

Families and Communities Raise Our Children: The Role and Cost of Effective Local Early Childhood Councils



**A Report to the
William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund**

Holt, Wexler & Farnam, LLP

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Participants in a family program at the Fair Haven Community Health Center, New Haven, Connecticut, provided courtesy of the United Way of Greater New Haven.

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Executive Summary

In November 2008, the Memorial Fund commissioned Holt, Wexler & Farnam, LLP (HWF) and convened a Study Work Group to delineate the current roles, functions and scope of community-based local early childhood councils and make recommendations regarding the cost and funding of local early childhood infrastructure. HWF researched practices in Connecticut and other states, reviewed the literature on community governance, collected information on local governance structures in Connecticut, and facilitated several work group meetings in the development of this report.

This report comes at a time of extraordinary fiscal stress which threatens state investment across the early care and education service system. The hard choices the current budget storm requires only increase the importance of more effective collaborative planning and guidance of the early childhood service system at the local level, and more effective state-local partnerships, to ensure that all services are as productive as possible.

Local Early Childhood Councils. Support for local early childhood councils has been a central pillar of state policy recommendations in recent years. The councils have been a recommended element of the 2005 Early Childhood Finance Project, the Early Childhood Education Cabinet's *Ready by Five, Fine by Nine* and the Early Childhood Research and Policy Council's 2006 Investment Plan. The concept has evolved in many communities from the more narrow School Readiness Councils formed under 1997 legislation to more comprehensive birth-to-8 councils, many of which are supported through the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund's Discovery initiative.

Table 1 summarizes the proposed functions and activities of local councils, as described in the Investment Plan.

Table 1: Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet Investment Plan: Birth-8 Local Councils	
Overall Functions	Activities
1. Policy and program planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a community-wide strategic plan
2. System development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a seamless, accessible system of services (school district and municipal) that responds to family needs and encompasses early childhood education (ECE), health and family support • Test new strategies (seed projects) and share lessons learned within the community and statewide • Serve as the primary interface with all state agencies involved in early childhood services
3. Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate at community and state levels • Ensure broad representation of the community, including the school system • Exercise influence and authority to make improvements
4. Data collection, analysis and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and report child and family outcomes
5. Public accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold public and private programs and systems accountable for results • Analyze barriers and system gaps on an ongoing basis
6. Resource allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align local, state and private resources in support of the plan and needs of children and families

The proposed local councils have a broader programmatic scope than School Readiness Councils, reflecting the growing belief among early childhood policy experts that a comprehensive approach to early childhood services beginning before birth is required to achieve school readiness. Our review of the national literature on local early childhood structures, experience working at the local level, and discussions with key stakeholders and communities confirm the importance of these functions in strengthening local early childhood systems. The current fragmented approach to serving children and families, especially the most vulnerable populations, is not succeeding to the degree it needs to. Services are provided locally, forming the heart of the “system,” and local providers, parents, and other stakeholders have the best understanding of the needs of local children and families. Integrated service strategies must work on the ground where families live and providers practice. A fiscal scan of Fiscal Year 2005-2006 spending identified **\$1.36 billion in federal, state and philanthropic funds invested in birth-8 services** in School Readiness Program communities, conveying the magnitude and complexity of the early childhood service system that local councils are called on to guide.

Thirty-eight (38) states, not including Connecticut, are also formally supporting integrated state-local early childhood systems. Most support regional approaches, many provide direct funding to staff local councils, and most provide a policy framework and technical assistance to support local work.

Infrastructure for Local Councils. The infrastructure for local councils refers to the staffing, space for operations, equipment and materials, training, data, and communication forums to enable a local council to perform its functions. Our cost estimates are based on interviews with eight communities, follow-up discussions with the Study Work Group, research on early childhood collaboratives in other states, and a 2008 survey of School Readiness communities by the Early Childhood Education Cabinet’s Standing Committee on State and Local Partnerships.

Recommendations

The degree of need and the complexity of the early childhood service systems increase as the municipality’s population increases, requiring higher levels of staffing and other support. A large proportion of the children at risk reside in our largest cities over 100,000. A significant proportion are found in the next tier of cities with populations from 40,000-100,000. The formula and timing of proposed grants to support local councils needs to address the priority of building local systems in communities reaching these children. Recommended grants by community size are as follows:

- For the five cities over 100,000 population (home to 50% of all three and four year olds living in poor families), we recommend a state challenge grant of \$150,000 to cover 75% of local council cost with a 25% cash or in-kind match required to ensure local investment in and ownership of the work. The proposed state investment in the local council capacity represents just over 1/10 of 1% of the estimated \$658.6 million of the combined federal, state, and major philanthropic investment in services for children 0-8 in these cities.
- For communities with populations from 40,000 to 100,000 (home to 29% of poor three and four year olds), we recommend a challenge grant of \$90,000 against a total budget of \$120,000.
- For communities between 9,000 and 40,000 population (home to 19% of poor three and four year olds), we recommend a grant of \$45,000 against a total budget of \$60,000.
- For communities under 9,000 population, we recommend that they be encouraged to form regional early childhood collaboratives or join in the work of a nearby larger community. We estimate an average State grant of \$10,000 per community toward such a regional collaboration.

These grants could be phased in over time, starting with the 23 communities that have undertaken local planning from mid-2008 to mid-2009.

Technical Assistance (TA). Our investigation focused on how to organize technical assistance – what services were best centralized and which were best left to local TA providers. A State-level **Resource Center** which could serve as a clearinghouse, data bank and referral hub gained significant support among communities and Work Group members. Such an intermediary might direct inquiries to specific resources, have content experts, maintain a virtual library of best practices, share successes across communities, and promote peer-to-peer networking. The Resource Center would also provide centralized support for planning and data indicators and Results Based Accountability (RBA), particularly given state RBA mandates. Locally secured technical assistance might help with parent outreach, facilitation, local data development and discrete marketing tasks. This work to support local community efforts with technical assistance can begin today and need not await major new funding. The state and its philanthropic partners currently invest substantially in specific TA strategies (including that of the Memorial Fund’s support for Discovery Collaboratives) which support the work of formalized local councils emerging from local planning processes.

Recommendations and Next Steps. Recommendations suggested by the foregoing analysis include:

- **Strengthen the state-level structure for early childhood policy to enable state-local partnerships.** The success of a coordinated local planning and implementation structure depends on a clear and effective structure at the state level.
- **Specify local council roles and responsibilities in legislation.** Guidelines for creating local councils should be codified in new State legislation by amending the School Readiness Program statutes.
- **Provide state funding to support infrastructure, with local match.** We recommend that the State provide a minimum annual funding level of \$45,000 for communities from 9,000-40,000 population to support local councils, with increased funding based on community population up to approximately \$150,000 for Connecticut’s largest cities. Communities should be expected to match at least 25% of the total costs of local councils to ensure local commitment and ownership.
- **Provide incentives for regionalization.** We recommend that the State structure local grants to provide additional resources for communities that establish regional Councils or share functions like data collection.
- **Expand community access to state data that describes conditions in each community.**
- **Establish a State Early Childhood Resource Center to support the work of local councils.**

Conclusion. Local early childhood councils have been identified in national experience and in Connecticut as a critical partner in achieving our ambitious goals for young children to be ready by 5 and fine by 9. Although there will be understandable pressure to put every available dollar into direct services to families, a relatively small investment in local councils will yield substantial benefits in more effective services and reductions in costs for remedial services like special education, juvenile justice and health care.

Families and Communities Raise Our Children: The Role and Cost of Effective Local Early Childhood Councils

1. Introduction

Unleashing the potential of local collaboration and action to improve outcomes for Connecticut's children will require focus, hard work, and financial investment in efforts to leverage and coordinate state, local and private resources. Connecticut has a long and rich tradition of local community engagement in planning across multiple policy areas, including promoting sound early childhood development. In these hard times, state strategies must tap this deep local vein of energy and work in "ready communities" and carefully align state actions to encourage and support it to bring forward a more effective early childhood system.

Beginning in 1995, the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund (the Memorial Fund) has supported local planning and engagement to improve early childhood outcomes in seven communities over seven years through the Children First initiative. Since the enactment of the School Readiness Program in 1997 (C.G.S. 10-16p – 10-16u), 63 of the state's 169 communities, including 19 Priority School Districts and 44 Competitive Districts, have established councils of local early childhood stakeholders to guide implementation of local School Readiness Programs (see community list in Appendix C). Based on its experience in Children First, the Memorial Fund began in 2001 to provide multi-year support for local early childhood collaborative work in 47 communities (growing to 54 in 2008) through the Discovery initiative.¹

"Families live – and children grow up – in neighborhoods and communities, where informal and formal supports and services assist them. Through effective community collaboration, 'ready communities' identify the needs of families with young children, assess the effectiveness and availability of essential services, develop strategic plans to guide service improvement, and make sustained resource commitments in an early childhood system at the local level."
-- *Ready by Five, Fine by Nine*, page 22

These collaboratives have planned and implemented numerous specific projects and cross-sector initiatives that help illustrate the importance of supporting this local work (for example, connecting behavioral health providers with early care settings to address social-emotional needs of children. See Appendix D and Discovery initiative web site for examples). Future investments in local collaboratives must recognize and build upon the concrete work they accomplish.

Since the publication of the Early Childhood Finance Project report in 2005, there have been a number of statewide policy proposals about the role of local early childhood planning entities, their relationship to state agencies financing or operating early childhood services, and how these vital local processes and their infrastructure can be supported and nurtured. This discussion and the experience with the Discovery initiative culminated in a public-private partnership of the Governor's Early Childhood Education Cabinet and the Memorial Fund to invest over \$1.65 million to finance development of local early childhood plans in 23 Connecticut communities in Fiscal Years 2007-2009. These communities self-selected from a pool of 67 School Readiness or Discovery initiative communities.

¹ See publications from the Memorial Fund for more information: http://www.wcgmf.org/pdf/publication_35.pdf, <http://discovery.wcgmf.org/> and <http://discovery.wcgmf.org/stories.html>.

In November 2008, the Memorial Fund commissioned Holt, Wexler & Farnam, LLP (HWF) and convened a Study Work Group with representatives from different sized communities to analyze a set of questions about local early childhood planning structures. HWF was asked to: (1) delineate the current roles, functions and scope of community-based early childhood councils in Connecticut; (2) assess whether existing funds adequately underwrite local activities and responsibilities from state mandates; and (3) estimate the costs of the core components of a local early childhood infrastructure. HWF researched practices in Connecticut and other states, reviewed the literature on community governance, collected information on local governance structures in diverse Connecticut communities, and facilitated several work group meetings in the development of this report. This report presents findings of this work.

The current environment. This report comes at a time of extraordinary fiscal stress at the state and local levels which threatens state investment across the early care and education service system. The hard choices this budget storm requires only underline the importance of more effective collaborative planning, efficient guidance of the local early childhood service system, and more effective state-local partnerships. The challenge of deploying scarce resources to help Connecticut families ensure the readiness of their children for school requires agencies and programs at the state and local level to work together more effectively. Frameworks like Results Based Accountability can facilitate data-driven policy decisions.

The state also must review the effectiveness of current investments to ensure that every dollar yields value for families and the community. Local early childhood leadership – which is closest to the families and the agencies that serve them – has a vital role to play in guiding system-building and service delivery and in advising the state on ways to increase the efficiency of its investments. Public and private investment is required to support the effective execution of this role.

What this report contains. This report recommends the formation of local councils with a broad programmatic scope. The findings reflect the growing belief among early childhood policy experts that a comprehensive approach to early childhood services beginning before birth is required to achieve school readiness.² The Councils therefore focus on education, health care, parent support and social services. The existing local councils are in the formative stages and have yet to be recognized officially in state statute. While local efforts are gaining credibility through their broad-based efforts, they do not yet have the authority that will be needed for cross-system accountability for results. In commissioning this report, the Memorial Fund sought to advance implementation of the framework contained in the Connecticut Early Childhood Research and Policy Council's *Investment Plan* (2006) by more specifically defining the roles of these local councils and the financial support needed to successfully carry out the work.

The report is organized as follows: Section 2 provides background on Connecticut's efforts to strengthen school readiness for all children; Section 3 reviews the role and functions of local councils; Section 4 presents findings from early childhood efforts in other states; Section 5 presents the proposed costs of funding local councils; and Section 6 presents recommendations and next steps. Report appendices include details on the study methodology and findings.

² See the Early Childhood Comprehensive System (ECCS) Initiative reports and resources, <http://www.state-eccs.org/resources.htm>. "State Early Childhood Policies: Improving the Odds", National Center for Children in Poverty, 2007. "Building the Foundation for Bright Futures", NGA Task Force on School Readiness, 2006.

2. Background: Policy Support for Strong Local Early Childhood Councils

Support for local early childhood councils (local councils) has been a central pillar of recent policy recommendations (see Appendix B). Grounded in a growing national literature on this topic, the call for councils recognizes the critical role that local collaboratives can play in improving results for children and families.

In 2006, the Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet (ECE Cabinet) established by the Governor and legislature published a comprehensive plan to increase the readiness of children for school, *Ready by Five, Fine by Nine*. The plan included 10 priority initiatives and 40 additional recommendations for state and local investment and action. Among the top 10 was: “Support local communities in developing birth-to-8 councils (e.g., using School Readiness Councils) for planning and monitoring early childhood services.”

Local Councils are a Component of the Early Childhood Service System Infrastructure

“High quality, easily accessible programs cannot exist without a quality infrastructure. Infrastructure must be understood as being indispensable.”

- Kagan, Sharon Lynn. “Giving America’s Young Children a Better Start: A Change Brief.” May 2001

The Governor’s Early Childhood Research and Policy Council then prepared the first Connecticut Early Childhood Investment Plan (Investment Plan), which provided additional evidence and rationale for each of the 10 priorities of the Cabinet and recommended five-year investments in each. The Investment Plan called for the creation of local councils as an enhancement to school readiness councils, to plan and monitor early childhood services in partnership with state agencies. The Research and Policy Council also recommended that the state: 1) invest in local councils to support their work in planning and guiding the local service systems; 2) promote flexible funding for services; and 3) support local capacity building to implement key system improvements at the local level.

In 2008, the ECE Cabinet formed the Standing Committee on State and Local Partnerships to support and strengthen the role of families and communities in the development of young children. The functions include but are not limited to: guidance on community leadership, strategic planning, parent and family leadership and engagement, co-investment opportunities through state and local resource development, public-private partnerships, and best practices.³ In October, the Standing Committee on State and Local Partnerships issued its recommendations to the Cabinet, calling for continued investment in local planning and plan implementation, and adjustments in state policies and practices to support local work.⁴

This proposal for local councils was informed by the experiences of the School Readiness Councils (SRCs) and by the local collaboratives established through the Discovery initiative. Both of these efforts focused on early childhood care and education and its connection to elementary school success. Both efforts brought together public officials, service providers and community stakeholders (most notably parents) to guide local decision making, influence resource allocation and address broader policy concerns.

³ http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/Content/Standing_Committee_on_State_and_Community_Partnerships_.asp

⁴ “State and Community Partnerships: Local Capacity Building, Fiscal Policy Briefing and Summary for Cabinet” October 2008. <http://www.ctearlychildhood.org/fileManagerRecursive/default.asp?LevelID=5&Year=2008&Month=10>

3. Role and Function of Local Early Childhood Councils

Local councils must be designed in the context of an overall early childhood service “system,” which includes local and state levels of organization and public as well as private resources. While Connecticut’s children benefit from generous private philanthropic support and in-kind donations, the overwhelming majority of financial resources for programming in education, health care and social services come from state (and federal) public sources. At the state level, Connecticut has an array of individual programs and initiatives addressing early childhood totaling more than \$560 million.⁵

The Early Childhood Education Cabinet was charged by the Legislature and Governor in 2005 with developing a comprehensive early childhood service system.⁶ In addition to supporting local early childhood plan development, the Cabinet has worked toward improved cross-agency accountability processes and investments in better data at the state level. Planning the functions and roles of the local councils must take into account the organization of the service system at the state level, notably the ECE Cabinet and its committees. The state controls the vast majority of resources for education, health and early care.

The Value of Local Councils. Local councils need to be recognized as essential and valued partners with state and local institutions in securing desired results: children who are “ready by 5 and fine by 9.” This can best be achieved if the councils’ work and expectations are clearly defined and the desired results are defined in measurable terms. The councils’ value stems in part from the growing recognition that our fragmented approach to serving children and families, especially the most vulnerable populations, is not succeeding. Services are provided locally, forming the heart of the “system,” and local providers, parents, and other stakeholders have the best understanding of the needs of local children and families. Integrated service strategies must work on the ground where families live and providers practice. Therefore, supporting stronger local accountability structures is an important strategy for states building comprehensive, streamlined early childhood systems. A recent analysis identified 38 states that are developing local systems as part of their strategy to improve outcomes for children and families (see Section 4).⁷

Functions of Local Councils. Table 3.1 summarizes the proposed functions and activities of local early childhood councils, as described in the 2006 Investment Plan. Our review of the national literature on local early childhood structures, experience working at the local level, and discussions with key stakeholders and communities for this study confirm the importance of these functions in guiding and strengthening local early childhood systems.

As the first 23 communities worked to complete their comprehensive early childhood plans in 2009, each planning process grappled with how the local council will be organized and address the functions listed in Table 3.1. From an update summary on these plans⁸ and information from our meetings with

⁵ Connecticut Early Childhood Partners Fiscal Scan, FY 2005-2006.

⁶ CGS 10-16s, “(C) develop budget requests for the early childhood program, and (D) promote consistency of quality and comprehensiveness of early childhood services.”

⁷ Project THRIVE, Short Take #6 Local Systems Development. http://www.nccp.org/projects/thrive_pubs.html

⁸ Building Local Capacity Partnership Grants Progress Report Summary (July 2008 – December 2008), Graustein Memorial Fund, Early Childhood Education Cabinet, Connecticut Health and Development Institute, State Department of Education.

the Work Group, it is apparent that defining these functions and roles is a work in progress. Below are some of the outstanding points.

**Table 3.1: Connecticut Early Childhood Cabinet Investment Plan:
Birth-8 Local Councils**

Overall Functions	Activities
1. Policy and program planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a community-wide strategic plan
2. System development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a seamless, accessible system of services (school district and municipal) that responds to family needs and encompasses early childhood education (ECE), health and family support • Test new strategies (seed projects) and share lessons learned within the community and statewide • Serve as the primary interface with all state agencies involved in early childhood services
3. Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate at community and state levels • Ensure broad representation of the community, including the school system • Exercise influence and authority to make improvements
4. Data collection, analysis and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and report child and family outcomes
5. Public accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold public and private programs and systems accountable for results • Analyze barriers and system gaps on an ongoing basis
6. Resource allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align local, state and private resources in support of the plan and needs of children and families

Policy and program planning. The first plans are coming together and identifying many important systems issues as they draft comprehensive plans that address results for education, health and family support. For example, communities identified the categorical, restrictive nature of state funding as critical challenge to integrated services for children and families.

System development. Having a functioning system requires broad participation and support for a local council and its plan. Many of the local challenges involve securing and sustaining engagement from key sectors, including the business community, staff from State agencies, and local officials.

Leadership. The Investment Plan is clear about the composition of local councils, but it does not clearly specify the powers that leadership will have to address the system changes and investments necessary to achieve defined community results. These powers are currently a matter for local determination, but could be specified in state legislation or regulations. Advocacy thus becomes an essential component of each local council’s work on behalf of children.

Data collection, analysis and reporting. How the State and municipalities divide responsibility and resources with respect to identifying indicators, defining goals and objectives, and collecting data will determine what resources local councils will require.

Public accountability. The local council’s power at this point is not defined in law. Their ability to hold local service systems and especially state service systems accountable may be limited. How local councils will advocate for state policy changes remains unclear.

Resource allocation. The authority of local councils to guide state funding and the extent to which state funding flows through local councils requires further clarification from the State, with local input. Local councils can identify opportunities to align resources more effectively, but their ability to secure these commitments is limited. As noted in our research from other states, influence over how resources are used can be just as critical as direct control of funding. Local councils need to align resources to advance the strategies defined in community plans, whether the councils directly control funding or not.

Interface with State Agencies. Numerous formal and informal processes exist for state agencies to relate to local interests and stakeholders at present (see Appendix E). The School Readiness Council structure is one of the most developed. The Birth-to-3 Program of the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) is required by law to support Local Interagency Coordinating Councils in each region. Only two remain active, and DDS is seeking to eliminate this requirement in favor of Birth-to-3 providers and stakeholders becoming active in the emerging local early childhood councils. The Department of Social Services controls the largest share of early childhood service funding yet does not have a defined mechanism for working with local stakeholders.

In other areas, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) has a firmly established network of Local Mental Health Authorities, local governing bodies with local Community Councils covering sub-areas of their regions to ensure provider and consumer input. These are staffed by the local mental health centers. DMHAS also has supported Regional Action Councils to plan collaboratively for enhanced prevention. The State Department of Education provides funding and technical assistance to Youth Service Bureaus to plan, evaluate, coordinate and implement a network of resources and opportunities for children, youth and their families. Each Bureau is required to have a local Advisory Board.

The local early childhood councils could be codified as the integrated vehicle for advising and working with the several state agencies comprising the early childhood service system, with clearly defined processes and powers.

In consultation with local communities, the state administration and legislature can define the functions and activities of local councils to help sharpen the discussion on necessary infrastructure (see recommendation in Section 6). Even without legislation, the local councils supported with infrastructure investments will define through their practice what functions and activities will be necessary to drive the work. This iterative process can lead to continuous improvements in efficiency and efficacy if sufficient attention is paid to community mobilization, data collection and analysis, and evaluation of local plans.

4. Findings from Other States

To broaden the perspective on proposed local councils, we examined the early childhood collaboratives and systems in eight states (see Appendices G-I for details on other state early childhood systems and a detailed matrix comparing these states' approaches to state-local collaboration⁹). State approaches vary by coverage (statewide vs. targeted) and strategy (direct funding to communities, policy, regulation). Some states provide both service funding and infrastructure funding while others provide only technical support.

⁹ Bruner, Charles, Julia Coffman, Michelle Stover Wright. "Building Connections: Six State Case Studies of Early Childhood System Building at the State and Local Levels, June 2006. Prepared for the Build Initiative by the Child and Family Policy Center.

State-Local Collaboration in State Early Childhood Systems. While the principle of strong local collaboratives as partners with state government in building effective early childhood systems is well established, there is great variety across states in how local councils are structured and supported, with no clear formula for success. Some common patterns include:

- **Regional approaches to collaboratives:** Whether based upon county, population or regional school district, most states defined a region as the operating scale for a local council, as opposed to a municipality.
- **Funding for infrastructure:** State support for staff for the local/regional collaboratives were included in almost all states we studied.
- **Administration of service funds:** While in some states like North Carolina local collaboratives administer significant service funding, collaborative control of funding does not necessarily increase the chances for improved results. Administering funding can soak up staff time and resources; funds for council infrastructure are often the first cut when state agencies are looking to trim costs.
- **State level organization:** A high-level commitment from public officials (gubernatorial administration and department heads) from diverse programmatic areas – education, health (and mental health), early care and family support – is critical.
- **Collaborative membership:** Local membership typically mirrors the categories of membership on the state organization, to facilitate state-local communications and broaden the circle of accountability.
- **State level technical assistance (TA):** Technical assistance for state-mandated functions, including data collection and evaluation, is usually state-funded, often in cooperation with philanthropy. States typically identify the overall outcomes and the indicators of progress, allowing local councils to choose how they want to achieve these outcomes.
- **Local level technical assistance (TA):** Peer-to-peer learning networks are low cost, sustainable mechanisms for TA. Local foundations often supplement centralized TA. States have found that local collaborative leaders can benefit from hands-on technical assistance and training to increase their effectiveness. In one example, the Michigan Great Start infrastructure review process encourages self-assessment by local councils (see Appendix H). Based on its work in multiple states, The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) developed a set of curriculum materials for local governance members and staff which communicate what community members need to know in order to make local decision-making a successful venture.¹⁰

These findings strongly support the Cabinet’s work to date to build local capacity and suggest directions for needed work to achieve this goal.

¹⁰ See http://www.cssp.org/major_initiatives/comm_dec_making.html for details and CSSP learning guides.

5. Infrastructure for Local Councils

The infrastructure for local councils refers to the staffing, space for operations, equipment and materials, training, data needs, and communication forums to enable a local council to perform its functions. We interviewed members of eight communities that are developing early childhood plans and/or local councils about their financial needs for infrastructure, the functions of local councils and what components of the system are particularly important. We also reviewed operations of systems of local collaboratives in other states. In consultation with the Study Work Group, we purposely selected a diverse group in terms of population, demographics, geography and stage in the planning process: New Haven, Bridgeport, Norwalk, Bristol, Middletown, Torrington, Colchester and Killingly.

Critical Components: In our interviews and Work Group meetings, participants mentioned several key ingredients for local council success. These include:

- **Follow-up and Accountability:** In-kind donations and volunteer time alone cannot be building blocks for an effective local council. Dedicated staff persons are needed to track and report results, ensure productive meetings, follow-up on key tasks, and undertake key functions like engaging parents and the community. Local council staffs need to create the conditions for effective meetings and planning processes through **facilitative leadership**, to empower councils to take on leadership and public accountability roles. This takes time and skill. Without funding for a thoughtful planning process, continuous decision-making support and time for relationship-building, funds spent on programs will not achieve desired results.
- **Parent Engagement:** It takes time and resources to effectively engage parents in planning and local councils.¹¹ The time and resources needed to create the forums and offer support for parent participation must be included as part of local infrastructure.
- **Influencing State Funding and Policy:** Clear channels of communication are needed to enable local councils to influence state resources. We recommend that the State establish the authority for such mechanisms.

Infrastructure Costs. Our cost estimates are based on interviews with the eight communities, follow-up discussions with the Work Group, research on early childhood collaboratives in other states, and a 2008 survey of School Readiness communities by the Cabinet's Standing Committee on State and Local Partnerships. It is important to note that when this research was completed, the 23 communities in the midst of their planning efforts had not yet developed detailed budget projections for local infrastructure costs. We divided the 63 communities under consideration into four groups by total population (Table 5.1).

Minimum Threshold. Given the multiple functions of local councils (Table 3.1), all communities above 9,000 population, regardless of size will require a baseline state grant of approximately \$45,000 per year against a total budget of \$60,000 to be successful. This would cover staffing costs (likely a half-time position supplied either within a local agency or by contractual arrangement with an individual) and additional funds for materials and supplies, parent engagement, and contracts to address specific needs (e.g., data and evaluation, technology, marketing).

¹¹ See resources from the Memorial Fund at http://discovery.wgmf.org/category_208.html.

Table 5.1: Connecticut Communities by School Readiness Program and Population Categories

Communities by Population	Priority	Competitive	Balance of State	Total
Greater Than 100,000	5	.	.	5
From 40,000 to 100,000	8	9	3	20
From 9,000-40,000	6	20	54	80
Under 9,000	.	15	49	64
Total	19	44	106	169

Table 5.2: Connecticut Population by School Readiness Program Categories

Community Categories	Communities	Population 2007	Projected 3 & 4 year-old populations	% Children <185% FPL* 2007	Estimated 3- & 4-year-olds <185% FPL
Priority	19	1,248,040	33,576	60%	20,002
Competitive	44	915,003	20,846	21%	4,369
Other Discovery or Eligible for Competitive	13	213,662	5,368	18%	465
Balance of State	93	1,125,604	23,472	5%	1,209
Total / Average	169	3,502,309	83,262	31%	26,044

* FPL = Federal Poverty Level

Increased Support for Larger Towns and Cities. The degree of need and complexity of early childhood service systems increase as municipality size increases, requiring higher levels of staffing and support. In the largest cities, each area of work – early care and education, health, and family support – requires focused attention as part of the work of the overall council. Specialized work may be required in areas such as developing local capacity to collect and analyze data. A large proportion of the children at risk reside in our largest cities, and a significant proportion are found in the next tier of cities with populations from 40,000-100,000. The formula, phasing, and timing of grants to support local councils should reflect the priority of building local systems in communities reaching these children.

In 2008, HWF completed a fiscal scan to identify the federal, state, and major philanthropic investments in School Readiness and Discovery communities for State Fiscal Year 2005-2006. The total of \$1.36 billion invested in services to School Readiness Program communities conveys the magnitude and complexity of the early childhood service system that local councils strive to make more effective. Of this amount, 77% goes to the 19 Priority School Districts (\$1.05 billion) and the remainder (\$301 million) goes to the 44 Competitive Districts (see Table 5.3 on page 11).

Recommendations. For the five cities with more than 100,000 population (home to 50% of all three and four year olds living in families with incomes below 185% of the federal poverty level), a state challenge grant of \$150,000 to cover 75% of the cost of support for the local council would be appropriate (Table 5.3). A local match requirement will help ensure local commitment to and ownership of the work. Currently, no funds are budgeted for this purpose, although some communities are able to devote a portion of the School Readiness Program administrative allowance to support local council activities.

The combined state-local budget of \$200,000 would support two full-time staff plus funds for local technical assistance and logistical support. These five communities receive \$658.6 million, 49% of the

combined federal, state, and major philanthropic investment in services for children 0-8 in School Readiness Program grantee communities. The proposed state investment in the local council capacity represents just .11% of this investment.

Table 5.3 presents the cost of annual local infrastructure grants at the recommended levels to all 63 current School Readiness Program (SRP) Grantees. Priority School Districts, those with high proportions of low income children, receive major School Readiness grants, while Competitive Districts, those with at least one school with a high proportion of low income students, receive small flat grants in the range of \$10,000 to support School Readiness programs (see Appendix C, Table C-1, for a listing and population of Priority and Competitive Districts). Incentives to work regionally could be built into grant offerings for communities at all levels.

State support could be phased in over time, starting with those communities that are developing comprehensive early childhood plans.

For communities with populations from 40,000 to 100,000 (home to 29% of poor three and four year olds, all but 1% of them living in communities that are current SRP grantees), a challenge grant of \$90,000 toward a total budget of \$120,000 would be appropriate, supporting a staff of 1.0 to 1.5 FTE and other costs. The requirement of a local match ensures local investment and is consistent with current policy and practice in the administrative cost grants in the School Readiness Program.

For communities between 9,000 and 40,000 population (home to 19% of poor three and four year olds, all but 5% of them living in communities that are current SRP grantees), a grant of \$45,000 against a total budget of \$60,000 would be appropriate, supporting a staff of 0.5 to 1.0 FTE and other costs.

Communities under 9,000 population (home to 2% of poor three and four year olds) would be encouraged to form regional early childhood collaboratives across smaller towns or to join with a nearby larger community. For estimating purposes, we have used an average of \$10,000 per community toward a regional grant. These funds could be combined with others, subject to an overall grant cap for a region.

Stretching Scarce Resources. Community representatives and Work Group members strongly supported municipal local councils (particularly in response to our findings from other states citing mainly regional collaboratives). While this makes sense for large towns and cities, it may become harder to justify for smaller municipalities because of cost.

Staffing costs comprise the largest portion of infrastructure budgets. There is an economy of scale to staffing which suggests the advisability of incentives for regionalization as called for in the Investment Plan. Regionalization of local councils or common functions will pose challenges, but may be an option for towns with a history of collaboration. Some smaller municipalities, such as Plainfield, Putnam and Killingly, have formed regional efforts for school readiness. Middletown participates in both city level planning (Middletown School Readiness Council) and regional planning for health and family support issues (Middlesex County Opportunity Knocks). United Ways and community foundations, major supporters of local early childhood work, increasingly serve regions. They can facilitate regional collaboration in both large and smaller communities.

Table 5.3: Estimated Cost of Local Council Support Grants by Community Category¹²

Community Categories	Level and Cost of Recommended Local Council Support Grants					Characteristics of Districts		
	Recommended Grant for local council (\$)*	Number of Communities	Grants by populations and category (\$)	Federal, State & Major Private Investment, FY 2005-06 (\$ in millions)	Grant as % of System Investment FY2005-06	Total Population Served	Children Age 3-4 Under 185% FPL	% of All CT Children Age 3-4 Under 185% of FPL
Priority Districts								
Greater Than 100,000	150,000	5	750,000	659	0.11%	610,839	13,104	50%
From 40,000 to 100,000	90,000	8	720,000	296	0.24%	502,633	5,133	20%
From 9,000-40,000	45,000	6	270,000	100	0.27%	134,568	1,765	7%
Average / Total	91,579	19	1,740,000	1,054	0.17%	1,248,040	20,002	77%
Competitive Districts								
From 40,000 to 100,000	90,000	9	810,000	117	0.69%	467,718	2,208	8%
From 9,000-40,000	45,000	20	900,000	158	0.57%	384,447	1,925	7%
Under 9,000	10,000	15	150,000	26	0.57%	62,838	236	1%
Average / Total	42,273	44	1,860,000	301	0.62%	915,003	4,369	17%
All Current Grantees (Average / Total)	57,143	63	3,600,000	1,356	0.27%	2,163,043	24,371	94%

* Currently no state funds are made available to support local councils beyond funds for administration of the School Readiness Program.

Even within regional structures, there should be mechanisms to ensure responsiveness to local concerns. For instance, the Missouri Family Investment Trust model addresses goals similar to those outlined for local councils. Their model features town committees through which regional Community Partnerships engage local neighborhood councils to plan, develop, finance and monitor strategies to achieve core results.

Many municipalities are developing a collaborative infrastructure by building on existing SRC staffing and resources (e.g., Norwalk and Killingly among the 8 communities we interviewed). We can expect local councils to be resourceful, to piece together funding streams and weave them into productive infrastructure. But the question to pose, particularly at this time of financial strain, is “What will be sustainable?” A school system that provides free space or allows a collaborative to make use of its copiers to produce thousands of free copies for parent flyers may find its own resources cut and the

¹² Sources: “What Are We Investing in Early Childhood Services?” 2008 Fiscal Scan; U.S. Census; Children Age 3-4 Under 185% of FPL; CHEFA.

“free” services no longer a possibility, despite best intentions. For that reason, it’s important to fully fund the local council infrastructure using state and local, public and private resources, and not depend completely on improvisation and goodwill.

Current Resources. Currently local councils are being supported through continuation grants under the Discovery initiative through calendar year 2009, planning grants from the State, the Memorial Fund and the Child Health and Development Institute, School Readiness Program administrative funds, and local philanthropic and public (municipal or school district) resources. None of the local councils consulted for this study have a commitment of state funding beyond the current fiscal year other than the portion of the SRP funds used to support the Council work on the SRP program.

Technical Assistance. Conversations across the state focused on properly organizing technical assistance – what services were best centralized and which others best left to local TA providers. The examples below are organized from more centralized to more local TA.

- A State-level **Resource Center** which could serve as a clearinghouse, data bank and referral hub gained significant support among communities and Work Group members. Such an intermediary, either freestanding or housed within an existing agency, might direct inquiries to specific other (State and Federal) resources, have content experts available, maintain a virtual library of best practices, share successes across communities, and promote and support peer-to-peer networks. Peer-to-peer networking will become increasingly valuable over time. As local plans are established and implementation begins, regional and statewide meetings of local councils, combined with electronic media that provide other channels of communication, will enable communities to share best practices, common challenges and lessons learned.
- Centralized support for **planning and data** indicators and Results Based Accountability (RBA) would also be helpful, and makes sense given State mandates for local plans and the RBA methods that will be used to evaluate progress.
- **Technology** could fall in either category — central or local. For example, online databases for data indicators and web-based programs to work with RBA would benefit from uniformity across all sites, and thus best be coordinated by a single provider (or team). While many local councils have their own locally designed web sites, there are opportunities for economies of scale across communities in the development of common forums, information resources, and web tools such as news and calendars.
- Locally secured **technical assistance** might help with parent outreach, facilitation, local data development and discrete marketing tasks. Communities can draw on existing relationships with contractors/consultants with expertise in these areas and knowledge of the local communities.

While designing and estimating the cost of this state level technical assistance function was not part of this study, estimates presented in the Investment Plan are still relevant and are consistent with what we have seen in other states and the local Connecticut experience. This suggests that a budget of approximately \$450,000 per year for these functions would be reasonable. This is an area ripe for a public-private partnership, building on the State-Memorial Fund partnership that has funded the initial planning work.

This work need not await major new funding in a time of lean budgets – the state and its philanthropic partners currently invest substantially in specific technical assistance strategies and resources, including years of support from the Memorial Fund for Discovery Collaboratives. These investments could be focused in whole or part to support both the infrastructure and programmatic work of the local councils emerging through the local early childhood planning processes. Substantial assistance is also available from national organizations and the federal government that could be focused, mobilized and leveraged through staff work at the state level.

6. Recommendations and Next Steps

The findings above all point to the need for building a more effective state-local partnership and clearly defined, integrated service system. Effective local councils are critical components in this vision. Recommendations suggested by the foregoing analysis include:

1. Strengthen the state-level early childhood policy structure to enable state-local partnerships.

The experience of other states and Connecticut suggest that the success of a coordinated local planning and implementation structure depends on a clear and effective structure at the state level, with which local councils will develop common desired results/standards and partner in implementation. The ECE Cabinet provides the state level structure, with a review of whether this is the most effective structure called for in the 2006 Investment Plan. The R&P Council explored structures used in other states and their possible implications for Connecticut, but did not recommend an approach.¹³ While this is beyond the scope of our study, a growing body of literature and experience with state structures across the country is available to inform Connecticut’s ongoing discussion of this necessary component.

2. Specify local early childhood council roles and responsibilities in legislation.

Guidelines creating local councils can be codified in new State Legislation amending the School Readiness Program statutes. In crafting the legislation, state leaders need to examine the history of state-local collaborative work in other policy areas, including the Youth Service Bureaus, the Local Mental Health Authorities, and the local Systems of Care assisting in implementing the children’s Behavioral Health Partnership (see Appendix E for a summary of these collaboratives).

Legislation should: (1) define the broader role and functions for local early childhood councils including the expanded focus on children from birth through age 8; (2) specify that the current functions of the School Readiness Councils be subsumed within the early childhood councils; and (3) define requirements for State agencies operating early childhood service programs to work in partnership with local early childhood councils.

3. Provide state funding to support the infrastructure required for effective work, with a required local match.

The clear message emerging from the 23 local planning processes, from seven years of the Discovery initiative, and from initiatives in other states is that **investing financial resources,**

¹³ See “Early Childhood Research and Policy Council, Early Childhood Investment Plan, Part I”, November 2006.

primarily for staffing and operations, is essential to the success of local councils. The collaborative work required to connect service systems across traditional “silos” is difficult but essential to produce improved results for children and families. Communities should be encouraged to integrate planning for early childhood services with other community services aimed at supporting strong families.

We recommend that the state provide a minimum annual funding level of \$45,000 for communities from 9,000-40,000 population to support local councils, with increased funding based on community population up to approximately \$150,000 for Connecticut’s largest cities (see Section 5). As with the School Readiness Program, communities should be expected to match at least 25% of the total costs of local councils, including overhead costs, donated staff time and materials and supplies. Communities under 9,000 population (home to 2% of poor three and four year olds) could be encouraged to form regional early childhood collaboratives across smaller towns or to join with a nearby larger community. For estimating purposes, we have used an average of \$10,000 per community toward a regional grant. These funds could be combined with others, subject to an overall grant cap for a region.

These grants could be phased in over time, starting with the 23 communities that were moving from planning to implementation in July 2009. Grants could also be made competitively to a limited number of communities based on availability of resources.

4. Provide incentives for regionalization.

Connecticut has a rich tradition of local governance which has influenced the approach to local early childhood work. However, many of the early childhood service systems are organized on a regional basis, including health, behavioral health and child welfare. The state can structure the local grants program to provide additional incentives for towns to establish regional Councils or to regionalize specific functions. For example, the State can use a portion of the cost savings from regionalization to provide higher funding levels, that is, split the cost savings 50:50 between the State and the regional Council.

5. Expand community access to state data at the community level.

The state needs to support local communities’ access to state data across agencies, disaggregated by community, in order to reduce the need for communities to develop their own data collection processes and ensure implementation of community RBA plans. The ECE Cabinet plans to meet this need by developing a public-private web portal featuring data access and visualization tools for greater accessibility.

6. Establish a State Early Childhood Resource Center to support the work of local councils.

We recommend that the state partner with a statewide nonprofit entity to develop and operate an Early Childhood Resource Center to support the work of all local councils through technical assistance, training, peer-to-peer networks, and disseminating promising practices across all the early childhood policy areas. The Center would facilitate infrastructure development projects across communities to reduce costs and redundancy in areas like web site development, data development, and program development.

Conclusion. This report and the Study Work Group have identified the resources necessary to develop a vital network of local and regional early childhood collaboratives to guide the effective investment of over \$1.3 billion in public and private resources currently invested in early childhood service systems. These local councils have been identified in the national experience and in Connecticut over a number of years as critical partners for achieving our ambitious goals for young children – that they be “ready by 5 and fine by 9.” Although there will be understandable pressure to put every available dollar into direct services to families, a relatively small investment in local councils, working in concert as a valued partner with a state-level governance structure for early childhood, will yield substantial benefits in more effective services and reductions in costs for remedial services like Special Education, the juvenile justice system, and the health care system.

Now is the time for Connecticut to build on the last several years of community planning, capacity development, and action to make the emerging local councils full partners in efforts to improve results for children.

Appendix A: Study Methodology and Scope

Proposed Approach

- To delineate the current roles, functions and scope of community-based collaboratives in Connecticut and quantify existing funds available to support these structures.
- To assess whether existing funds adequately underwrite local activities and responsibilities from state mandates.
- To estimate the costs of the core components of a local early childhood infrastructure.

Start-up & Leadership

- Establish a small Study Work Group to guide HWF's work.
- Hold work session on December 1, 2008 with Study Work Group to review study plan and refine framework for organizing data collection and recommendations.
- Finalize the timeline to support the Early Childhood Planning work of the Memorial Fund.

Definition and Data Collection

1. *Develop common definitions of core infrastructure/coordinating functions*

- Prepare a draft set of core functions.
- Review the common definitions with the Study Work Group.
- Review available documents and knowledge generated during the Discovery process and literature regarding collaboratives in other states.
- Clarify the specific functions, objectives and goals that constitute a coordinating infrastructure.

2. *Examine collaborative structures and regional intermediaries in Connecticut*

- Identify local/regional collaboratives and regional intermediaries to include in the analysis.
- Gather data on existing local or regional collaboratives established for other purposes (e.g. youth services, children's behavioral health) to inform recommendations regarding early childhood collaboratives: statutory requirements, funding sources including budget details (limitations, functions funded, in-kind and other resources), authority and governance structure, relationship with state.
- Gather background data on existing Connecticut intermediaries that could potentially play a role in supporting local early childhood collaboratives: functions (e.g., technical assistance, data systems) and main funding sources.
- Gather background data on strengths/weaknesses of different structures (CSSP, other sources).

3. *Research best practices from other states*

- Identify leading candidate states based on input from Connecticut leaders/national experts involved in Connecticut.
- Review reports, web sites, and literature on local infrastructure in the identified states (e.g. federal Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) initiative, the Build Initiative, NGA, North Carolina Smart Start, and other cross-state efforts).
 - Interview selected state early childhood officials responsible for supporting local infrastructure to determine advantages and disadvantages of the approach taken and advice for Connecticut.

4. *Work with sample of target communities to specify costs of collaborative infrastructures*

- Select 8 communities engaged in early childhood planning that represent the diversity of communities in the state (e.g., large city, mid-sized city, small city, rural). Initial list (in order by these categories): Bridgeport & New Haven, Middletown & Norwalk, Bristol & Torrington, Colchester & Killingly (regional three-town model).
- Work with target communities to identify local infrastructure costs by function and budget category, including outside supports (e.g., data systems).
 - Determine the (a) level of funding necessary to fulfill collaborative functions and (b) extent to which current models are publicly supported.
 - Develop recommendations to reduce inefficiencies of current infrastructure and coordinating functions.

5. *Solicit input from communities and key stakeholders*

- Issue notice and call for comments from communities on Discovery Listserv
- Identify and solicit input from key stakeholders (e.g., short list of structured questions).
- Identify individuals who have served in the role of local collaborative staff to get their input on the functions and success factors.

Appendix B: Key State and National Reports

Recommendations Regarding the Role of Local Collaborative Planning in Early Childhood Policy

Meeting the Need, Accepting the Challenge, The Connecticut Early Care and Education Cost Model. Early Childhood Finance Project (2005). Local governing bodies remain responsible for implementation of the programs and services that directly affect the readiness of Connecticut’s children for school. The basic functions of the community-based part of our system for young children include: (a) institutionalizing local roles and responsibilities in a coordinated early care and education governance structure, (b) assessing local needs, assets and trends that impact young children and their families, (c) planning for community systems, resource allocation and monitoring, and (d) connecting and improving a full set of early childhood services to ensure access by all children and their families.

Institutionalizing local roles: The fragmentation of systems that makes early childhood planning so difficult at the state level is magnified at the local level where communities must deal with multiple funding streams, service delivery demands and reporting requirements. **State governance must have a clear and direct relationship with local leadership that ensures meaningful community participation in that state governance structure. In addition, the delegation of roles and accountability for the responsibilities being assumed by local governance must be clear and supported through a responsive state governance structure.** (p. G-4)

Governor’s Early Childhood Pilot Program Proposal (2005). In her first Biennial Budget (presented in February 2005), Governor M. Jodi Rell requested nearly \$11 million in new state funds over SFY 06 and SFY 07 for a “statewide Early Childhood Pilot Program.” The purpose of this pilot effort, which was not funded that year, was to partner with and support a small number of communities over a multi-year period to plan for, provide for and evaluate early childhood service integration and systems development.

Early Childhood Partners Plan (2005). “[L]ocal planning and oversight is necessary to ensure that the early childhood system is integrated and responsive and accessible to all families. The Plan’s intent is to create a local service delivery system focused on child outcomes, supportive and respectful of the family values, beliefs and needs, and accessible to all through multiple points of entry. Community level governance and infrastructure with a strong family voice should inform and implement state policies, based on the needs of families and communities. The Plan will provide mechanisms for providers and other key stakeholders to launch new or expanded public-private partnerships bringing together local government, education, business and philanthropy to make expanded birth to five investments. Local efforts are diverse and most effective when reflective of the culture and values of the local community.” (p. 38)

ECE Cabinet Plan, Ready by Five, Fine by Nine (2006). In recommending support for local councils, the Cabinet stated: “Families live – and children grow up – in neighborhoods and communities, where informal and formal supports and services assist them. Through effective community collaboration, ‘ready communities’ identify the needs of families with young children, assess the effectiveness and availability of essential services, develop strategic plans to guide service improvement, and make sustained resource commitments in an early childhood system at the local level.” (p. 22)

Early Childhood Research and Policy Council, Early Childhood Investment Plan, Part I (November 2006). This report recommended an implementation and investment plan to advance the Cabinet’s goal of investment in community capacity development. The Investment Plan identified functions of local early childhood councils as well as roles and responsibilities of the state. First year costs for the Local Capacity Building Initiative were estimated by the Investment Plan at \$ 3.5 million; second year costs were estimated at \$7 million. (pp. 35-38)

Public-Private Partnership Investment (2008-09). In July 2007, the Cabinet allocated funds to implement a formal public-private partnership with the William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund in which the state would provide \$1.05 million over two years and the Memorial Fund would provide additional \$600,000. Following a competitive application process open to all 63 communities participating in the Connecticut School Readiness Program, funds were allocated to 27 communities to engage in the two-year intensive Local Capacity Building process (January

2008). In SFY 08, 24 requested and received continuation funding in SFY 09. The Children’s Fund of Connecticut provided additional funding to support communities in strengthening the integration of health and mental health concerns in their planning efforts, bringing the total of private funds leveraged by the effort to \$800,000. In addition, philanthropic funds were awarded to provide a series of RBA-training institutes for communities to embed their local planning within the State’s Results-Based Accountability budget framework.

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Beyond Parallel Play—Presentation on State-Community Partnerships in Building Early Childhood Learning Systems

Kagan, Sharon Lynn. “Giving America’s Young Children a Better Start: A Change Brief.” May 2001

Project Thrive Short Take #5—State of the States’ ECCS Initiatives

Project Thrive Short Take #6—Local Systems Development

Project Thrive Short Take #7—State Indicators for Early Childhood

Center for the Study of Social Policy, *Learning Guides*

Appendix C: Connecticut Communities Eligible for School Readiness or Discovery Initiative

Table C-1: Connecticut Communities by School Readiness Program Status and Other Indicators
(Sorted by District Type and Population)

Community	First Planning Cohort	District Type	Town	Regional School District (S=K-12, HS=High School Only)	Population 2007	Wealth Rank for ECS 2009
Bridgeport	1	Priority	Bridgeport	.	136,695	164
Hartford	1	Priority	Hartford	.	124,563	169
New Haven	1	Priority	New Haven	.	123,932	165
Stamford	1	Priority	Stamford	.	118,475	21
Waterbury	1	Priority	Waterbury	.	107,174	166
Norwalk	1	Priority	Norwalk	.	83,456	39
Danbury	1	Priority	Danbury	.	79,226	75
New Britain	1	Priority	New Britain	.	70,664	167
Bristol	1	Priority	Bristol	.	60,911	144
Meriden	1	Priority	Meriden	.	59,225	163
West Haven	.	Priority	West Haven	.	52,676	69
East Hartford	1	Priority	East Hartford	.	48,697	158
Middletown	1	Priority	Middletown	.	47,778	100
Norwich	1	Priority	Norwich	.	36,432	162
New London	.	Priority	New London	.	25,923	159
Windham	1	Priority	Windham	.	23,678	168
Bloomfield	.	Priority	Bloomfield	.	20,693	72
Ansonia	.	Priority	Ansonia	.	18,550	160
Putnam	.	Priority	Putnam	.	9,292	152
Greenwich	1	Competitive	Greenwich	.	61,871	1
West Hartford	.	Competitive	West Hartford	.	60,486	29
Hamden	.	Competitive	Hamden	.	57,698	105
Manchester	1	Competitive	Manchester	.	55,857	119
Milford	.	Competitive	Milford	.	55,445	44
Stratford	1	Competitive	Stratford	.	49,015	91
Enfield	.	Competitive	Enfield	.	45,011	138
Groton	.	Competitive	Groton	.	42,324	85
Shelton	.	Competitive	Shelton	.	40,011	41
Torrington	1	Competitive	Torrington	.	35,451	153
Naugatuck	.	Competitive	Naugatuck	.	31,931	154
Vernon	.	Competitive	Vernon	.	29,620	136
Branford	.	Competitive	Branford	.	28,984	36
Windsor	1	Competitive	Windsor	.	28,754	104
East Haven	.	Competitive	East Haven	.	28,632	132
Mansfield	1	Competitive	Mansfield	HS 19	24,884	146
Killingly	.	Competitive	Killingly	.	17,710	151
Wolcott	.	Competitive	Wolcott	.	16,407	135
Seymour	.	Competitive	Seymour	.	16,240	121
Colchester	1	Competitive	Colchester	.	15,495	137
Plainfield	.	Competitive	Plainfield	.	15,450	161
Ledyard	.	Competitive	Ledyard	.	15,097	134
Derby	.	Competitive	Derby	.	12,434	122

Community	First Planning Cohort	District Type	Town	Regional School District (S=K-12, HS=High School Only)	Population 2007	Wealth Rank for ECS 2009
Coventry	.	Competitive	Coventry	.	12,192	125
Plymouth	.	Competitive	Plymouth	.	12,011	149
Stafford	.	Competitive	Stafford	.	11,786	148
Griswold	.	Competitive	Griswold	.	11,390	150
Winchester	.	Competitive	Winchester	.	10,748	142
Thompson	.	Competitive	Thompson	.	9,231	145
Woodstock	.	Competitive	Woodstock	.	8,188	115
Brooklyn	.	Competitive	Brooklyn	.	7,886	156
Thomaston	1	Competitive	Thomaston	.	7,818	133
Canterbury	.	Competitive	Canterbury	.	5,100	140
Preston	.	Competitive	Preston	.	4,902	117
Ashford	.	Competitive	Ashford	HS 19	4,453	139
Lisbon	.	Competitive	Lisbon	.	4,205	131
North Canaan	.	Competitive	North Canaan	HS 1	3,352	116
Andover	.	Competitive	Andover	HS 8	3,181	110
Sprague	.	Competitive	Sprague	.	2,981	147
Voluntown	.	Competitive	Voluntown	.	2,612	127
Chaplin	.	Competitive	Chaplin	HS 11	2,528	143
Hampton	.	Competitive	Hampton	HS 11	2,118	109
Eastford	.	Competitive	Eastford	.	1,789	112
Scotland	.	Competitive	Scotland	HS 11	1,725	141
Montville	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Montville	.	19,744	128
Plainville	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Plainville	.	17,193	126
Ellington	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Ellington	.	14,426	124
Somers	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Somers	.	10,850	120
Lebanon	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Lebanon	.	7,354	130
Westbrook	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Westbrook	.	6,618	157
Beacon Falls	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Beacon Falls	S 16	5,770	123
Pomfret	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Pomfret	.	4,165	129
Sterling	.	Wealth Rank - Lowest 50	Sterling	.	3,725	155
Wallingford	.	Discovery	Wallingford	.	44,679	92
Southington	.	Discovery	Southington	.	42,142	102
Wethersfield	.	Discovery	Wethersfield	.	25,781	93
Granby	.	Discovery	Granby	.	11,215	88

Appendix D: Examples of the Work of Connecticut's Local Early Childhood Collaboratives

Early Care and Education

- Obtained CHEFA grant to upgrade & expand Head Start facilities
- Printing of Kindergarten Expectations booklet
- Increased links between K and Pre-K (Building Bridges)
- Publishing of "Going to Kindergarten in Norwalk" children's coloring book
- Single point of entry & universal application to ensure full utilization of spaces as well as match family needs with appropriate program
- Increased preschool capacity 40% over the past four years through School Readiness Council efforts
- Bonding funds received to renovate and add classrooms
- Private funding to support curriculum training
- Growing Collaboration around early childhood education by CBOs & funders
- Kith and Kin Group

Health & Development

- Immunization campaigns
- Oral health education & screening
- WIC Program
- Multi-year project that provides training & technical assistance to all providers on supporting social-emotional development of young children
- Community-grounded Nurturing Families Network program for at risk new mothers offered across all state birthing hospitals
- Child Care Health Consultation System working in collaboration with faculty at Yale School of Nursing and Connecticut Nurses Association—training, networking, continuing education, and collaboration with multi-disciplinary consultation efforts
- Working with multi-disciplinary team of health, mental health and education consultants
- Use of United Way of America Born Learning campaign in outreach efforts
- Recognition that health of the family is essential to an early childhood plan

Collaboration

- Diverse groups that are well established in the community with support from mayor, superintendent and parents
- Parent Leadership Training Institute – active programs across multiple communities
- Strength in unity: Sharing & improved utilization of resources, Exploration, Understanding, Communication

Source: Meeting of Community Early Childhood Collaboratives to review Early Childhood Partners Strategic Plan Directions, Capitol Building, Hartford, CT, July 18, 2005.

Appendix E: Other Connecticut Collaborative and Consultative Structures

State Departments have either voluntarily or by statutory requirement developed mechanisms to engage local collaborative and advisory bodies in either advising state action or undertaking planning and in some cases direct service delivery at the local or regional level.

Supporting Service Delivery. Structures established to support service delivery include:

- **Children’s Behavioral Health Systems of Care.** The Department of Children and Families (DCF) has supported the establishment of 29 local and regional collaboratives to develop local capacity to support families of children with serious mental health issues. These groups are linked to a specific set of services funded through the Behavioral Health Partnership and aim to create stronger community-based and family-driven “wrap-around” services to meet children’s needs. While these collaboratives were originally charged with service system analysis and planning responsibilities, their work in recent years has focused more on service delivery. DCF provides resources for administrative support for these collaboratives built into their service contracts with local agencies.
- **Youth Service Bureaus.** Youth Service Bureaus (YSBs) plan, evaluate, coordinate and implement a network of resources and opportunities for children, youth and their families. YSBs are required to have an Advisory Board for recommending overall policy and program direction that includes a private youth agency, youth, a school system representative, and a Police Department representative among others. YSB functions are similar to the proposed local councils. In addition to providing direct services for youth, YSBs are expected to conduct needs assessments, coordinate services, engage community members in the planning process, evaluate programs, and advocate for improved policies and programs.

Local governments directly operate or contract with private agencies to operate YSBs. Most towns and cities have their own YSB but there are several regional Bureaus; 100 YSBs serve a total of 134 communities. The CT State Department of Education provides approximately \$2.9 million in funding annually, with YSBs required to raise matching funds. Across all funding sources, the YSBs collectively operate on approximately \$22 million per year.

Advisory Structures. Structures established to advise state agencies and their regional offices include:

- **Birth-to-3 Local Interagency Coordinating Councils.** The Department of Developmental Disabilities is required under state law to establish local interagency coordinating councils (LICCs) for the Birth-to-3 Program, but has determined that people concerned about infants and toddlers with disabilities may find joining local early planning groups preferable to joining a regional LICC as a way to advocate for young children with disabilities. Currently, there are only two (2) LICCs, one in Danbury and one in Torrington, which DDS will continue to support.
- **Local Advisory Committees (DCF).** These committees meet to advise the regional directors and senior program managers of the DCF regional office on how their programs are working, on resource allocation, and on building local networks of support. The effectiveness and impact of these committees depends heavily on the approach and skill level of the area office directors.
- **Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) and Community Councils (DMHAS).** LMHAs are the official planning bodies for the local mental health system and receive input on service needs and quality from several multi-town Community Councils within their region.

Appendix F: Data to Support Infrastructure Cost Analysis

Table E-1: Summary Data by Community Category

Community Categories	Communities	Population 2007	Projected 3 year-old and 4 year-old populations	% Children <185% FPL 2007	Estimated 3- and 4-year-olds <185% FPL
Priority					
Greater Than 100,000	5	610,839	18,191	72.0%	13,104
From 40,000 to 100,000	8	502,633	12,128	42.3%	5,133
From 9,000-40,000	6	134,568	3,257	54.2%	1,765
Under 9,000	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Total	19	1,248,040	33,576	59.6%	20,002
Competitive	-	-	-	0.0%	-
From 40,000 to 100,000	9	467,718	10,798	20.4%	2,208
From 9,000-40,000	20	384,447	8,559	22.5%	1,925
Under 9,000	15	62,838	1,489	15.8%	236
Total	44	915,003	20,846	21.0%	4,369
Sub-total Current SRP Grantees	63	2,163,043	54,422	44.8%	24,371
Other Discovery	-	-	-	0.0%	-
From 40,000 to 100,000	2	86,821	2,117	7.7%	164
From 9,000-40,000	2	36,996	905	7.9%	72
Under 9,000	-	-	-	0.0%	-
Total	4	123,817	3,022	7.8%	236
Eligible by Wealth	-	-	-	0.0%	-
From 9,000-40,000	4	62,213	1,183	11.3%	134
Under 9,000	5	27,632	1,163	8.2%	95
Total	9	89,845	2,346	9.8%	229
Balance of State	-	-	-	0.0%	-
From 40,000 to 100,000	1	57,548	1,437	5.0%	72
From 9,000-40,000	48	872,254	18,275	5.3%	960
Under 9,000	44	195,802	3,760	4.7%	176
Total	93	1,125,604	23,472	5.1%	1,209
Grand Total	169	3,502,309	83,262	31.3%	26,044

Appendix G: Michigan Model for Local Community Collaboratives

TOOLS FOR THE COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVE (Michigan Department of Community Health)

Background. Currently all counties, either individually or in cooperation with other counties, have an established collaborative group that addresses issues that impact the lives of children, families, and special populations in their area. These collaboratives provide for:

- Community planning and visioning (establishes workgroups of agency staff, consumers, and community representatives to plan and/or implement services for a target population or coordinate services);
- Sharing of information regarding programs, policies and protocols/procedures;
- Taking responsibility for the local directions and coordination of state-, federal- and foundation-sponsored collaborative enterprises, including reporting the results/activities;
- Managing state-funded collaborative initiatives and workings with the designated fiduciary; and
- Linking with or consolidating other community collaborative groups (Early On Local Interagency Coordinating Councils, Homeless Continuums of Care, Child Abuse/Neglect Councils, Workforce Development, etc.).

Role of the Community Collaboratives. It is recommended that each Community Collaborative serve as the entity that 1) sets the agenda for collaborative activities, 2) focuses resources on common “outcomes” and 3) acts as the common community interface with State agencies on State “collaborative” efforts in human services.

Expectations of the Community Collaboratives. Each Collaborative will be expected to:

- Communicate annually their priority goals for the upcoming year and how they are coordinating existing resources and efforts to achieve those goals.
- Collaborate (share ownership and decision making) in the allocation of new and sustaining resources available to the county to address unmet human service needs
- Communicate to the State human services directors recommendations for policy changes that could improve the way services are funded and delivered to improve the effectiveness (impact on goals) and efficiency (better use of existing resources) of services.
- Coordinate community efforts to address State priorities
- Identify barriers to progress that State agencies create.

Operationalizing the Community Collaborative. To fulfill the role and expectation of the Community Collaborative as an inclusive planning and implementation body of stakeholders at the county or multi-county level, the Collaborative needs to:

- Articulate a **shared vision and mission to improve outcomes** for children, families and special populations.
 - Recognizes that improved outcomes for children, families and special populations are the responsibility of all of the human service agencies and the entire community.
 - Recognizes that human service agencies have a shared interest in risk factors and protective factors that mediate outcomes for children, their families and special populations.
 - Recognizes that a community needs a balance of prevention, early intervention, and remedial services.
- Share risk, responsibility, resources and accountability in carrying out its vision and mission.
- Operate on the basis of mutual trust, respect and consensus.
- Make decisions (within parameters determined by the funding source) concerning the use of funds which are made available by the state, the federal government or foundations for collaborative efforts to improve outcomes for children, families and special populations.
- Assign responsibilities to its respective workgroups and initiatives for:
 - assessing neighborhood/community needs and strengths
 - developing plans to respond to needs and to utilize strengths
 - implementing plans
 - monitoring results
- Make **programming and policy decisions** based on an analysis of the best available information and data about: 1) the needs and assets of the community, and 2) approaches and interventions which have been found to be effective in accomplishing desired outcomes.
- Facilitate the development of comprehensive **cross-systems arrangements** through which agencies and the community working together can better meet the needs of children, families and special populations (Memo of Understanding, Letter of Agreement, Cross System Training Plans, etc.).

Appendix H: Michigan Great Start Collaborative Infrastructure Review Process

The following infrastructure elements undergird and connect the high quality programs within each component area to form a functional early childhood system across all the component areas. Each element of infrastructure must be informed by and work in tandem with the others to be effective.

- Collaborative Governance
- Accountability, Results and Standards
- Data and Information Systems
- Professional Development and Technical Assistance
- Parental and Community Engagement
- Communication and Public Will Building
- Service System Integration
- Financing and Fund Development

The *Early Childhood Infrastructure Review* is intended to be a facilitated dialogue in which the Great Start Collaborative (GSC) engages that addresses two key questions:

- What is the current status of a given infrastructure element? (Accomplishments, Strengths/Weaknesses and Opportunities);
- What are our recommendations for the improvement and/or development of this infrastructure element, based on the status review findings?

The findings of the *Infrastructure Review* and the subsequent recommendations are to be documented in writing and will be incorporated into the strategic plan.

The *Infrastructure Review* is provided below, in outline form. It contains key activities for each infrastructure element. GSCs are encouraged to add additional topics or questions.

Early Childhood Infrastructure Review

Collaborative Governance

- GSC reviews performance standards for Year 1, as applicable.
- GSC completes *Collaboration Factors Inventory*¹⁴ or a similar tool to determine the current status of its collaborative governance.
- GSC reviews and documents links to other collaborative governance structures and EC workgroups or committees in the community.

Accountability, Results and Standards

GSC reviews and documents:

- existing cross component¹⁵ and/or component specific approaches/practices for accountability;
- Existing cross component and/or component specific results, standards or goals.

Data and Information Systems

GSC reviews and documents current practices for shared data collection and sharing across component and/or within a component area.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

GSC reviews and documents:

- past or current examples of profession development (training) offered to staff across components and/or to staff across organizations within a specific component, e.g. phys. health;

- existing practices for offering technical assistance and consultation across components and/or to staff across organizations within a specific component.

Parental and Community Engagement

GSC reviews and documents current practices for:

- assuring parental leadership and engagement within each component area and across components;
- promoting community engagement within each component area and across components.

Communication and Public Will Building

GSC reviews and documents current practices for:

- building public will for early childhood;
- sharing access and service information with parents across components;
- sharing information with administrators and staff across components and/or within each component area.

Service System Integration

GSC reviews and documents:

- existing written interagency agreements, contracts, policies and procedures related to the provision of early childhood services and service coordination; e.g. identification of at-risk newborn infants and referral for appropriate services
- past or current examples of two or more organizations working together to provide staff for a jointly developed program; e.g. parenting education in health care and child care settings or literacy, health and safety education in home visiting programs, etc.
- past or current examples of paperwork/documentation that was integrated to support families who receive services from multiple organizations, e.g. intake forms, release of information forms, etc.;
- past or current programs that were developed to serve the children and/or parents of one organization in another, e.g. Community MH Services Program screens foster children from Dept. of Human Services for social-emotional concerns and makes referral for specialized assessment and follow-up;
- past or current examples of two or more organizations working together to avoid duplication and competition, e.g. joint recruitment by public early childhood programs, co-location, etc.

Financing and Fund Development

GSC reviews and documents:

- current approaches to financing programs, services and supports for young children and their parents and summarizes \$\$ by source;¹⁶
- past or current efforts to pool or braid funds for early childhood programs, services or supports;
- past or current efforts to raise, develop or leverage funds for early childhood programs, services and supports.

¹⁴ Available from the Fieldstone Alliance.

¹⁵ Physical Health Care, Social Emotional Health Care, Early Care and Education, Parenting Education, Family Support, Basic Needs, Economic Security and Child Safety.

¹⁶ *Funding Matrix* template will be provided by ECIC.

Appendix I: Building Connections Cross-State Summary Matrix

	Colorado	Iowa	Minnesota	North Carolina	Oklahoma	Vermont
Initiative name	Colorado Consolidated Child Care Pilot Programs	Iowa Community Empowerment Initiative	Minnesota Early Childhood Initiative	Smart Start North Carolina	Smart Start Oklahoma	Building Bright Futures
Years in Existence	9	8	3	13	3	Completing Planning
Age Focus	Birth to 5	Birth to 5	Birth to 5	Birth to 5	Birth to 5	Birth to 5
Early Childhood System Focus	Comprehensive early childhood focus	Comprehensive early childhood focus	Comprehensive early childhood focus	Comprehensive early childhood focus	Comprehensive early childhood focus	Comprehensive early childhood focus
How Established	Legislation	Legislation	Foundation Initiative	Legislation	Legislation	Executive Order (for planning phase)
Definition of "Local"	Single County or Multi-County	Single County or Multi-County	Counties or Cities	Single County and Multi-Counties	Single County, Multi-County, or Cities	Regional Agency of Human Services Districts
Geographic Reach	17 pilots serving 30 out of 64 counties—72% of Colorado's population	Statewide 58 empowerment areas serving all 99 counties	51 coalitions serving 42 out of 80 MIF-served counties (MN has 87 counties)	Statewide 80 partnerships serving all 100 counties	16 sites serving 65% of Oklahoma's children under 6 years	Statewide (proposed) 12 councils serving all of Vermont
Funding Source	Federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funds administered through the state Departments of Human Services and Education Additional support from state and local public and private grants	State appropriation and TANF funds administered through a state level department	Core funding from the McKnight Foundation, administered through Minnesota Initiative Foundations (MIFs) Additional support from local sources, including corporations and foundations	State appropriation	State appropriation	[For planning] State Department for Children and Families and state appropriation. Additional planning support from federal ECCS and private funding sources

	Colorado	Iowa	Minnesota	North Carolina	Oklahoma	Vermont
Funding Amount	Each pilot's annual funding ranges from \$30,000 to \$100,000. The statewide total CCDBG investment is \$974,000	\$49 million for upcoming year	\$3.2 million from the McKnight Foundation for the first three years	\$190 million last fiscal year	\$2 million last fiscal year	[For planning] \$100,000 state appropriation last fiscal year plus Department for Children and Families funding
State (or Cross-Community) Structure	<u>Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission</u> created by the General Assembly, in partnership with the <u>Early Childhood State Systems Team</u> made up of state agencies and early childhood organizations Collaborative partnership between the Colorado <u>Department of Education</u> and <u>Department of Human Services</u> .	<u>Iowa Empowerment Board</u> (as of July 2007) made up of 22 voting members, including State Department Directors, and 16 citizen governor appointees. Also, 6 non-voting Iowa General Assembly representatives sit on the Board. <u>Early Childhood Iowa</u> , a state-level system building group of stakeholders from early care, health and education systems	Six regional Minnesota <u>Initiative Foundations</u> , independent nonprofit foundations that provide services and grantmaking in six regions outside of the Twin Cities	<u>North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC)</u> , a statewide nonprofit organization <u>NCPC Board of Directors</u> which includes legislative and gubernatorial appointees, and state agency, business, foundation, and early childhood program representatives.	Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR), a board of 29 appointed members including 13 state agency directors and 16 private sector individuals <u>OPSR Foundation</u> , a 10-member board of private citizens	<u>State Building Bright Futures Council</u> , 19 appointed members including two state agency secretaries, three department commissioners, two legislators, two business representatives, a public and private school teacher or early care and education provider, child or family doctor, United Way director, school board member, and parent.
State (or Cross-Community) Role	The 3-year Commission studies, reviews, and evaluates plans for a comprehensive early childhood system. The ECSST is the ongoing planning arm for the developing early childhood system. State Departments of Education and Human Services provide oversight and approve pilot spending	The Empowerment Board provides oversight and approves how funds are spent. The State Empowerment Technical Assistance Team provides TA and other support. Early Childhood Iowa is building a state early childhood system and advises the Community Empowerment Board	MIFs provide oversight and approve how funds are spent. They select communities and work closely with them to build coalitions, participating in the process themselves by providing technical assistance throughout. MIFs provide funding to help implement coalition projects.	NCPC provides oversight and approves how funds are spent. NCPC also manages administrative and reporting policies and procedures, and provides technical assistance. The NCPC Board sets policies and procedures related to local partnership operations.	OSPR provides oversight and approves how funds are spent through the Department of Human Services. The OSPR Foundation fundraises in the private sector to support the work of the Partnership statewide and locally.	The State Council will provide oversight and be charged with planning, coordinating, integrating, and developing early childhood programs, policies, and resources at the state and regional levels.

	Colorado	Iowa	Minnesota	North Carolina	Oklahoma	Vermont
Local Structure/ Governance	Early childhood councils consisting of community leaders from early care and education, health, mental health, and family support; 3 pilots are 501c3 organizations	Local community empowerment boards consist of citizens, elected officials, consumers, the faith community, the business community, representatives from human services, health and education systems and others locally decided upon	Early childhood coalitions with members locally-decided; may include parents, elected officials, early childhood education, child care, K-12, postsecondary education, community and economic development, business, faith, media, law enforcement, health, and human services	Local partnerships that are 501c3 organizations Local partnerships have boards of community members drawn from the service sector (health, social services, and mental health), K-12, county and city government, child care, business, faith-based organizations, and parents	Local public-private partnerships made up of local stakeholders such as parents, business leaders, providers, representatives of the local school districts, or local nonprofit agencies, the faith community and others decided upon locally	Regional councils in each of 12 Agency of Human Services Districts with members based both on state guidelines and locally decided
Local Role	Charged with creating an early childhood system by focusing on local needs, working parents' needs, child care quality, and consolidating funding; Councils make their own decisions about where to focus coordination and some resources based on local needs (state has to approve, however)	Charged with community planning, awarding funds for local services, educating about the importance of early childhood services, collaborating with private and public organizations, building community commitment to early childhood, and reporting outcomes to the State	Charged with developing system-building approaches based on each community's unique strengths; Follow a common coalition-building process, but make their own decisions about where to focus	Charged with creating a system of services that builds on existing services and fills in gaps as needed; Share a common mission but make their own decisions about where to focus; Each has its own leadership and locally-developed plan (state has to approve, however)	Charged with policy and system development, public engagement, community mobilization, and resource development; Share a common mission with the state-level Partnership; Use a local planning process to increase coordination and collaboration to address unique local needs	Charged with creating and integrating the early childhood system at the local level; Responsibilities mirror the state council; State council establishes guidelines, but regional councils will make their own decisions about where to focus
Local Staffing	Full-time or part-time pilot coordinators	Full-time or part-time community empowerment coordinators	Part-time community coordinators who receive a small yearly stipend (~\$5,000) for multiple years	Full-time partnership executive directors	Full-time or part-time local partnership directors	Full-time regional council executive directors

	Colorado	Iowa	Minnesota	North Carolina	Oklahoma	Vermont
Incorporation of Local Input in State-Level System Building	<p>State-level staff gather pilot successes, ideas, and needs to inform the state-level system.</p> <p>The waiver process (see below under unique characteristics or strengths) highlights local barriers to be addressed statewide.</p> <p>Pilots have representation on the Early Childhood School Readiness Commission, and collaborate with the Commission on early childhood systems building work branded as Smart Start Colorado.</p>	<p>The Iowa Community Empowerment Board gets ideas and insights from Community Empowerment coordinators through the State Empowerment Office and from local coordinators themselves on occasion.</p>	<p>Because the Initiative is foundation-sponsored and not tied to a state-level entity, advocacy is the main route for ensuring local input is incorporated into state-level system building.</p> <p>Through the Build Initiative and Ready 4 K, MIF representatives are involved in boards and committees focused on moving Minnesota's early care and education policy agenda and systems reform.</p>	<p>Local partnerships regularly communicate with NCPD and provide feedback on what works and what does not. NCPD communicates local input to its Board and to policymakers.</p> <p>NCPD's local partnership advisory committee includes eight local partnership board chairs and seven executive directors, and is a liaison and policymaking voice between local partnerships and NCPD. Also, two LPAC members sit on the NCPD Board.</p>	<p>OSPR receives local input in several ways including local coordinator participation on ad hoc committees, surveys, and attendance at partnership meetings.</p> <p>Fully incorporating the local point of view into the state-level systems planning is still a work in progress.</p>	<p>The state council's regional councils committee will be a vehicle for incorporating local input into state-level systems building.</p>
Local Communication Mechanisms	<p>Monthly pilot coordinator meetings</p> <p>Quarterly 2-day Pilot coordinator and state staff meetings</p>	<p>Quarterly coordinator meetings</p> <p>Some regional coordinator meetings</p>	<p>Local coalition meetings</p> <p>Regional coordinator meetings</p> <p>Quarterly statewide coordinator meetings</p> <p>Shared compilation of promising strategies</p>	<p>Executive director forums</p> <p>Conferences</p> <p>Smart.net website</p> <p>Videoconferencing</p> <p>Mentor partnerships</p>	<p>Quarterly partnership coordinator meetings</p> <p>Bi-monthly conference calls</p> <p>Peer-to-peer networking</p> <p>Community newsletters</p>	<p>[Specific communication mechanisms within and across regions will develop.]</p>
Technical Assistance (TA)	<p>State-provided for pilot site development; less TA available now. TA needs have emerged in areas of financing, professional development, public engagement and data collection and evaluation.</p>	<p>A state team of representatives from involved state agencies and the Office of Empowerment provide TA and a detailed Iowa Empowerment toolkit.</p> <p>Topics include community planning, board development, accountability, and other</p>	<p>MIFs work with coalitions to gather partners and community input, establish a vision, and develop an action plan for system building. MIFs then help fund, monitor, and provide ongoing technical assistance to coalitions as they implement their action</p>	<p>NCPD field staff and program specialists provide TA to local partnerships. Topics include accounting, program monitoring, evaluation, board and organizational development, strategic planning, collaboration, fundraising, and</p>	<p>Sites receive individual TA during monthly meetings and peer-to-peer. Topics include coalition building, public engagement, planning, evaluation, grantwriting, advocacy, collaboration. Community newsletters publish ideas on best practices, collaboration,</p>	<p>The State Council is responsible for ensuring regional councils have the TA they need.</p>

	Colorado	Iowa	Minnesota	North Carolina	Oklahoma	Vermont
		areas as requested.	plans.	community outreach and engagement.	mobilization, early childhood, funding, and research.	
Advocacy	Pilot sites educate legislators about the importance of an early childhood focus. <u>The Colorado Children's Campaign</u> , a statewide child advocacy organization, includes Pilots in formulating policy and shaping messages.	Coordinators advocate locally and together through the <u>Association for Iowa's Children</u> .	MIFs and coalitions participate in advocacy coordinated by <u>Ready 4 K</u> , a statewide child advocacy organization.	The State partnership coordinates a statewide message that is implemented locally through partnership advocacy networks. Local advocates talk to legislators to inform them about essential services and why funding must continue.	Partnerships perform <u>informal local advocacy</u> with local representatives; State level staff and <u>OPSR</u> inform legislators about early childhood systems work.	Regional councils will inform high-level state administrators through state council committees. Regional councils may participate in statewide advocacy—e.g., <u>Kids are Priority One</u> and <u>Vermont Children's Forum</u> .
Unique Characteristics or Strengths	Pilots can request <u>waivers</u> from state laws, rules, and regulations that may create barriers to implementing their work and to offering effective services—most have made funding more flexible	Statewide effort, which includes a comprehensive focus with local flexibility.	Comprehensive coalition building process Successful use of voluntary support networks Compilation of promising strategies shared among local coalitions	Longest-running statewide effort with deep learning Extensive technical assistance support system Working data and reporting system	Strong record of diffusing innovation by promoting successful programming at one site to other sites. Includes a Foundation made up of private citizens for the purpose of private sector fundraising.	Success in engaging high-level state administrators Use of executive orders to put system-building efforts in motion