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OBJECTIVES AND NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

History and Status of Governance for Iowa's Early Childhood System

Building on over a decade of coordinated local and state level efforts to assure that Iowa's children 0-5 are healthy and successful, Iowa is at a pivotal moment in the coordination, planning and implementation of a high quality and comprehensive early childhood system.

In 1998, the Iowa General Assembly established Iowa Community Empowerment as a state and community partnership with the goal to improve the well-being of young children and their families. Then Governor Terry E. Branstad signed the original Empowerment legislation. At that time he commented, "This collaborative approach at the local level will focus the efforts of parents, schools, child caregivers, and health and human services professionals on the well-being of young children. In return for the flexibility given to these local partnerships there will be local accountability for achieving specific measurable results."

Community Empowerment Areas led by local Empowerment Boards are broadly representative of their communities and charged with the development of comprehensive and strategic plans focused on the healthy development and readiness for school of children birth to five. By 2000 Iowa Community Empowerment had expanded to include 58 local Empowerment areas representing all 99 of Iowa's counties.

At the state level, legislation also created a state level Community Empowerment Board comprised of state agency heads and a majority of citizen

members appointed by the Governor. This board was charged with overseeing grants to local empowerment areas, initially on a competitive basis. The state provided both state funding and federal TANF funding, with a major emphasis upon providing home visiting and family support services and strengthening the quality, affordability, and availability of child care. Iowa's early childhood system development continued to gather momentum with increased state funding in 2005 focusing on preschool vouchers. In state fiscal year 2010, local Empowerment Boards received \$35 million dollars in state and federal funding.

In 2000 and 2001 Iowa received a planning grant from the Smart Start National Technical Assistance Center. This planning process ultimately involved over three hundred state and local early childhood leaders and stakeholders participating in a process to plan for the further development of a state level comprehensive and coordinated early childhood system. Iowa, supported by the federal Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) grant, created the Early Childhood Iowa (ECI) Stakeholders. ECI was designed as an open confederation or alliance of stakeholders in Early Care, Health and Education systems that affect children age 0 to 5 in the state. Its purpose was to support the development and integration of an Early Care, Health and Education system for Iowa. The structure of ECI includes six system component groups that describe the necessary elements of an effective and comprehensive Early Care, Health and Education system. Membership in each component group is open to anyone with an interest in any of the six component areas.

1. Quality Services & Programs
2. Public Engagement
3. Professional Development
4. Resources & Funding
5. Governance Planning & Administration
6. Results Accountability

While the State Community Empowerment Board was in place to provide management and over-site to the 58 Community Empowerment Boards, the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders served as a planning body and a state level catalyst for the development of a comprehensive and integrated early childhood system, including the development of governance, finance, outcome accountability, data, family involvement, and quality provisions for the developing system.

Governor Culver, in accordance with the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, designated the ECI Stakeholders as Iowa's Early Childhood Advisory Council in 2009.

During the summer of 2009, the Department of Management undertook a broad-based and intensive one week planning effort to re-examine the state and community empowerment structure while seeking to ensure a streamlined, integrated, and results-accountable approach to early childhood, drawing upon state and community empowerment leaders and representatives from Early Childhood Iowa. Recommendations from this process included:

- Setting a minimum population that single county local Empowerment Boards would serve (at least 5,000 children 0-5 in the county) expected to reduce the number of local boards from 58 to 38;
- Placing an even greater focus upon evidenced-based practice, quality improvement, and results-accountability; and
- Naming the stakeholders group as an advisory alliance to a state Early Childhood Iowa Board.

In 2010, the Iowa General Assembly enacted these provisions with SF 2088 establishing the Early Childhood Iowa Initiative. Further highlights of the ECI Initiative include:

- The merging of Iowa Community Empowerment and Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders under one local and state system building effort now identified as Early Childhood Iowa (ECI).
- Maintaining the designation of the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance as the Early Childhood Advisory Council under the 2007 Head Start Act.
- Establishing one common mission for ECI that “ Every child, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful.”

Under the new legislation, which took effect on July 1, 2010, ECI is composed of a state leadership board (ECI State Board), the Early Childhood Stakeholders Alliance (formally Early Childhood Iowa), the local Early Childhood Iowa Boards (formerly Iowa community Empowerment boards) and an Office of Early Childhood

Iowa. Serving as a decision-making structure the ECI State Board is composed of six Department Directors or designees (including Departments of Economic Development, Education, Human Rights, Human Services, Management, Public Health, and Workforce Development), 16 Governor-appointed citizens, and four ex-officio legislators. The Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance includes representatives from any organization that touches the lives of children 0-5 in the state, including all the designated representatives mandated in federal requirements and acts in an advisory capacity to the ECI State Board and the system. The local Early Childhood Iowa Boards are composed of local officials and citizens, with no members who are providers of early childhood services. The Early Childhood Iowa Office is housed in the Iowa Department of Management and provides staffing support to the ECI system, both through three dedicated staff (the ECI facilitator, a family support specialist, and a community liaison) and through assigned staff from the different agencies. A one page picture of the new ECI structure is included in the Appendix.

Through Iowa Community Empowerment and now Early Childhood Iowa, our state has been a leader in establishing both state and community structures for developing a comprehensive early childhood system that focuses upon children's health, safety, education, and development. ECI has adopted the Early Childhood System's Work Group "four ovals" framework for describing the systems components that go into developing an early childhood system and has aligned those "ovals" with their five results areas (further description included in

Appendix). Local Early Childhood Iowa Boards also leverage additional community support and draw in voluntary and community resources that are essential for creating the supporting environment that young children need.

Iowa has expanded its funding commitment to young children – particularly through Community Empowerment funding and Statewide Voluntary Preschool (SVPS). In his first state of the state address in 2007, newly-elected Governor Chet Culver pledged to establish a statewide universal preschool program for four-year olds, with \$15 million in new funding proposed in his 2007-8 budget and commitments to grow the funding to \$65 million by the 2010-11 budget. The General Assembly established SVPS with the same commitment for program expansion, and the program has expanded each year and is funded at \$65 million for FY 2010-11.

Need for Assistance

While it is evident that Iowa has had success in increasing focus and in investments during a child's youngest years, the task of systems building is far from complete – both from the perspective of achieving the goal that “all children, beginning at birth, will be healthy and successful” or that children and their families have access to quality and evidenced-based services they need to enable them to meet this goal.

Through Early Childhood Iowa, local ECI Boards are required to report on the status of young children in their jurisdictions. School districts are required to develop and report a measure of children's school readiness at kindergarten entry.

The Early Childhood Iowa Board reports annually on the status of young children

The most recent ECI/Iowa Community Empowerment report (tracking data over the decade or so) includes statewide information from each of the ECI results areas including:

- **Healthy Children:** Data shows that rates of low birth weight births is decreasing.
- **Children Ready to Succeed in School:** Data shows a steady increase in key pre-literacy skills in children entering Kindergarten.
- **Safe and Supporting Communities:** Data shows that Iowa's employment rate has decreased in recent years and 2009 saw a decrease in juvenile arrests.
- **Secure and Nurturing Families:** Data shows that while incidences of child abuse have declined, teen birth rates have increased.
- **Secure and Nurturing Child Care Environments:** Data shows that overall (over the last decade) the number of licensed or registered child care slots has increased, although the number did decrease by 2,130 between 2008 and 2009. 1,243 programs are participating in the state's child care Quality Rating System.

The indicators reflect some improvements for children 0-5 and their families and some areas in need of further or continued attention. The availability of this information shows an investment in and focus on data collection along with a

structure for consistent reporting of this information by early childhood system development initiatives.

Nationally, it has been estimated that half of future school difficulties and eventual drop-out already are evident in children at the time they enter school. To a good degree, fourth grade reading and mathematics proficiency can be employed as a lagging indicator of children’s early learning and development prior to school entry. As the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scores show for Iowa, the level of reading and mathematics proficiency at fourth grade is of concern for Iowa as well as the nation. In Iowa our ranking among the 50 states has actually dropped significantly.

National Assessment of Educational Progress Scores:					
Percent Proficient – All Students					
	<u>4th Grade Reading</u>		<u>8th Grade Mathematics</u>		
	<u>1992</u>	<u>2005</u>		<u>1992</u>	<u>2005</u>
Iowa	36%	33%	Iowa	31%	34%
United States	27%	30%	United States	20%	28%
Iowa Ranking	T2	T19	Iowa Ranking	T1	T13

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

While gains have been made in developing early childhood programs and services, the current reality is that there are many gaps in meeting the needs of young children and their families in Iowa and that services are not of uniformly high quality nor are they always based upon strong evidence of effectiveness. From

a systems perspective, they often operate independently from one another and young children and their families may not receive continuity or coordination across different services they receive.

This grant will enable Iowa to do a much more detailed analysis of the gaps and needs in its early childhood system, but the state already can provide a broad picture of the services its provides within each of the four ovals and some estimate of the systems building work it needs to do.

Child Health. Over the last three years, Iowa dramatically expanded child health coverage through its Medicaid and CHIP program, *hawk-i*. This has included raising the eligibility level for *hawk-i* to 300% of poverty, providing coverage for legally-residing immigrant children with no waiting period, streamlining enrollment and re-enrollment procedures, establishing a Family Opportunity Act, and providing a dental only coverage option under *hawk-i*. Iowa also has established a First Five Initiative to support comprehensive screening during well-child visits and developing effective referrals for service. In 2008 (the most recent year for which federal figures are available), it was estimated that 40,000 children in Iowa were not insured, 7% of all Iowa children. Since that time, however, over 60,000 additional Iowa children are now covered under Medicaid or *hawk-i*. While rising health costs and the recession likely would have resulted in some loss of coverage, Iowa has made major inroads in covering all children. The experiences of First Five have been very positive, but there is still much work to do to further

diffuse comprehensive screening practices and follow-up referrals for young children through well-child visits.

Special Needs. Research on young children’s mental health and developmental needs is clear that early identification and response to emotional, behavioral, and developmental needs in young children is critical to their overall development. Whether a learning disability, autism, attention deficit disorder, behavioral problems, or young child depression, early identification and response is essential both to addressing the child’s needs and to supporting the family in responding effectively to those special needs. Nationally, it is estimated that up to one-quarter of young children have one or more special needs that benefit from special professional attention. At the same time, while Iowa has invested new funding in its early intervention program (Part C of IDEA, called Early ACCESS in Iowa), it currently serves only a little more than two percent of Iowa’s infants and toddlers. Like most states, Iowa has a shortage of child psychologists and psychiatrists and a particular gap in identifying and treating very young children. While First Five has strengthened connections between the pediatric community and specialists who can respond to young children’s emotional, behavioral, and development needs, there is much work to be done in establishing referral protocols and effective referrals and linkages to services for young children screened by pediatricians (or in child care settings) as having special needs.

Family Support. Due, in part to the work of Early Childhood Iowa, there are substantial investments in parenting education, home visiting, and family support,

with over \$15 million annually provided through ECI alone. In addition, Iowa provides several other sources of funding for family support, including Healthy Families Iowa and Family Resource Center support. Under the new federal home visiting program, Iowa is scheduled to receive \$1 million in additional funding for evidenced-based home visiting next year, with planning for use of that funding being developed within Early Childhood Iowa. Still, the current reach of Iowa's home visiting programs is not sufficient to reach many families who could benefit, with ballpark estimates that between five and ten percent of families with very young children (0-2) receiving some form of home visiting or family support services, although more than twice that amount are good candidates for such preventive services.

Early Learning. Over the last four years, Iowa has made dramatic advances in providing preschool experiences, with \$65 million invested annually in the SVPS, which now serves over ninety percent of the state and provides at least a ten hour per week preschool program with credentialed teachers to approximately 15,000 four-year olds. With Head Start, Part B preschool services under IDEA, community empowerment preschool vouchers, and Iowa's Shared Vision program (an intensive preschool program for low-income children established in 1988), Iowa now serves approximately 65% of all four year olds in some publicly-supported preschool program. Moreover, Iowa's SVPS requires school districts to collaborate with local Early Childhood Iowa Boards and Head Start programs in developing preschool programs; and local Early Childhood Iowa Boards often provide wraparound

services to enable parents of young children to take advantage of SVPS and to meet their other child care needs. Again, however, the task of providing preschool to all Iowa four-year olds is not entirely complete, although school districts can receive state funding, after the first year of expansion, to serve additional four-year olds in their districts if needed.

SVPS, while an essential part of Iowa's early learning component, is only one part – and Iowa has been working to strengthen its early care and education system through the establishment of a Quality Rating System for both child care centers and family child development homes and investing in a variety of quality improvement efforts. The key challenge Iowa faces, like other states, is a mismatch between what most parents can afford to pay for child care and what is needed to ensure that all child care is of high quality and developmentally appropriate for the children it serves. Iowa is among the top three states in the country in the proportion of families with young children where both parents are in the workforce, with resulting needs for child care.

Iowa's child care subsidy program has generally moderate co-payments for child care and does not have waiting lists for child care, but its top eligibility level of 145% of poverty is among the lowest in the country and creates a very large “cliff effect” when parents receiving child care subsidies increase their earnings above that threshold. For a family of three with one child, this can mean a cliff of more than \$2,500 annually when family incomes rise slightly above 145% of poverty, with families not recovering from falling off this cliff until they earn over 180% of

poverty. Meanwhile, various studies of Iowa's child care system have shown that a majority of care provided through registered and licensed providers is of mediocre quality, at best, and up to one-fifth is of poor quality.

In short, from a financial perspective, Iowa's gap in providing early care and education environments from birth to five that promote young children's learning and development is the greatest among the four ovals. Further, because many early care and education programs struggle financially themselves, their ability to connect young children and families to other needed services are often limited. While Iowa's QRS system and its quality improvement activities promote collaboration and local Early Childhood Iowa Boards often direct resources to this end, including supporting nurse consultation to early care and education programs, programs often struggle to provide basic care to children, let alone to respond to young children's needs that go beyond that basic care.

Summary. Through the work of the state Early Childhood Iowa Board and the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance, Iowa already has developed a framework for assessing Iowa's early childhood system and been able to take advantage of opportunities (such as health care reform and VSPPS) to fill specific gaps and to begin to link and coordinate them with other parts of an early learning system.

In 2002, the Urban Education Network (the nine largest school districts in the state) worked with members of the Iowa Business Council (the twenty largest employers in the state) to identify investment needs and opportunities in early

childhood, with a long-term goal of strengthening overall school readiness and educational success. The Blueprint commissioned by the Urban Education Network suggested that there was a \$300+ million investment gap in Iowa – across health, special needs, early learning, and family support – but that a \$75 million “down payment” could be strategically invested immediately in a cost-effective way with a statewide impact. Since that time, through Early Childhood Iowa, SVPS, and child health expansion, in particular, more than \$100 million has been invested, but that still leaves at least an additional \$200 million in further investments. The forward movement made since 2002, even despite state financial challenges, is very significant and sets the stage for further actions that can complete the task. This will require collaboration across state agencies and departments, but it also will require public and private partnerships at the state level and partnerships between the state and community in service design and delivery.

Iowa has established an overall governance structure that is comprehensive in its focus upon what young children and their families need and inclusive in ensuring the involvement of all key stakeholders. The ECAC funding enables Iowa to strengthen the infrastructure for this further systems development. This will include improvements to, among other areas, Iowa’s data and professional development systems. An overview of the status of those systems is included in the next section.

APPROACH

Introduction

The changes in Iowa's governance structure for early childhood systems provides a unique moment to reenergize Iowa's efforts to assure an integrated and coordinated high quality system. Through the work that has been done under the banners of ECI Stakeholders, Iowa Community Empowerment, and other related initiatives strategic plans across the system have been produced. The Early Childhood Advisory Council funding will be used, in part, to move those efforts ahead, identify unmet needs and implement strategies to improve Iowa's early childhood system. Funding will also be used to increase the staff capacity in two key areas of system building work and to begin a conversation focusing on early childhood related data and its use. These types of systems level strategies, to better coordinate and integrate a system that is accountable and moving ahead based on solid information and the identification of needs and gaps, are in perfect alignment with the needs of Iowa's system at this point in time. These activities pull together stakeholders, expertise, and authority from across the system and across sectors. There is an ongoing need for the implementation of activities and strategies that support and require strong and intentional coordination and collaboration among early childhood development programs, services and systems that impact children 0-5 and their families. ECI will improve the quality and sustainability of early childhood education and development programs and services for children birth to school entry in Iowa through these targeted goals, objectives and activities.

Overview of Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Create an Early Childhood Iowa Systems Coordinator position whose responsibilities would be to expand capacity and support system building efforts outlined in the Early Childhood Iowa Strategic Plan with a specific focus on goals, objectives and activities outlined here.

Objective 1: Hire an ECI Systems Coordinator.

Objective 2: Develop a protocol to assure a close partnership with the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) coordinator and other Iowa Department of Public Health staff dedicated to the ECCS grant system building activities and goals. “The purpose of ECCS is to support states and communities in their efforts to build and integrate early childhood service systems that address the critical components of access to comprehensive health services and medical homes; social-emotional development and mental health of young children; early care and education; parenting education, and family support.”

Objective 3: Develop strategies to assure ongoing coordination between with ECI Office Administrator (formerly Statewide Empowerment Facilitator), other key DOM staff and the newly created ECI Systems Coordinator.

Iowa’s Department of Management has been the home for Iowa’s Community Empowerment Initiative since its inception in 1998. A small staff, along with a TA team from across key Iowa Departments, have provided guidance and staffing.

With the new ECI Initiative, which was implemented July 1, 2010 the roles and responsibilities of the former Iowa Community Empowerment staff have expanded

to include those of the ECI Stakeholder Alliance and the ECI State Board. To support this expanded role funding will be used for an Early Childhood Systems Coordinator. This will increase the capacity of the ECI staff to provide general leadership and coordination; and to move ahead specific system building tasks and strategies. It takes time, resources and dedicated staff to move these efforts ahead and the expanded capacity made possible by this funding will move efforts to assess, improve and integrate the system ahead more effectively.

Key Partners. The Iowa Department of Management (DOM), the ECI coordinating office, Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), the ECI co-chairs group, and ECCS grant coordinator who will work together to produce a job description, announcement and lead the hiring process.

Factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work. For the activities of this grant and other system building efforts to move ahead within the proposed time frame, a position entirely focused on those efforts and systems coordination is needed. This assures the hiring of a ECI Systems Coordinator is a top priority and one that will be accomplished within the first two quarters of funding.

Goal 2: Conduct a needs assessment of Iowa’s comprehensive early childhood system including services focusing on healthy children, children ready to succeed in school, safe and supportive communities, secure and nurturing families and secure and nurturing early care and education environments. The assessment will focus on gaps between resources and services as well as access.

Objective 1: Convene an ECI work group to produce a Request for Proposal and description of needs assessment activities.

Objective 2: Produce a Request for Proposal for the development of a comprehensive needs assessment of early childhood programs, services and workforce.

Objective 3: Utilize the findings of the needs assessment to update the ECI strategic plan and strategies at the state level.

Objective 4: Utilize the findings of the needs assessment at the local level.

To most effectively build a system that provides support to young children and their families those planning, implementing and identifying resources for that system must know 1- Who could potentially benefit from the services or programs? 2- Who is currently accessing those services and programs 3- If there is a gap between those why is that gap there?, and 4- What can the system to do close that gap? Iowa currently has the answers to some of those questions, for parts of its early childhood systems in some places. A comprehensive needs assessment will be planned, funded and used in a variety of ways to answer a variety of questions. What additional funding, coordination, resources and strategies to improve access are needed in Iowa?

The findings of the assessment will be used in the strategic planning process at the state and local levels. Funding will also be used to provide technical assistance to state and local systems to aid them in the utilization of the needs assessment data for their planning efforts. Regional meetings centered on the use

of the needs assessment information will be held. The new ECI legislation requires the ECI Board to produce a strategic plan. The needs assessment will inform that planning. The current ECI strategic plan (full plan is available on request) will serve as the basis for the new ECI plan and has informed the areas of focus for the goals and activities highlighted in this application.

Key Partners. IDPH, IDOE, IDHS, IDHR, IDWD, Head Start, IAEYC, Child and Family Policy Center, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, ECI Stakeholder Alliance, ECI Board, ECI local boards and coordinators, Project Launch. This comprehensive group of key partners will help to identify the key questions for the assessment and work closely with a consultant to provide the assessment information back to the system. These key partners are also central to providing technical assistance to state and local systems in the best ways to use the outcomes of this work.

Factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work. Under the new legislation the development/updating of a strategic plan is mandated. To appropriately fulfill that requirement and to identify the gaps in funding, participation, coordination etc. a comprehensive needs assessment is necessary and a high priority. A factor that might delay the work is the plan to post a RFP to identify an organization or individual to conduct the assessment. That process can sometimes delay the start of the work, although the planners are confident that in the long term it will provide high quality and comprehensive information for the system in a timely fashion.

Goal 3: Proceed in the development of a framework for an early childhood data system that provides information to providers, policymakers, stakeholders, parents, researchers and the private sector about the operation, participation and outcomes of Iowa's early childhood system.

Objective 1: Convene an Early Childhood Iowa data work group including representatives from the Early Childhood Iowa results accountability component group, the Iowa Department of Human Services, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and other key partners to identify data needs and opportunities for collaboration and coordination across data systems focusing on early childhood.

Objective 2: Through the ECI data work group identify data needs for Iowa's early childhood system.

Objective 3: Determine what early childhood related data is currently available across Iowa's system.

Objective 4: Identify recommendations to improve, link or integrate existing data systems to better provide information to the early childhood system and stakeholders.

All states maintain a great deal of information about specific early childhood programs and services and the providers and consumers of those services. In Iowa data is collected from:

- Child care assistance (subsidy) programs;

- Preschool programs under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
- State-funded preschool programs;
- State-funded home visiting and family support and resource center programs;
- Child Care Resource and Referral agencies;
- Early intervention services for infants and toddlers under Part C of IDEA;
- Child protective and foster care services for children in need of assistance;
- Health care services under Medicaid and the Child Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which include behavioral and mental health services;
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) income support participation;
- Supplemental nutrition assistance programs (SNAP) and, of particular relevance and importance to young children, the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program;
- Early Childhood Iowa local areas and other sources.

Even with the availability or presence of data from sources such as these and others there is often limited information that applies to all young children in a state; looks at how those systems and programs work together; helps identify who is not getting the services that might benefit them; or lays out the longer-term outcomes or impacts those systems have.

In Iowa questions will be asked such as:

- What are Iowa's key policy questions related to its early childhood data?
- Who are the key audiences and uses for data?

- What do the currently available data systems look like? What do they collect?
In what form is the data available?
- What are the opportunities for interoperability or sharing data across systems?
- What governance and planning process that will work to coordinate these data related efforts?

Recommendations will focus not only on what data the system needs to improve, be better coordinated, or to better show impacts, but will include technical recommendations on how to integrate systems and share information.

Currently, Iowa does not have a comprehensive, integrated early childhood data system. Nor does the state have a protocol for sharing information across all systems impacting young children and their families. However, efforts to explore how the Iowa Department of Education's statewide longitudinal database can incorporate early childhood data and be used to track children from early childhood programs into the elementary school system are underway. This work will build on that conversation and provide opportunities for others to come to the table to plan for a comprehensive early childhood data system in the state. Small pilot projects to implement recommendations on a small scale and to identify lessons learned that could be used during a larger scaled up phase will be funded during the third year of the grant.

Key partners. IDPH, IDOE, IDHS, DOM, Child and Family Policy Center, ECI Stakeholders Alliance, ECI Board, CCRR are already collecting key data for

children 0-5 and their families in the state. All of their input is central to assuring that recommendations are useful and can be put into practice.

Factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work. When analyzing the needs of Iowa's early childhood system, the ability to identify, utilize and share data is always a top priority. The accountability mandate and creation of unique student identifiers for those in preschool programs, required in the new legislation, has focused even more attention on what data the system is collecting and how that data can be used for system improvement and support. This increased focus will accelerate the work. Also, the Iowa Department of Education is receiving funding for the State Longitudinal Data program and part of their work is to begin pulling in Pre-K data into their K-12 longitudinal data systems.

Data is complex and the technical expertise to integrate systems can seem overwhelming and can decelerate planning around this important topic. Some monies will be spent to support the technical side of the planning work and assure that the recommendations that come out of the planning group's work reflect the technical needs as well as the policy and coordination aspects of the work.

Goal 4: Fully implement Early Childhood Iowa's Professional Development Framework.

Objective 1: Contract for a .25 Professional Development System Coordinator
.25 FTE professional development coordinator will be hired through the ECAC funds to support the work of the PD system. The PD coordinator will work with

staff from other state agencies and private organizations to increase coordination of professional development activities.

Objective 2-A: The ECI Stakeholders Alliance through the Professional Development steering committee of the Professional Development Component Group of ECI will provide leadership to ensure the Professional Development Framework, modeled after NAEYC's Blueprint, is fully implemented.

Objective 2-B: Develop strategies to address needs that surface in the needs assessment where professional development system improvements can help address access and quality issues.

Objective 3: Four Leadership Teams representing the professional development needs of the four sectors (early learning, early intervention/special needs, health, mental health and nutrition and family support) who have been meeting since November, 2009, will adopt and implement strategies to provide an integrated, comprehensive network of professional development.

Objective 4: Survey and support the system's capacity to address professional development needs of all sectors of the early childhood workforce. Review, and as needed, update the Iowa Early Learning Standards, taking into consideration the new framework, the adopted teacher level and competencies, recommendations from the ECI diversity advisory group, and updates in state/national standards.

Professional development consists of the formal education and training for early childhood professionals that supports and empowers them to improve the

quality of care and early education provided to young children. Professional development is important for licensed teachers who have formal college education to continue to enhance skills that support school readiness. It is also important for professionals who meet Iowa Professional Licensing Standards in order for them to provide quality care that will assist children in achieving good outcomes. Research defines effective professional development as professional development that is outcome based, provided by an approved trainer with ongoing technical assistance.

The skills the early childhood professional is expected to master are practiced in both the training session and in the work setting. Providing outcome-based training assists professionals in meeting quality program standards and will assist in providing activities that help children achieve the Iowa Early Learning Standards.

An effective professional development system crosses many sectors in an effort to reach a variety of early care, health, and education professionals. In addition, an effective system addresses the elements of leadership, regulation and standards, education, articulation, training, compensation, and evaluation by its delineation of results and performance measures. A system implies coordination and articulation among and between agencies.

The best way to improve quality in early care and education is through enhancing professional development. Research indicates children who participate in high quality early learning programs demonstrate greater school readiness and success through second grade than children who had been in low quality care, even

after controlling for family differences (*The Cost, Quality and Outcomes Study*, 1999, National Center on Early Development and Learning). A professional development system will assist Iowa in achieving results by:

- Supporting and empowering individuals to improve and sustain the quality of early care, health, and education in Iowa.
- Identifying and documenting professional competencies of individuals.
- Assuring that quality training is disseminated by approved trainers across the state.
- Improving career mobility by increasing opportunities to link training education for advanced degrees.
- Supporting individuals in receiving compensation that is commensurate with qualifications and responsibilities.

In order to achieve these results several components of the systems are necessary. Some of these components currently exist in Iowa. Some components exist only within some agencies or locales, while others are statewide. These components include funding, core knowledge, credentials and qualifications, quality assurances, and access and outreach. Iowa currently has a core body of knowledge as well as Early Learning Standards (ELS). Released in 2006 by the Iowa Department of Human Services and Department of Education, Iowa's ELS focus on:

- Physical well-being and motor development;
- Approaches to learning;

- Social and emotional development;
- Communication, language, and literacy;
- Mathematics and science; and
- Creative arts.

To support implementation, the Iowa ELS also provides guidance across the following topics:

- Guiding Principles;
- Terminology;
- Skills, Knowledge, and Attitudes;
- The Role of Play;
- The Roles of Caregivers;
- The Role of Assessment;
- Diversity;
- Accommodations for Children with Special Needs; and
- Policy Issues.

Expectations for credentials and qualifications and quality assurances exist within some agencies or professions but are not shared statewide. These expectations create the foundation for an effective system of professional development but have not yet illuminated pathways, highlighted partners, or clearly defined mechanisms for delivery.

Iowa's Early Childhood Professional Development System is fragmented, duplicative and lacks essential resources. So in 2009, the ECI Professional

Development Component Group fulfilled a long time dream of creating a professional development framework (full framework available on request) for Iowa. This framework addresses Iowa's weaknesses by focusing on policies that connect professional development activities to support effective implementation of a coordinated system. This framework highlights the principles and policy areas that will build and sustain an integrated, comprehensive system uniting the early childhood sectors¹ of early learning, family support, special needs/early intervention and health, mental health and nutrition – and addresses the needs of children ages 0 to 5 and their families.

Iowa's Early Childhood Professional Development System will be a system of integrated supports for early childhood professionals that empower them to improve the quality of services provided to young children and their families.

The EC workforce study will be used as a framework for increasing the need for support related to the professional development needs of early care, health and education providers. The PD Steering Committee will work with representatives from higher education to engage them in the comprehensive PD strategies. A .25 FTE professional development coordinator will be hired through the ECAC funds to support the work of the PD system. The PD coordinator will work with staff from other state agencies and private organizations to increase coordination of professional development activities.

Key partners. The members of the Professional Development Component group have already established an implementation plan and policy framework. The state

universities, community colleges, Dept of Education, IAEYC, Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, Head Start, Department of Education, Department of Health will all play key roles in the implementation of the plan and framework.

Factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work. Implementation of state standards and systems that require the work on competencies, pathways, articulation will help us to move faster towards completion. Issues that might decelerate our work include, Changes in staffing due to budget cuts, the re-vamping of the Head Start T & TA system and necessary time to get back to full speed.

Goal 5: Facilitate the development or enhancement of high quality early care, health and education programs to improve school readiness in Iowa.

Objective 1: Strengthen leadership, collaboration and coordination of state agencies and early childhood partners to improve the quality of state and local-level programs.

Objective 2: Implement the ECI Diversity Advisory Committee work plan that will include strategies to improve the quality of early childhood programs

We know that high quality programs enhance a child's ability to reach their full potential in all areas of growth & development. Quality early care, health, and education experiences increase the quality of life for children. Quality Programs have been linked to:

- Increased high school graduation;
- Increases rates;
- Increased strength of skills;

- Reduced grade repetition;
- Reduced teen pregnancy rates;
- Reduced crime and delinquency;
- Leading to greater employment; and
- Higher wages as adults.

ECI will continue to build on the work of the Quality Services and Programs Component Workgroup as they investigate and promote quality practices for the Early Care, Health and Education system.

Workgroup Responsibilities Include:

- To expand early learning environments and opportunities, with attention to those meeting a minimum desired level of quality;
- To create and maintain links with entities that support the development and improvement of services at a local, state and regional level; and
- To incorporate evidence-based knowledge for early care and education, family support programs, health services and other programs and services that serve young children and their families.

As is true around the country, Iowa also is becoming more diverse, and young children are leading the way. While 9.2 % of the Iowa's working age population and 2.7% of the senior population is of color, 14.8% of Iowa's school-aged population and 17.7% of its preschool age population are of color. The growing diversity places new responsibilities on both early childhood and K-12 educational systems to respond to this opportunity.

In 2007 ECI hosted a Diversity and Early Childhood Symposium. Over 200 stakeholders and leaders participated with the goal to discuss and plan for a responsive and high quality system for all young children in the state. Growing from the needs identified during that Symposium and since, Iowa has established a diversity and school readiness working group within Early Childhood Iowa. This group has been charged with the development and implementation of strategies to assure a high quality early childhood system, taking into consideration the diversity of all young children and their families.

The strategies of ECI's Diversity Advisory committee are focused in five identified gap areas. Strategies, to learn more about and then address, these gaps have been identified and are part of the ECI diversity and school readiness strategic plan (full plan is available on request). These gaps include:

- A readiness gap at the time of kindergarten entry (similar to and with some common etiology to income, achievement, health, safety, justice system, and wealth gaps);
- A participation gap in formal services (particularly health services and preschool and other formal care arrangements);
- A cultural awareness and recognition gap (particularly for providers serving children with different cultural and language backgrounds than their own);
- A workforce diversity gap (particularly among credentialed providers and within professional institutions training and accrediting the workforce); and

- A stakeholder planning and decision-making gap (particularly in developing public policies and recognizing the expertise of those from other backgrounds and experiences).

Resources will be used to move the strategic plan ahead and support the efforts of the ECI Diversity Council by identifying best practices and implementation strategies. The ECI Diversity Workgroup has gained commitment from state agency and public/private partners on the integration of the work plan into existing planning for their agencies. This reflects one step in improving the impact and overall quality of the system in Iowa, for all young children and their families.

The ECAC grant will support an ECI Parent Summit to identify recommendations for systems improvement from parents and families. The Parent Summit is a strategy outlined in the ECI Diversity Council work plan. The ECI Governance component group has provided leadership on the Parent Summit and has researched successful models from other states. After the Summit an ECI Parent/family advisory council will be formed to provide ongoing insights and recommendations.

Key Partners. This will require significant collaboration among the following primary stakeholders: IDPH, IDOE, IDHS, IDHR, IDWD, Head Start, IAAYC, Child and Family Policy Center, CCR&R, AFSCME, IDOM, United Way, Governor's office and the State Legislature, the ECI Diversity Advisory Group, the ECI

Governance Component Group. All those who care about young children in our state will need to come together to ensure the highest quality care is available.

Factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work. Finding a unified definition of what quality care will take some time and effort. There is enthusiasm for this conversation and for securing resources to move the diversity strategies ahead.

**Early Childhood Iowa State Advisory Council
Implementation Plan**

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Goal 1: Create an EARLY CHILDHOOD IOWA COORDINATOR position whose responsibilities would be to expand capacity and support system-building efforts outlined in the Early Childhood Iowa Strategic Plan with a specific focus on goals, objectives and activities outlined here.						
Objective 1.1: Hire the ECI Systems Coordinator.						
Activity 1A: Develop a job description and requirements for the ECI Systems Coordinator position specifying required credentials and scope of responsibilities.	DOM is conferred with regarding job description requirements. Year 1 Quarter 1. Job description is produced and finalized. Year 1 Quarter 1.	Department of Management (DOM)	X			
Activity 1B: Establish a Search and Selection Committee to advise the Director of the Iowa Department of Management throughout the hiring process.	Members of the Search and Selection Committee are identified. Year 1 Quarter 1.	DOM	X			
Activity 1C: Advertise statewide for the position.	Position is posted statewide. Year 1 Quarter 1.	DOM	X			
Objective 1.2: Develop a protocol to assure a close partnership with the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) coordinator and other Iowa Department of Public Health staff dedicated to the ECCS grant system-building activities and goals.						

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 1D: Bring together Iowa's ECCS grant coordinator, Early Childhood Iowa Systems Coordinator and other key Iowa Department of Public Health and Iowa Department of Management staff to develop protocol and discuss details around the coordination of ECCS and ECI system building efforts.	Workgroup is formed. Year 1 Quarter 2. Protocol established. Year 1 Quarter 2.	DOM	X			
Objective 1.3: Develop strategies to assure ongoing coordination between with ECI Office Administrator (formerly Statewide Empowerment Facilitator), other key DOM staff and the newly created ECI Systems Coordinator.						
Activity 1E: Bring together key team members from DOM to develop a work plan to assure coordination and capacity.	Workgroup is formed. Year 1 Quarter 2. Protocol established. Year 1 Quarter 2 then ongoing.	DOM	X	X	X	
Goal 2: Conduct a NEEDS ASSESSMENT of Iowa's comprehensive early childhood system, including services focusing on healthy children, children ready to succeed in school, safe and supportive communities, secure and nurturing families and secure and nurturing early care and education environments. The assessment will focus on gaps between resources and services as well as access.						
Objective 2.1: Convene an ECI work group to produce a Request for Proposal and description of needs assessment activities.						

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 2A: Include representatives from the ECI component groups (Funding and Resources, Quality Services and Programs), local Early Childhood Iowa area coordinators and others to be identified.	Workgroup members are identified. Year 1 Quarter 2. Workgroup meetings are convened. Starting Year 1 Quarter 2.	DOM	X			
Activity 2B: Produce a description of required needs assessment activities.	Timeline and activities are identified by the workgroup. Year 1 Quarter 3. RFP for needs assessment consultant is produced and finalized. Year 1 Quarter 3. RFP is released. Year 1 Quarter 3. Consultant is identified. Year 1 Quarter 4.	DOM	X			
Objective 2.2: With the contractor selected through the RFP process:						
Activity 2C: Identify already existing needs assessments at the state and local levels across the system, including early care and education, family support, special needs and health.	Year 2 Quarter 1.	DOM		X		

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 2D: Assess areas where professional development improvement strategies can assist in addressing quality and access issues as part of the needs assessment.	Year 2 Quarter 1.	DOM		X		
Activity 2E: Provide a mechanism for state and local-level partners to complete a needs assessment on the availability of early childhood programs and conduct assessment.	Year 2 Quarters 2-3.	DOM		X		
Activity 2F: Provide preliminary recommendations on local funding categories and state funds related to early childhood, as well as opportunities for collaboration among programs, based on the gaps and needs identified in the assessment.	Year 2 Quarters 4.	DOM		X		
Objective 2.3: Utilize the findings of the needs assessment to update the ECI strategic plan and strategies at the state level.						
Activity 2G: Present needs assessment findings to the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance co-chairs. Outline strategies to use the findings for component group work and planning. Highlight recommendations for presentation to the Early Childhood Iowa Board.	Presentation of findings produced. Year 3 Quarter 1. Findings are presented and recommendations finalized. Year 3 Quarter 1.	DOM			X	

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 2H: Present the needs assessment findings and recommendations to the Early Childhood Iowa board and an invited representative from the Iowa Department of Management to aid the Board in making recommendations to improve access and quality.	Year 3 Quarter 1.	DOM			X	
Activity 2I: Present needs assessment findings to the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance.	Year 3 Quarter 1.	DOM			X	
Activity 2J: Present needs assessments findings to other stakeholder groups, including policymakers, private-sector groups, advocates, etc.	Year 3 Quarter 1.	DOM			X	
Activity 2K: Update State ECI Strategic Plan to reflect needs assessment findings.	Year 3 Quarter 1.	DOM and ECI Stakeholders Alliance			X	
Objective 2.4: Utilize the findings of the needs assessment at the local level.						
Activity 2L: Share the findings of the needs assessment with local Early Childhood Iowa area boards and stakeholders during a series of local/regional meetings.	Year 3 Quarter 2.	DOM			X	

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 2M: During local/regional meetings, provide technical assistance to best utilize the findings at the local level.	Year 3 Quarter 2.	DOM			X	
Goal 3: Proceed in the development of a framework for an EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA SYSTEM that provides information to providers, policymakers, stakeholders, parents, researchers and the private sector about the operation, participation and outcomes of Iowa's early childhood system.						
Objective 3.1: Convene an Early Childhood Iowa data work group including representatives from the Early Childhood Iowa results accountability component group, the Iowa Department of Human Services, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Public Health, and other key partners to identify data needs and opportunities for collaboration and coordination across data systems focusing on early childhood.						
Activity 3A: Invite participation on the data work group from identified state departments and other key public or private partners with expertise in data collection, use and analysis related to children 0-5 and their families.	Key partners will identify representative person or persons to sit on ECI data advisory group. Year 1 Quarter 2.	DOM and DOE	X			

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 3B: Secure the perspectives of those conducting early childhood research in Iowa on needs and opportunities in developing data that can be used for answering important research questions that can guide policy and practice.	Key experts and partners outside of the ECI data advisory group are identified. Year 1 Quarter 1. Key experts and partners outside of the ECI data diversity group are invited to comment and share thoughts on the current data system and future recommendations. Year 1 Quarter 3 and ongoing.	DOM and DOE	X	X	X	
Activity 3C: Convene periodic meetings of the work group.	Inaugural meeting of work group is held. Year 1 Quarter 3. Initial work plan and future meeting schedule is determined. Year 1 Quarter 3.	DOM and DOE	X	X	X	
Objective 3.2: Through the ECI data work group, identify data needs for Iowa's early childhood system.						
Activity 3D: Discuss the needs for data for Early Childhood Iowa and Iowa's early childhood system by accomplishing the following tasks: · Define key policy questions · Define key audiences and uses for data	The data needs of Iowa's early childhood system are outlined. Year 1 Quarter 4 to Year 2 Quarter 2.		X	X		

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop a governance and planning process · Take stock of current data efforts · Develop an action plan for improvements 						
Activity 3E: Include measures to assess access and quality issues for key early childhood services in the areas of operations participation and outcomes for children.	Year 1 Quarter 4 to Year 2 Quarter 2.		X	X		
Activity 3F: Explore how the statewide longitudinal database can incorporate early childhood data and be used to track children from early childhood programs into the elementary school system.	Year 2 Quarter 2		X	X		
Objective 3.3: Determine what early childhood-related data is currently available across Iowa's system.						
Activity 3G: Conduct an assessment of what data is collected in Iowa and what databases exist in both the public and private sectors focusing on systems and programs that impact children 0-5 and their families.	Year 1 Quarter 4 to Year 2 Quarter 2.		X	X		

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 3H: Identify other councils, planning groups, etc., that are also responsible for data collection, use and improvement.	Year 1 Quarter 4 to Year 2 Quarter 2.		X	X		
Activity 3I: In partnership with the ECI Diversity Advisory Group, include a specific focus on the assessment of how language, cultural, ethnic and other areas of diversity area addressed in data collection systems focusing on children 0-5 and their families.	Ongoing		X	X	X	
Objective 3.4: Identify recommendations to improve, link or integrate existing data systems to better provide information to the early childhood system and stakeholders.						
Activity 3J: Explore what early childhood systems data is collected and available in other states, how are those systems linked, and how is the data used?	Identify other states to contact. Year 2 Quarter 2. Interviews with leaders from other key states are conducted. Year 2 Quarter 3. Lessons and successful models from other states are identified and shared with the full data advisory group. Year 2 Quarter 3.			X		

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 3K: Share recommendations from the Early Childhood Iowa data work group with policymakers, ECI component groups and other appropriate stakeholders.	Recommendations are finalized. Year 3 Quarter 2.			X	X	
Activity 3L: Explore the possibility of pilot projects to test early childhood-focused data sharing and use across systems.	Recommendations for a pilot project are finalized. Year 3 Quarter 4.				X	
Goal 4: Fully implement Early Childhood Iowa's PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT framework.						
Objective 4.1: Contract for a .25 Professional Development System Coordinator.						
Activity 4A: Develop a job description for PD Coordinator that includes connections with others responsible for professional development in the early care, health and education system.	Job description developed and approved by various agencies and posted. Year 1 Quarter 1	PD Steering Committee and DOM	X			
Activity 4B: Develop an RFP for PD Coordinator position.	Candidates interviewed and job offer made to successful candidate. Candidate begins employment by Year 1 Quarter 1	PD Steering Committee and DOM	X			
Objective 4.2: The ECI Stakeholders Alliance through the Professional Development steering committee of the Professional Development Component Group of ECI will provide leadership to ensure the Professional Development Framework, modeled after NAEYC's Blueprint, is fully implemented.						

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 4C: The PD steering committee and the leadership workgroups (in partnership with the PD component group members) will work with the Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance and other partners to prioritize and implement strategies, infusing goals and objectives of the framework into state agencies and private organization goals and budgets.	IDPH, DOE, DOM and DHS have implemented goal and objective into their goals and budgets. Ongoing	ECI Alliance, Co-Chairs and DOM	X	X	X	
Activity 4D: The PD steering committee will develop PD communications plan.	work with communications firm Year 2 Quarter 2- Plan is implemented. Year 2 Quarter 3 Communications is improved- survey will be completed on effectiveness of communications plan Year 3 - ongoing	PD Steering Committee		X	X	
Objective 4.3: Four leadership teams representing the professional development needs of the four sectors (early learning, early intervention/special needs, health, mental health and nutrition and family support) that have been meeting since November 2009 will adopt and implement strategies to provide an integrated, comprehensive network of professional development.						

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 4E: Adopt and implement competencies and levels for the workforce roles within each sector, using state and/or nationally recognized professional development standards when appropriate.	<p>Workforce discussion broken into four groups to address each sector. Year 2 Quarter 1</p> <p>Each group will propose adopted levels to various workforce roles. Year 2 Quarter 3.</p> <p>Competencies implemented Year 3 and ongoing</p>	PD Steering Committee		X	X	
Activity 4F: Link adopted professional development competencies to state regulation, standards and into systems (licensure).	Facilitate statewide PD committee to revise core competencies. At least one system by end of year two is linked. By end of year three and Quarter 4 all systems are linked	PD Steering Committee and IDPH, DHS, DOE and DOM		X	X	
Activity 4G: Review and consider cultural competencies being produced by the ECI diversity advisory group.	Ongoing.	PD Steering Committee and ECI Diversity Advisory Council	X	X	X	

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 4H: Design and implement credentials, certifications and pathways to support the career advancement of all sectors of our workforce.	Design and convene and facilitate a statewide committee. Year 2 Quarter 4. Committee design credentials. Year 3 Quarter 1. Credentials will be implemented by end of year 3.	PD Steering Committee, Co-Chairs and DOE, DHS and DOM		X	X	
Activity 4I: Design career pathway policies that are aligned with job opportunities that reward investments in professional advancement with appropriate compensation.	WAGE\$ and tiered reimbursement policies are created in draft form for all roles within early learning sector. Propose alignment with the pathways with tiered reimbursement. Year 2 Quarter 2 and ongoing	PD Steering Committee, DHS, DOE and DOM and Co Chairs.		X	X	
Objective 4.4: Survey and support the system's capacity to support the professional development needs of all sectors of the early childhood workforce.						

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 4J: Support and expand the capacity of higher education to train and support the early care, health and education workforce.	A scan of the capacity is completed by end of year one. Workgroup is formed to explore Gaps in capacity. Recommendations are made to legislature and Governors office to expand capacity (increase funding) for professional development. Quarter 4 and ongoing	PD Steering, PD Coordinator, Committee, Co-Chairs, DOE and institutes of higher learning.	X	X	X	
Activity 4K: Develop strategies to promote articulation agreements among high education.	Articulation workgroups are formed. Year 2 Quarter 2 Pilot articulation Agreement projects between Community Colleges and 4 year institutions are reached and implemented by end of year 3.	PD Steering, PD Coord., Committee, Co-Chairs, DOE and institutes of higher learning.		X	X	

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
<p>Activity 4L: Review, and as needed, update the Iowa Early Learning Standards, taking into consideration the new framework, the adopted teacher level and competencies, recommendations from the ECI diversity advisory group, and updates in state/national standards.</p>	<p>Review team is formed year 2. Quarter 1.</p> <p>If appropriate, recommendations for updates to the Early Learning standards are developed. Implementation strategy is developed. New materials and modules are developed and distributed. Year 2 Quarter 2.</p>	<p>PD Steering Committee, Co-Chairs, DHS, DOE, IDPH, and DOM</p>		X	X	

Goal 5: Facilitate the development or enhancement of high quality early care, health and education PROGRAMS to improve school readiness in Iowa.

Objective 5.1: Strengthen leadership, collaboration and coordination of state agencies and early childhood partners to improve the quality of state and local-level programs.

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 5A: Develop and implement communications plan.	<p>Communications workgroup is developed with members from QSP work group and Public Engagement workgroup and any other stakeholders. Year 1 Quarter 2.</p> <p>Workgroup explored other states communications plans. Year 1 Quarter 3.</p> <p>Plan is drafted, shared, input sought implemented. Year 2 and ongoing.</p>	Systems Coor., QSP workgroup, Co-Chairs	X	X	X	

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 5B: Engage the QSP component workgroup to develop recommendations on evidence-based early-childhood programs and services across early learning, family support, health and special needs.	<p>Environmental scan is completed. Year 2 Quarter 1</p> <p>Research on other states evidenced based programs is completed Year 1 Quarter 3</p> <p>Recommendations are distributed for input from the early childhood field. Year 2 Quarter 2</p>	QSP workgroup, ECI Co-Chairs, IDPH, DHS, DOE and DOM.		X	X	
Activity 5C: Share recommendations with ECI Board, stakeholders and policymakers.	Through implemented communications plan recommendations are distributed and feedback is secured. Year 3 and ongoing	Systems Coord., QSP workgroup, Co-Chairs			X	
Activity 5D: Support ongoing communication and collaboration among state agencies and institutes of higher education related to best practices and pre-service training.	QSP workgroup will implement established communications plan. Departments report understanding and access to best practice.	QSP workgroup		X		
Objective 5.2: Implement the Diversity Advisory Council work plan that will include strategies to improve the quality of early childhood programs.						

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
<p>Activity 5E: Continue to provide support for the ECI Diversity Workgroup.</p>	<p>Quarterly meetings of the ECI Diversity Council are scheduled. Ongoing.</p> <p>Quarterly meetings of the ECI Diversity Council are held. Ongoing.</p> <p>Membership recruitment via the Iowa Department of Human Rights Commissions and other avenues continue. Ongoing.</p> <p>The ECI Diversity Council Strategic plan is reviewed bi-annually. Ongoing.</p> <p>ECI diversity website is planned. Year 1 Quarter 4.</p> <p>ECI diversity website is launched. Year 2 Quarter 1.</p>	<p>ECI Diversity Council and ECI Governance Component Group</p>	X	X	X	

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
Activity 5F: Provide support for the implementation of the diversity work plan with state agencies and private organizations.	<p>Specific next steps and areas of focus are approved by the Council. Year 2 Quarter 2.</p> <p>Specific work plans and areas of responsibility to implement identified strategies are produced. Year 2.</p>	ECI Diversity Council and ECI Governance Component Group	X	X	X	
Activity 5G: Conduct a best practices scan across the five gaps identified by the ECI diversity advisory group.	<p>A RFP is produced to identify a consultant to conduct a best practices scan across the five gap areas. Year 2 Quarter 1.</p> <p>Consultant conducts scan. Year 2 Quarters 2-3.</p> <p>Scan results are presented to the ECI Diversity Council. Year 2 Quarter 4.</p> <p>Scan results are presented to the ECI co-chairs and other partners. Year 2 Quarter 4.</p> <p>Scan results are used to update work plan and</p>	ECI Diversity Council and ECI Governance Component Group		X		

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	(TBD)
	expand recommendations. Year 2 Quarter 4.					

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
<p>Activity 5H: Provide support for the planned Early Childhood Iowa parent summit.</p>	<p>Advisory group for the planning of the parent/family summit is convened. Year 1 Quarter 1.</p> <p>Summit site and date are selected. Year 1 Quarter 1.</p> <p>Event is publicized and parent and family programs from across the state are contacted to identify possible participants. Year 1 Quarter 1.</p> <p>Parent Summit is held in Des Moines, Iowa. Year 1 Quarter 1.</p> <p>Input and ideas for early childhood system improvement, generated from the Summit, are shared with the ECI Stakeholders Alliance, the ECI co-chairs and other key partners. Year 1 Quarter 3.</p> <p>Input and ideas are integrated into ECI's</p>	<p>ECI Diversity Council and ECI Governance Component Group</p>	<p>X</p>			

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	(TBD)
	strategic plan as appropriate. Year 1 Quarter 3-4.					

Activities	Milestone/Quarterly Timeline	Party Responsible	Activity Timeline			Status (TBD)
			Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	
<p>Activity 5I: Provide ongoing support for the Early Childhood Iowa Parent Advisory Council.</p>	<p>ECI Parent/Family Advisory Group is convened. Year 2 Quarter 2.</p> <p>Mission for Advisory Group is identified. Year 2 Quarter 2.</p> <p>Strategic plan for the Advisory Group produced. Year 2 Quarter 3-4.</p> <p>Input and ideas for early childhood system improvement are integrated into system planning and implementation. Ongoing.</p>	<p>ECI Diversity Council and ECI Governance Component Group</p>	X	X	X	

Plan for Conducting a Needs Assessment

Goal Two of our proposal for this funding opportunity focuses on dedicated resources and planning for a needs assessment. The assessment will be conducted during year two. Strategies are also in place to share the assessment findings at the state and local levels.

Plan for Holding Public Hearings and Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholders Alliance Meetings

On July 7, 2010, a public hearing was held, hosted by the Iowa Department of Management, to provide an opportunity for public input for the proposed goals, objectives and activities. Comments were received from several state departments and other partners from the public and private sectors. The ECI Stakeholders Alliance, and the planning group for this funding opportunity (which included representatives from the Iowa departments of Public Health, Human Services, Education, and Management as well as private sector representation from the Child and Family Policy Center (an Iowa based private non-profit research organization) and Every Child Counts (a children and family focused advocacy group) also provided input throughout this planning process.

The ECI Stakeholders Alliance, composed of several hundred stakeholders, meets on a quarterly basis. The Council will meet to review implementation status, update the Council's implementation plan and other reasons deemed necessary by the Council. The ECI co-chairs, composed of the co-chairs of each of the five ECI component groups, provide leadership for ECI and meets monthly.

Plans to Sustain This Work Beyond the Grant Period

The one-time nature of this funding was considered when the five primary goals areas were conceived. The focus is on planning and implementation efforts that will impact the long-term coordination and focus of the system building efforts as well as implement already identified strategies. Data and professional development systems will be improved. Quality improvement efforts will proceed. These changes will be integrated into the ECI strategic plan, institutionalized at the system and program level, and implemented by the new ECI system that crosses sectors and state departments and community areas.

The ECI Stakeholders Alliance is largely made up of volunteers or in-kind donations of staff time and effort from stakeholder organizations and state departments. The work will continue beyond the availability of the current proposed funding due to the work and investment of these individuals and organizations. The two positions (ECI Systems Coordinator and Professional Development coordinator) will be hired on a time-limited basis to focus on the strategies supporting by this funding, although private, state and federal funding will be researched to assess the possibility of extending these positions as needed.

Staff and Position Information

Given the recently enacted ECI Initiative and associated governance and leadership changes, there are needs for increased resources and staffing. To plan for these positions (develop job descriptions, identify roles and responsibilities, map out

specifics on how the position will fit into the already existing system) planners feel is it important for a cross-sector, cross-agency, cross-system group come together to make those determinations. Assuring that these positions reflect the specific needs of the system and that there is buy-in across the system leadership regarding these key positions is a high priority and a key strategy in Iowa's system building effort.

State Advisory Council (ECI Stakeholders Alliance) Profile

The ECI Stakeholders Alliance is the Governor appointed State Advisory Council. The membership list, including the name and agency affiliation of each member, is included in the appendix. A full description of the Alliance is provided in the opening section of this application and a visual depiction (within the context of the Early Childhood Iowa System) is in the appendix.

IOWA ECAC ANNUAL BUDGETS

Year One	Federal Budget	Non-Federal Budget	Total Budget
Iowa Early Childhood Advisory Council Budget	235,175		235,175
Support work of Component Group	2,375		2,375
Early Childhood Iowa Systems Coordinator FTE	████████		████████
Needs Assessment of Iowa's comprehensive early childhood system	55,000		55,000
Support work group activities and members in development of early childhood data system recommendations	9,000		9,000
.25 Professional Development Systems Coordinator (IAEYC)	████████		████████
ECI Professional Development activity support	9,042		9,042
General support Early Childhood Iowa Diversity Advisory group (meeting space, copies, travel reimbursement) Support work group and strategic plan activities for Early Childhood Iowa Diversity Advisory Group	8,000		8,000
Early Childhood Iowa Parent/ Advisory Council Activities	10,000		10,000
Indirect	11,758		
Professional Development		████████	
Totals	235,175		████████

Year Two	Federal Budget	Non- Federal Budget	Total Budget
Iowa Early Childhood Advisory Council Budget			
Early Childhood Iowa Systems Coordinator FTE	104,000		104,000
Needs Assessment of Iowa's comprehensive early childhood system	30,000		30,000
Support work group activities and members in development of early childhood data system recommendations	15,421		15,421
Support Component Groups work	5,000		5,000
.25 Professional Development Systems Coordinator (IAEYC)			
ECI Professional Development activity support	15,000		15,000
General support Early Childhood Iowa Diversity Advisory group (meeting space, copies, travel reimbursement) Support work group and strategic plan activities for Early Childhood Iowa Diversity Advisory Group	15,000		15,000
Early Childhood Iowa parent/family advisory council support (meeting space, child care reimbursement, meals, travel expenses)	7,000		7,000
Indirect	11,754		11,800
Professional Development			
Total			

Year Three	Federal Budget	Non- Federal Budget	Total Budget
Iowa Early Childhood Advisory Council Budget			
Early Childhood Iowa Systems Coordinator FTE			
Support Component Group Work	5,000		5,000
Support regional meetings focused on outcomes and use of early childhood needs assessment data (space, travel, supplies, meals) in partnership with Project Launch regional meetings	15,000		15,000
Support work group activities and members in development of early childhood data system recommendations	21,000		21,000
.25 Professional Development Systems Coordinator (IAEYC)			
ECI Professional Development activity support	15,000		15,000
General support Early Childhood Iowa Diversity Advisory group (meeting space, copies, travel reimbursement) Support work group and strategic plan activities for Early Childhood Iowa Diversity Advisory Group	15,000		15,000
Early Childhood Iowa parent/family advisory council support (meeting space, child care reimbursement, meals, travel expenses)	11,417		11,417
Indirect	11,758		11,758
Professional Development			
Total	235,175		

APPENDIX

Early Childhood Iowa- Organizational Chart

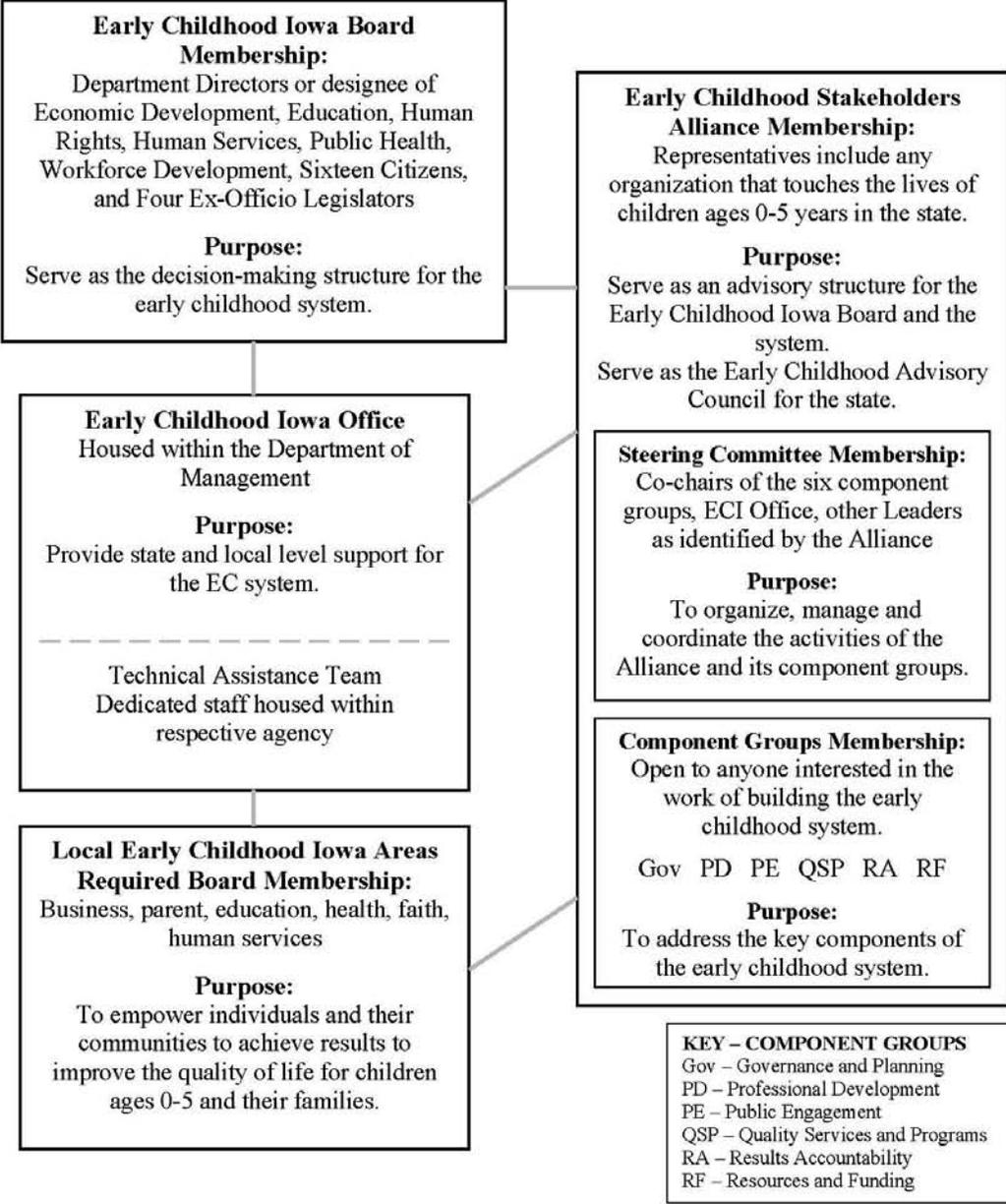
Four ovals/Early Childhood Iowa Results areas

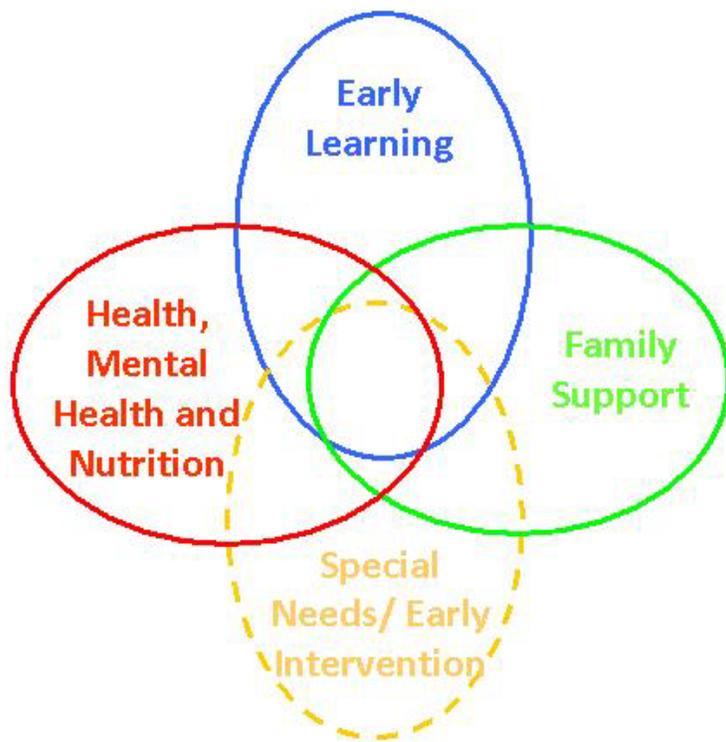
List of Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholder Alliance members

Letter from the Honorable Chester J. Culver, Governor of Iowa.

Memoranda of Agreement between ECI and state Departments

Early Childhood Iowa





RESULT AREAS

- Healthy children – **RED OVAL + SN**
- Children ready to succeed in school – **BLUE OVAL + SN**
- Safe and supportive communities- **ALL OVAL/LOCAL FOCUS**
- Secure and nurturing families- **GREEN OVAL + SN**
- Secure and nurturing early learning environments- **BLUE OVAL + SN**

Early Childhood Iowa Stakeholder Alliance Members

Name	Representation
Abbey, Maria	Prevention Concepts
Andersen, Susan	Iowa Head Start
Anderson, Jeff	Iowa Department of Human Services
Anderson, Jennifer	Child Care Resource & Referral-Central Iowa
Arzola, Isbelia	T.E.A.C.H.
Bancroft, Rhonda	Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Bartleson, Linda	Bright Horizons
Beghtol, Tasha	Washington/Henry County Early Childhood Iowa Area
Bell, Alison	AEA 267
Bell, Kim	Parents as Teachers
Bennett, Kate	United Way
Beveridge, Brenda	Parents as Teachers -Capitol View Elementary
Bidwell, Ginny	Jasper County Early Childhood Iowa Area
Boltz, Rhonda	Iowa Department of Public Health
Brewton, Bobbretta	Primary Health Care
Brinkman, Mary Kay	Iowa Department of Public Health
Brott, Emily	Child Care Resource & Referral
Bruner, Amy	HACAP
Burgart, Becky	Iowa Western Community College
Cano, Gloria	Iowa Workforce Development
Caswell, Jody	Iowa Department of Human Services
Chapman, Tom	Iowa Catholic Conference
Charma, Kathy	Parents as Teachers
Clancy, Erin	Iowa Department of Human Services
Cobie, Darla	Hardin County Early Childhood Iowa Area
Collins, Dawn	Iowa Department of Human Services
Cooper, Lorri	Oakridge Early Enrichment Child Care Center
Cooper, Susan	Skip-a-Long Child Development Services
Crawford, Mike	Child & Family Policy Center
Curry, Julie	Iowa Department of Education
Curtis, Amy	Child Care Resource & Referral-Central Iowa
Dahlhauser, Jane	Child Care Resource & Referral

Name	Representation
Daniel, Jason	Lakeshore Learning Materials
Dather, Cyndee	Lakes Area Empowerment
Dauscher, Jessica	Child Care Resource & Referral
Dautremont, Pat	Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Davis, Jodi	Child Care Resource & Referral
Degarmo, Kay	Center for Disabilities & Development
Demetri, Kathy	Child Care Resource & Referral
Dillon, Patrick	Kaplan Early Learning Co.
Donielson, Sue	Urban Education Network
Donohoe, Angela	Child Care Resource & Referral-Central Iowa
Doughan, Karen	Childcare Nurse Consultant
Doyle Scar, Angie	Iowa Department of Public Health
Duey, Nancy	Des Moines Public Schools
Duhrkopf, Cindy	Partnerships 4 Families
Dunn, Nancy	Child Care Resource & Referral - NE Iowa
Easter, Lorie	Iowa Department of Human Rights
Eddy, Cathy	Area Education Agency 11
Edwards, Sherri	Dubuque County Empowerment
Ellis, Diane	Child Health of Marion County
Ellis, Pam	Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Fairholm, Kristin	Iowa Family Resource Network
Fett, Brian	Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Fitzgerald, Carrie	Child & Family Policy Center
Fitzpatrick, Tim	Iowa Department of Human Rights
Foley, Tami	Iowa Department of Human Services
Foss, Diane	Iowa Department of Human Services
Foster, Susan	Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Fugenschuh, Julie	Making Connections
Gael, Nickie	Hand4Learning
Gannon, Mary	Iowa Association of School Boards
Gartin, Janet	Dept. of Management
Gilmore, Jill	Mouline Elementary School
Gronstal, Connie	AEA 13

Name	Representation
Gruba, Jerry	AEA 11
Grundleger, Barb	United Way
Gvist, Lou Ann	Iowa School Boards Foundation
Hageman, Gretchen	Iowa Department of Public Health
Halbrook Olson, Sarah	United Way
Haney, Dennis	Iowa Department of Public Health
Hansen, Sheila	Child & Family Policy Center
Harshbarger, Karen	ISU Extension
Heck, Cindy	Child Care Resource & Referral
Heckenlaible, Suzanne	Delta Dental of Iowa
Hegland, Susan	Iowa State University Extension
Heitman, Stephanie	Dallas County Early Childhood Iowa Area
Hennessey, Catherine	Visiting Nurse Services
Herzberg, Pam	Corner Counties Early Childhood Iowa Area
Hodges, Jenny	Iowa Department of Public Health
Hough, Jeanine	Upper Des Moines Opportunity
Hyland, Susan	Iowa Dental Hygienists' Association
Ingersoll, Julie	Iowa Department of Public Health
Ingle, Regan	Willkie House, Inc.
Janssen, Mary	Child Care Resource & Referral
Jespersion Hade, Delora	Des Moines Area Community College
Johnson, Heather	Simpson College
Johnson, Marcus	Iowa Department of Public Health
Jones, Beth	Iowa Department of Public Health
Kelly, Mary	Des Moines Health Center
Khal, Barb	University of Iowa - Child Health Specialty Clinics
Kidman, Connie	Des Moines Public School
Koch, Sherri	Kirkwood Community College Childcare Center
Kreiter, Jenny	Clinton/Jackson Decat and ECI Area
Kresse, Marion	Iowa Department of Human Resources
Krueger, Ruth	Mid-Iowa Community Action Agency
Lagerstrom, Marian	Parents as Teachers
Lang, Julie	Matura Head Start

Name	Representation
Larson, Kathlene	CD-Dial
Lathrop, Susan	Mercy Medical Center
Leavell, Joyce	AEA 9
Lindell, Kristine	Child Care Resource & Referral
Lumbard, Heidi	Empowerment
Lyons, Janet	Cedar Valley's Promise
Maben, Kathi	Child Care Nurse Consultant
Mahoney, Pam	VA Child Care Center
Mansueto, Jody	CCR&R - Marion Co.
Martens, Diane	Scott County Early Childhood Iowa Area
Martin, Peggy	Iowa State University Extension
Martindale, Karie	AEA 15
Mays, Sharon	Iowa State University Extension
McKeag, Christi	Child Care Resource & Referral
McLain, Janet	University of Northern Iowa
McReynolds, Pat	Genesis Development Center
Mendenhall, Marcy	Scott County Kids
Merrill, Barb	T.E.A.C.H. - Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Milburn, Penny	Iowa State University Extension
Miller, Heather	Iowa Department of Public Health
Miller, Lindsay	Iowa Department of Public Health
Miller, Sue	Drake University Head Start
Mireles, Jessie	Child Care Resource & Referral
Moore, Diane	Iowa Department of Education
Moritz, Betsy	Lakes Early Childhood Iowa Area
Morrison, Anna	CCR&R SE Iowa
Myers, Betsy	Child Care Resource & Referral-Dallas County
Neubauer, Nicole	Child Care Resource & Referral
Odell, Mary	Lutheran Services in Iowa
Oesterreich, Lesia	Iowa State University Extension
O'Halloran, Brenda	Child Care Provider
Pearson, Analisa	Iowa Department of Public Health
Penziner, Andy	Iowa Child Health Specialty Clinics

Name	Representation
Perlowski, Karon	Child & Family Policy Center
Petersen, Rose	Head Start/Early Head Start Director
Pierce, MariLynn	CCR&R of NE Iowa
Proeschel, Donna	CCR&R NW Iowa
Rainforth, Carol	CCR&R of Central Iowa
Ramsey, Sarah	United Way
Readout, Kathie	Mid Iowa Community Action
Reckseen, Glenna	Central Place Family Resource Center
Rendon, Tom	Director, Iowa Head Start State Collaboration Office
Renz, Cathy	Child Care Nurse Consultant
Reynolds, Lori	Iowa Federation of Mental Health
Richman, Kim	The Learning Zone
Rilely, Ann	Center for Disabilities & Development
Rist, Jeannie	CCR&R-Central Iowa
Robinson, Robin	Five Giant Steps - Linn County Initiative
Rodgers, Tracy	Iowa Department of Public Health
Russell, Bob	Iowa Department of Public Health
Salter, Susan	AEA 10
Schertz, Mary	Iowa Department of Education
Schmalzried, Leslie	Dallas County Community Services
Schminke, Heidi	Benton County Early Childhood Iowa Area
Schrader, Deb	Warren & Adair Early Childhood Iowa Area
SchraderBachar, Lori	Iowa Department of Human Rights
Schroeder, Carol	Prevent Child Abuse Iowa
Schulte, Kelly	Iowa Department of Public Health
Scott, Steve	Prevent Child Abuse Iowa
Scowther, Debra	Iowa Department of Management - Early Childhood Iowa
Shaw, Ginger	Children First
Sheriff, Georgia	Drake University Head Start
Sherman-Proehl, Laurabelle	Iowa Department of Education
Sodders, Carrie	Mid Iowa Community Action
Staley, Sue	Child Care Resource & Referral
Stanek, Kimberly	Iowa Department of Public Health

Name	Representation
Steverson, Stacie	Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Stockton, Jane	Iowa Department of Public Health
Stolze, Doreen (Dee)	Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
Stout, Janeann	Iowa State University Extension
Stout Kagan, Jennifer	Visiting Nurse Services
Stover-Wright, Michelle	Child & Family Policy Center
Sullivan, Wendy	Child Care Resource & Referral
Swackhamer, Cathy	Iowa Head Start
Swartz, Denise	Mid Iowa Health Foundation
Taylor, Nancy	Child Care Resource & Referral
Thelin, Karen	Women for Change
Thompson, Glenna	CCR&R Region 3
Thompson, Debbie	Early Childhood Consultant
Thompson, Kathy	Parents as Teachers
Tiffany, Maureen	United Way
Trujillo, Carrie	Language Schoolhouse
Uhlenberg, Jill	University of Northern Iowa
VanderGaast, Deb	Tipton Adaptive Daycare
Vasey, Kristie	Child Care Resource & Referral
Vierling, Sonni	Visiting Nurse Services
Vrankin, Marcia	CCR&R of Jasper City
Wagler, Shanell	Iowa Department of Management - Early Childhood Iowa
Waldron, Debra	Child Health Specialty Clinics
Walling, Beth	Zero to Three
Walter, Stacey	United Way/Polk Co. Emp.
Ward, Sue	AEA 11
Warning, Jeanne	ISU Extension
Wegner, Linda	Heartland AEA 11
Weigel, Cindy	Iowa State University
Wermes, Toranna	Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children
West, Patricia (P.J.)	FaDSS
Westbrook, Jovanka	Partners in Family Development
Wheatcraft, Cathy	CCR&R Region 4

Name	Representation
White, Jamie	T.E.A.C.H.
Yoke, Kathy	Child Care Resource & Referral
Young-Kent, Kim	Tri-County Child and Family Development Council
Zan, Betty	Regents' Center for Early Dev. Ed.



CHESTER J. CULVER
GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

PATTY JUDGE
LT. GOVERNOR

July 30, 2009

Gretchen Hageman
ECCS Project Director
Bureau of Family Health
Iowa Department of Public Health
321 East 12th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Ms. Hageman:

I am excited to designate the Early Childhood Iowa Council as the designee to serve as Iowa's Early Childhood Advisory Council. My office will be involved in the submittal of the Early Childhood Advisory Council application.

Early Childhood Iowa has been instrumental in the creation of an Early Childhood system framework and ECI Strategic Plan. The ECI Strategic Plan serves as the single, comprehensive plan for the comprehensive system of early childhood in Iowa, while the Framework guides the activities of the Early Care, Health and Education system, building upon existing and emerging efforts of public and private partners.

Early Childhood Iowa is a partnership between state and local stakeholders to serve as catalysts in the development and implementation of a comprehensive system. My education policy and health care policy staff are involved in the Early Childhood Iowa State Agency Liaison Team and keep apprised of the work of the Early Childhood Iowa Council and six component workgroups. In the 2008 legislative session, I supported the codification of Early Childhood Iowa into a formalized structure that serves as the advisory body for early childhood to my office, legislators, state agencies and non-governmental agencies.

As Governor, I have challenged Iowans to embrace and direct change while state government works as the catalyst for change and removal of barriers. Iowa's youngest citizens and their families deserve access to quality early care, health, human services and education programs and services.

Sincerely,



Chester J. Culver
Governor of Iowa

