongoing assessment, understanding and using standardized assessment data, and using assessment data to improve instruction at the classroom and program level.
- ❖ Expand and implement training focused on using TS GOLD system and achieving reliability status (B-5).
- ❖ Develop and implement comprehensive training on classroom quality measures including; interpreting and understanding classroom quality measures and using that information to improve classroom quality (B-5).

THE STATE PLAN FOR SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE USES OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT (C2 – 20 POINTS)



Key Strategies (cont'd)

- ❖ Develop a plan to align and integrate assessments to avoid duplication – specifically:
 - ❖ use of common screening instruments statewide;
 - ❖ use of Teaching Strategies GOLD in all programs receiving state or federal education funding (IDEA Part C and B, State Pre-K, Title I), and;
 - ❖ incentivize use of TS GOLD for private programs by incorporating them under the state license and state rate.
 - ❖ Incorporate use of TS GOLD into the Tiered QRIS upper levels for all programs
- ❖ MOU regarding sharing of classroom quality data between BrightStars and RIDE Approval.
- ❖ MOU with other state agencies (DCYF, DOH, DHS) to align early childhood grant requirements to reflect use of common screening tools, TSG, ECERS, and CLASS where appropriate in work supporting early childhood programs.
- ❖ Create a public awareness campaign regarding the importance of regular developmental screenings for children between B-5 years old.
- ❖ Expand the capacity of the primary care component of Watch Me Grow to increase screening rates and to include social and emotional screenings.

THE STATE PLAN FOR SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE USES OF COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT (C2 – 20 POINTS)



Key Strategies (cont'd):

- ❖ Ensure that providers who conduct screening have the capacity to ensure families receive follow up for any identified social and emotional concerns by expanding Project LAUNCH to Child Outreach programs and to other RI communities.
- ❖ Create regional ELL screening teams to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate Child Outreach screening to young dual language learners.
- ❖ Invest in technological supports to facilitate seamless, effective child assessment data entry that allows teachers to collect and enter child observation data without redundancy of effort.
- ❖ Incorporate classroom assessment tools such as the CASEBA and PRISM which dig deeper into adult-child interactions and support stronger outcomes in science, math, and for English Language Learners into professional development system and program quality assessments.



THE STATE PLAN TO ENGAGE AND SUPPORT FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS (C4 – 20 POINTS)

Criteria: Engage and support families

- ❖ Establish a progression of culturally and linguistically appropriate standards for family engagement across the levels of Program Standards. Include activities that enhance the capacity of families to support their children’s education and development.
- ❖ Increase the # and % of educators trained and supported on an on-going basis to implement family engagement activities included in the Program Standards
- ❖ Promote family support and engagement statewide, including leveraging other existing resources such as home visiting programs, other family-serving agencies, and through outreach to family, friend and neighbor caregivers



THE STATE PLAN TO ENGAGE AND SUPPORT FAMILIES OF CHILDREN WITH HIGH NEEDS (C4 – 20 POINTS)

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Review existing program standards for key family engagement strategies. Revise the continuum and more specifically address missing components.
- ❖ Increase access to RIELS training, as well as developing new trainings aligned with core competencies family engagement domains.
- ❖ (3-5) Expand capacity to deliver RIELS Fun Family Activities Parent Training to other groups, such as Head Start, public schools via Child Outreach, PAT, libraries, Children's Museum by conducting Train the Trainer sessions statewide.
- ❖ Develop new Fun Family Activities Parent Training using existing model but based on B-3 standards. Develop training for parents on general child development B-5 and train a diverse cohort of trainers including home visitors, early childhood educators, pediatricians etc.

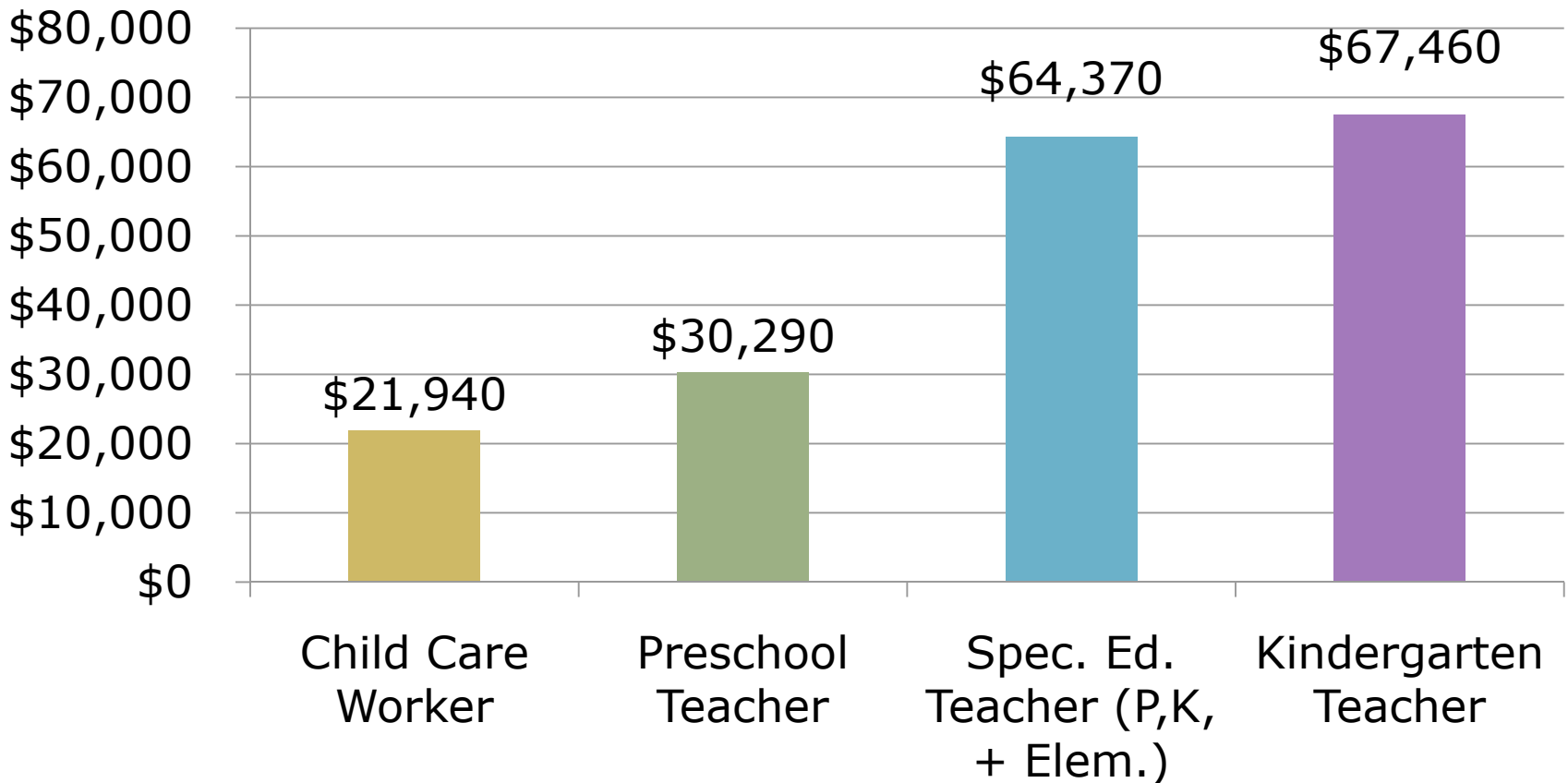
**A GREAT EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION WORKFORCE
(40 POINTS)**





RI EARLY LEARNING WORKFORCE

BLS Occupational Wage Estimates Rhode Island, 2010






THE STATE PLAN TO DEVELOP A WORKFORCE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK AND PROGRESSION OF CREDENTIALS (D1- 20 POINTS)

Criteria:

- ❖ Develop/adopt common, statewide WKC framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes
- ❖ Develop/adopt common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the WKC framework
- ❖ Engage postsecondary institutions and PD providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's WKC framework.

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Revise teacher/TA Core Competencies to include specific instructional strategies in math and literacy.
- ❖ Develop competencies for administrators, family child care, education coordinator, PD providers, and higher education.
- ❖ Create an addendum to Teacher competencies for special educators and early intervention professionals.
- ❖ Create course packages which aligned with CKCs and levels, roles, and population served.
- ❖ Reference DOH core competencies for home visitor and ensure alignment (DOH MOU).

A young girl with dark hair in pigtails, wearing a striped shirt, is raising her right hand in a classroom setting. In the background, other children and a whiteboard are visible.

THE STATE PLAN TO SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN IMPROVING THEIR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES (D2 – 20 POINTS)

Criteria: Support educators in improving their knowledge, skills and abilities

- ❖ Expand access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State’s WKC framework
- ❖ Implement policies and incentives that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the WKC framework and that are designed to increase retention
- ❖ Publicly report aggregated data on educator development, advancement, and retention
- ❖ Set ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and PD providers aligned to WKC framework (and # of educators who receive credentials from aligned institutions and providers) and for increasing the # and % of educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the WKC framework



THE STATE PLAN TO SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN IMPROVING THEIR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES (D2 – 20 POINTS)

Key Strategies (expanding access to PD):

- ❖ Use developed and emerging WKC framework to design/adopt high-quality, aligned professional development for programs and educators serving high-need children. Develop a list of approved PD opportunities.
- ❖ Develop systems to build trainer capacity and approve/monitor trainers to deliver aligned PD (need core competencies for trainers)
- ❖ Expand access to free and accessible high-quality, approved PD opportunities, targeting programs serving Children with High Needs along the career pathway (lattice).

Key Strategies (Increasing advancement and retention):

- ❖ Support educators in developing individual PD plans and career advising.
- ❖ Expand TEACH Rhode Island to offer scholarships and support for the full range of degrees outlined in career pathway/lattice. Target TEACH scholarships to programs serving Children with High Needs.
- ❖ Revise the Tiered Program Standards for QRIS to include measurement of benchmarks
- ❖ Implement staff education/retention bonuses tied to meeting benchmarks on the career lattice through the QRIS.



THE STATE PLAN TO SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN IMPROVING THEIR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES (D2 – 20 POINTS)

Key Strategies (aggregated data):

- ❖ Ensure State's Early Learning Data System has mechanism to track workforce professional growth and accomplishments and progress toward attaining aligned credentials (workforce registry).

Key Strategies (PD and HE alignment with WKC):

- ❖ Develop MOUs with PD providers and agencies funding PD providers to align PD with the WKC framework.
- ❖ Support national accreditation of CCRI's early childhood education program. Ensure course alignment to WKC framework.
- ❖ Incorporate use of the WKC into the RIDE approval process for teacher preparation programs (4 year only) in Rhode Island.

Key Strategies (Increasing progression to higher credentials):

- ❖ Include in RIDE's teacher preparation program approval the process for 4-year programs to accept credits from 2-year higher education programs and ensure that articulation agreements specify that coursework must align with the WKCs.
- ❖ Develop alternate pathways to PK-2 teacher certification/earned college credits for the existing workforce.

**MEASURING OUTCOMES AND
PROGRESS
(40 POINTS)**





THE STATE PLAN TO IMPLEMENT A COMMON, STATEWIDE KINDERGARTEN ENTRY ASSESSMENT (E1 – 20 POINTS)

Criteria: Implement a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that is:

- ❖ Aligned with the State’s Early Learning Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness.
- ❖ Valid, reliable and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for ELL and children with disabilities.
- ❖ Is administered beginning no later than the start of the 2014-2015 school year to children entering public school K (can phase in).
- ❖ Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant.



THE STATE PLAN TO IMPLEMENT A COMMON, STATEWIDE KINDERGARTEN ENTRY ASSESSMENT (E1 – 20 POINTS)

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Review current research and national trends to identify key issues to be considered in developing a statewide kindergarten assessment.
- ❖ Develop methods for gathering RI stakeholder information based on identified key issues.
- ❖ Gather stakeholder information using identified methods.
- ❖ Analyze the information collected and develop guiding principles and recommendations for development and implementation of a kindergarten assessment and the communication of kindergarten assessment information.
- ❖ Develop/identify kindergarten assessment based on revised RIELS.
- ❖ Develop training to prepare teachers to conduct valid and reliable assessments based on assessment tool.
- ❖ Pilot K assessment in representative sample of districts and with volunteer districts.
- ❖ Implement K assessment Statewide.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY – UNDERSTANDING THE STATUS OF CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (10 POINTS)



Criteria:

- ❖ Demonstrate that the State has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets the selection criteria.
- ❖ Develop a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets the selection criteria and earn a score with at least 70% of the maximum points available.

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Separate response not required. Opportunity to earn extra points for quality of response to E1



THE STATE PLAN TO BUILD AN EARLY LEARNING DATA SYSTEM (E2 – 20 POINTS)

Criteria: Enhance the State’s existing State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) or build/enhance a separate, coordinated early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the SLDS and that:

- ❖ Has all the Essential Data Elements
- ❖ Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs
- ❖ Facilitates the exchange of data among agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data
- ❖ Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible and easy for programs and educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making
- ❖ Meets the Data System Oversight requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws



THE STATE PLAN TO BUILD AN EARLY LEARNING DATA SYSTEM (E2 -20 POINTS)

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Establish and maintain cross-departmental and public-private planning and oversight body for the Early Learning Data System linked to the Early Learning Council.
- ❖ Expand RIDE Data Warehouse and build linkages with KIDSNET and other key state data systems to track information on young children's participation and attendance in early learning programs, young children's learning and development (link to KIDSNET and child assessment system), early learning programs and classrooms, and the early childhood workforce.
- ❖ Expand the capacity of the state's child health data system (KIDSNET) to receive information about developmental screening and follow up actions.
- ❖ Ensure shared access and use of the Early Learning Data System across state departments and key programs (e.g. BrightStars and PD providers).
- ❖ Plan and build for data integration/linkage with existing data systems that must be maintained. Identify which existing data systems can be replaced by the new system.
- ❖ Ensure data system addresses need for a workforce registry and tracks educator progress toward achieving aligned credentials (annual aligned clock hours of training?) as well as staff compensation and turnover.



THE STATE PLAN TO BUILD AN EARLY LEARNING DATA SYSTEM (E2 – 20 POINTS)

Key Strategies:

- ❖ Develop and implement training, technical support, and incentives to support data entry/data transfers by early learning programs and state administrators.
- ❖ Identify on-going resources to manage data system and monitor/support data quality.
- ❖ Ensure regular reporting for Early Learning Council and policymakers.
- ❖ Build in access to critical information for early learning programs to inform program quality improvement and by educators to inform instruction.
- ❖ Explore reporting for pediatricians and family physicians.



NEXT STEPS

- ❖ Community Input Forums:
 - Friday, September 23, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. location TBD (Providence/Pawtucket area)
 - Wednesday, September 28, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at West Warwick High School, West Warwick
- ❖ Next ELC Meeting: Wednesday, September 28, 12:00-2:00 p.m. Community College of Rhode Island – Knight Campus, Room 1130

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

Thursday, September, 15, 2011, 3:00-4:30 p.m.
United Way of Rhode Island, 50 Valley Street, Providence, Conference Room

Council & Work Group Members In Attendance: Co-Chair Commissioner Deborah Gist, Co-Chair Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Brenda Almeida, Chris Amirault, Christine Arouth, Leanne Barrett, Karen Beese, Blythe Berger, Tammy Camillo, DCYF Director Janice DeFrances, Brenda DuHamel, Rhonda Farrell, Maryann Finamore-Allmark, Ruth Gullucci, Leslie Gell, Kristen Greene, Denise Jenkins, Cindy Larson, Kristin Lehoullier, Khadija Lewis Khan, Mindy Mertz, Michele Palermo, DHS Director Sandra Powell, Larry Pucciarelli, Barbara Schermack, Joseph Morra, Susan Warford

Additional Attendees:

Linda Dickinson, Dr. William Hollinshead, Carol Mahoney, Kate Begin, Sue Washburn, Indira Prado, Tracy Cheney, Aimee Mitchell, Jim Berson, Sharon Friedman, Maureen Manion, Christine Chiacu-Forsythe

Welcome/Meeting Overview

The joint meeting of the Rhode Island Early Learning Council and Workgroup meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Co-chairs Elizabeth Burke Bryant and Deborah Gist.

Public Comment

None

Report from Professional Development Team

Tammy Camillo gave a presentation outlining the goals, planning areas, approach and process of the Professional Development Team (see meeting slides for further detail)

Council and Work Group members congratulated the team on their work. No questions or concerns were raised.

Presentation and Discussion: Rhode Island's Application for Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge – Background

Elizabeth Burke Bryant gave an overview of the federal competition from the application and guidance released in late August including how it works, the 5 areas that must be addressed in the application, some key definitions and the process and approach being used to develop Rhode Island's response (see meeting slides for more detail). She also announced the dates for two community input forums:

- Friday, September 23rd, at 4:30 -6:30 pm, North Providence High School Cafeteria, 1828 Mineral Spring Ave., North Providence, RI 02904
- Wednesday, September 28th, 6 :00- 8:00 pm at West Warwick High School Cafeteria, 1 Webster Knight Dr, West Warwick, RI 02893

Elizabeth stated that she felt that Rhode Island was in a great position to become one of the winners of this competition because of the alignment between the grant and the work of the Early Learning Council that has been underway for the past year and a half as well as the systems building work that has been going on in Rhode Island for a number of years. Deborah said that this is a very tough competition but that the reason Rhode Island is so well-positioned to submit a competitive application is because of the tremendous leadership of Rhode Island's early childhood community, including the people in this room.

Discussion: No questions or comments

Elizabeth introduced Leanne Barrett, Michele Palermo and Karen Beese as the presenters of the key strategies being proposed by the grant team to include in the application (see meeting slides for more detail). She noted that the materials were a work in progress and were meant to be a jumping off point for discussion.

Leanne presented Section B: Quality Rating and Improvement System (B1-B5) – see meeting slides for more detail

Several discussion points and questions were raised on the presentation:

- Do we have the support of the legislative leaders? How much of this is dependent on General Assembly action? We should develop a list of things that might involve legislative support.
- What is the timeline for how things will be implemented?
- It is important to include grant opportunities to help programs raise their level of quality as opposed to just rewarding them when they do.
- How will RIDE be aligned with Bright Stars? The fact that RIDE approval is classroom based and BrightStars is at the program level is confusing.
- One participant mentioned that she was encouraged to hear that RIDE is taking a look at aligning their preschool standards with Bright Stars program and commented that the comprehensive approval process to date has felt like a process of exclusion instead of inclusion.
- Rather than get caught up in the specifics of how things will be aligned we should be focused on the design principles that we want to guide the work. Is there anything missing on the slide that would be a value add?
- Can we apply for more Head Start slots?
- Are children in private pre-school included in all this?

Leanne, Elizabeth and Michele explained the following:

- The legislature sets the base rates for the CCAP program but we believe that DHS has the authority to make additional incentive payments.
- The team is working on the timelines - they are not completed yet. In general we have four years over the life of the grant to get programs into BrightStars and to demonstrate progress on quality improvement.

- Right now the strategies include two ways that programs are supported to continually improve their quality – program quality improvement grants to increase their quality and tiered reimbursement to help programs stay there and reward them.
- For the purposed of this application we won't be able to present a specific plan for how everything will align. Part of the plan will be a shared process for figuring this out, including aligning RIDE preschool approvals with upper levels of BrightStars and eliminating any duplication of efforts. We want quality measurement levels in BrightStars to continue to be researched-based, efficient and effective and we need to undertake a process of revision and alignment which is already underway at BrightStars.
- The important thing is that we have a commitment to a seamless continuum whereby programs enter through the same door and advance in quality levels in a common TQRIS (Bright Stars) that is shared across agencies using this common framework. Pointed to a diagram in powerpoint that shows all publicly funded and publicly regulated programs will be in BrightStars.
- We will need to figure out a way to align RIDE's classroom level approval with BrightStars.
- In terms of applying for money to support additional slots, they want us to take where kids are now and raise the quality of those programs. Whatever we do has to be sustainable; we cannot add new slots without a plan for how to sustain them.
- The grant includes all children with a strong emphasis on ensuring children with high needs have access to high-quality early learning programs..

Sandra Powell joined the meeting and reaffirmed and restated DHS's support and excitement about this process and the opportunity to build on the work that has been going on in this state to make things better for our children.

Michele presented Section C1: Early Learning and Development Standards, Section C2: Comprehensive Assessment Systems and C4: Family Engagement – see meeting slides for more detail.

Michele explained that while the state has a strong activities already happening in C3, the grant team felt that those items would be more effectively addressed in other areas of the grant where they can be presented as part of a larger strategy. As C3 is structured now, those strengths would appear to be siloed.

Several discussion points and questions were raised on the presentation:

- How do we make sure that we address the criteria in the grant that our plan be culturally and linguistically appropriate? I do not see that addressed and I think it is critical given our population. We should think about what models we will use to think about this.
- It is good that there is a strong focus on home visiting programs. It is an essential resource that we have in our state and it is very effective and it is an area that is struggling to keep the funding going.
- A concern was raised that C3 is not being addressed as its own section since it is an area of huge strength for Rhode Island. The participant stated that Rhode Island is one of the few states that have universal newborn screening, a very high quality health insurance plan (Rite Care) with over 93% of children have health insurance coverage which makes EPSDT goals easier to attain. Rhode

Island can get early information on children's developmental risks and that is not something every state can do.

- There was also a concern about how the application will address health and obesity and a request to that we reconsider including C3 in the response.
- We should emphasize that we are one of the first states to put standards for early periodic, screening, diagnosis and testing (EPSDT) in Medicaid. Rhode Island has adopted the "gold standard" which is American Academy of Pediatrics Bright Futures standards for high quality care for infants and toddlers. This forces private insurers to consider those standards too. This whole area is a strength of Rhode Island that other states lack and it is important to bring this out in the grant application. Recommended adding C-3 back in.
- Recommendation that we look at other organizations that are doing family engagement work that could align with the RIELS and try to build that capacity. One suggestion was the Strengthening Families framework. There is not enough emphasis on family engagement in their children's early learning and development. This is something that is critical (not just family engagement with programs, but overall).
- Recommendation that we talk to the ICC about being a resource.

Elizabeth and Deborah explained the following:

- We can absolutely take another look at C3. We definitely want to raise up our assets but we want to do it in the most strategic way so that we can maximize our points.

Michele presented Section D1: Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework And Progression of Credentials – see meeting slides for more detail

Karen presented Section D2: Support Early Childhood Educators in Improving their Knowledge, Skills and Abilities– see meeting slides for more detail

Several discussion points and questions were raised on the presentation:

- Is a workforce survey included here as strategies so we can better understand the composition and needs of the workforce?
- Recommendation to make sure wage and turnover is included in workforce registry.
- Will professional development and supports be targeted for infant/toddler educators?

Karen and Michele explained the following:

- A workforce survey is included as part of the work.
- Supporting Infant/Toddler educators will definitely be a focus- it is a high need area

Michele presented Section E1: Implementing a Common, Statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment– see meeting slides for more detail

Leanne presented Section E2: Build an Early Learning Data System– see meeting slides for more detail.

Several discussion points and questions were raised on the presentation:

- Is family engagement a part of the implementation of Kindergarten Entry Assessment?
- Several participants commended the team on their work.
- Concern about the amount of work being proposed in this grant and whether Rhode Island has the capacity to do it.

Michele explained the following:

- Families will be engaged as part of the planning process and as part of our implementation.

Next Steps

Elizabeth encouraged everyone to send additional feedback via email to Kristin at klehoulrier@gmail.com. She emphasized that the grant application is a work in progress and that everyone's continued feedback will result in a very competitive, high quality application.

Deborah reminded the Council and Work Group members that **the next joint meeting will be Wednesday, September 28, 12:00-2:00 p.m. at the Community College of Rhode Island – Knight Campus in Room 1130.**