



United Way of Florida

## EARLY LEARNING CONSORTIUM

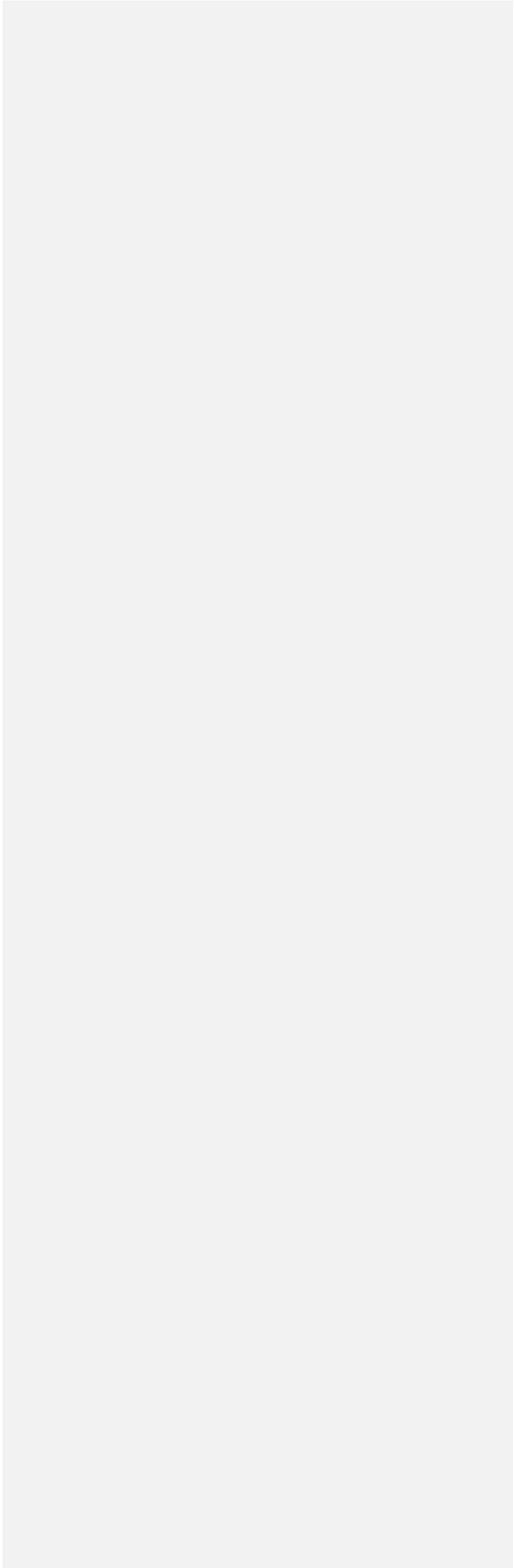
### BUSINESS PLAN

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*Early Learning Consortium*

Business Plan

**NOVEMBER 19, 2018**



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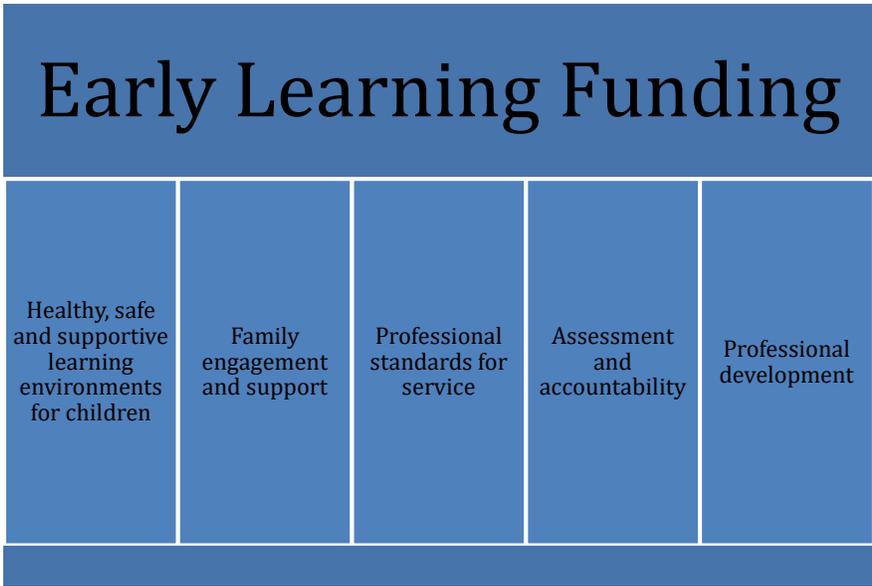
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Early Learning Consortium (Consortium) is a group of key influential early learning leaders that have organized to work together and improve Florida’s early learning system benefiting the hundreds of thousands of children served annually. Comprised of early learning provider associations, funders and subject-matter experts, the Early Learning Consortium will provide recommendations to state leaders and policymakers that advance Florida’s system and improves outcomes for children.

Recognizing there are limited public resources, investments must be made where there is the greatest statewide impact. Given the demonstrated need for services and the benefits to taxpayers and Florida’s economy by investing public resources in early learning, there is clear need for effective public policies and increased investments.

The Early Learning Consortium has determined that before any early learning system changes can be made adequacy of funding should be the foundation of the following five core considerations for an effective and efficient early learning delivery system:

Commented [MW1]: FACCM: Should we include some sort of statement, maybe a sixth core consideration, around the ongoing viability of the business side of early learning in Florida. Some business focused wording and the need for cost effective child care / early learning options for all families at all income levels.  
1)Healthy, safe and supportive learning environments for children;  
2)Family engagement and support;  
3)Professional standards for service;  
4)Assessment and accountability;  
5)Professional development; and



There are direct and immediate benefits related to early learning investment. Parents are able to work and maintain employment, are less reliant on government resources and overall are more economically self-sufficient. If ample resources are not available, this becomes a critical challenge

for our state in terms of higher unemployment and increased reliance on other government programs.

The earliest interventions in a child’s life are essential in the development of executive functioning skills that will promote educational success, reduce crime, and foster workforce productivity and fill skill gaps identified by employers as compared to more expensive interventions later shown to be less effective.

**EARLY LEARNING CONSORTIUM PROCESSES**

In order to accomplish significant collective impact the Early Learning Consortium was formed to pool its subject matter expertise, advocacy experts and monetary resources to help promote and further Florida’s efforts in designing an effective and efficient early learning delivery system. As such the following Early Learning Consortium tenants are outlined below:

**MESSAGING**

It is understood and anticipated that all Early Learning Consortium members will have meetings with members of the executive and legislative branches of government. As such any member may invoke the name of the Early Learning Consortium when outlining or explaining the priorities agreed upon by the Early Learning Consortium to these stakeholders. However due diligence by all members must be taken when articulating an individual member’s priorities to clearly articulate that the priority is solely that individual organization’s priority. This process will help maintain the integrity of messaging on behalf of the Early Learning Consortium and alleviate confusion by stakeholders.

**FISCAL MANAGEMENT**

The United Way of Florida shall serve as the Fiscal Agent for the Early Learning Consortium. As such the United Way is responsible for collection of all fees by Consortium members and has the authority to enter into subcontracts on behalf of the Early Learning Consortium for consultants, early learning system experts, and other entities that support the achievement of priorities outlined by the Consortium. Each year the United Way will send a Letter of Agreement to each member organization of the Early Learning Consortium that outlines the new fiscal years dues and signifies its intent to maintain membership for the next fiscal year. Along with the Letter of Agreement an invoice will also be generated each year by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Commented [MW2]:** I will speak to Ted and determine if he would like to attach a draft agreement as an appendix.

**BUDGET**

Each member organization of the Early Learning Consortium shall contribute an investment of \$10,000 for its initial membership to the budget of the Early Learning Consortium, which shall be due to the fiscal agent in total or in a maximum of 4 installments each quarter beginning July of each state fiscal year. The total budget for the new year shall be provided to each Early Learning Consortium Member organization by May of each year along with a detailed plan for expenditures. The plan for expenditures must be approved by a majority of the Consortium member

organizations prior to initiating any contracts with consultants, early learning system experts, or other entities that support the achievement of priorities outlined by the Consortium.

Subsequent dues for members will be calculated annually based on the availability of reserves which shall be equally applied to all paying members and offered in the form of dues discounts. At no time shall annual dues exceed the initial membership investment of \$10,000.

### **CALLING OF MEETINGS**

The Early Learning Consortium will conduct weekly conference calls during the legislative session to discuss issues, projects, and strategies. Outside of the legislative session calls and face to face meetings will be scheduled on as needed basis. In the event that an interim meeting is needed to resolve an issue or devise and deploy a strategy the Early Learning Project Manager will immediately schedule a conference call. All participating Consortium members available may make final recommendations on the issue if it requires immediate action.

### **PRIORITIZATION OF WORK EFFORT**

The Early Learning Consortium Project Manager shall maintain a register of all current projects and activities related to the priorities identified by the Early Learning Consortium members. As part of the project manager's duties they shall be responsible for providing information regarding the progress of activities to the Consortium as well as share any new requests for information so that the Consortium may determine if a reprioritization of work should occur. All new requests for information should be submitted in writing to the Project Manager to include:

- Who is requesting the information?
- What information are they requesting?
- What focus area lead or leads should be consulted?
- Timeline for completion or due date?
- Determination of work effort or consultants needed to complete the work?

In the event that a request for information is due before the next Consortium conference call the Project Manager shall have the authority to approve any activity to be conducted by subcontractors needed to complete the request. The Early Learning Consortium Project Register shall also be used by the **Fiscal Agent** to assist in tracking expenditures for the Early Learning Consortium.

Please reference **Appendix A** for the current Early Learning Consortium Project Register

### **PROJECT MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Project Manager shall be responsible for developing, coordinating and implementing all tasks that relate to the **Work Plan** and **Consortium Project Register** agreed to upon by the Early Learning Consortium. This includes identifying system experts, assigning resources to projects, setting timelines for completion, reviewing subcontractor work, determining when a project is

complete, submitting final work products to the Consortium for review and input, reaching out to Consortium members, and providing Consortium communications, and updates.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPERT CONSULTATION**

Funds from the Consortium may also be used to support the time and contributions of subject-matter experts in the field of early childhood development, early learning system design, and policy and data. This investment is to ensure that the integrity of the products put forth by the Early Learning Consortium are of the highest caliber and provide sufficient data for thoughtful decision making, and when appropriate is tied to all applicable research in the field of child development and early learning system design.

Prior to entering into a contract with an expert the Project Manager will reach out to all Consortium members to determine if they may have an available expert resource to complete the work. If a member resource outside of a Principal is identified they shall submit information to include an hourly rate and a time estimate to complete for consideration by the Consortium.

**EARLY LEARNING CONSORTIUM WORK PLAN**

To maximize the knowledge, skills and expertise of each consortium member and to capitalize on the opportunity to work more collectively and effectively, the **Work Plan** below outlines four areas of focus to enhance the priorities and work of the Consortium. Lead Consortium Members in each area will articulate needs, progress, and strategies to the Project Manager in order to maximize coordination efforts, success and outcomes.

- **System Development/ Subject Matter Expertise-** This includes conducting research and analysis of both national and state policies to inform Florida specific system recommendations, practices, and data sets, drafting policy recommendations based on the consensus of the group for system improvement priorities and providing legislative analysis during session on bills, amendments and draft language.

Consortium Members:

Leadership in this area includes engaging consultants, early learning system experts, and consortium members in early learning system development and impact. Requests for work may come from Consortium members, Florida’s Office of Early Learning, legislative policymakers, and other stakeholders whose involvement advances the policy agenda of the Consortium.

Priorities for System Development work shall be set by the Consortium based on the alignment of the request to the Consortium’s priorities, party requesting the information and for what purpose, timeline for completion, and available resources.

- **Strategy-** This includes devising a strategic plan for accomplishing the Consortium’s public policy priorities, ensuring all Consortium members are aware of current Consortium legislative and administrative priorities, and individual member organization’s legislative agendas, deploying Consortium members to speak to key legislative influencers when appropriate and reporting back legislative accomplishments. This may include convening each Consortium members lobbyists to clarify strategy and messaging.

Consortium Members:

Leadership in this area includes facilitated discussions to determine legislative outreach and engagement strategies; identification of Consortium members best suited to work on different priorities and strategies; facilitating discussion among Consortium members on progress of legislative priorities; working with the System Development Lead to gather resources as requested by legislative members; and working with the Project Manager on determining impact of bills, amendments, and draft language on the Consortium’s legislative priorities and devising a plan forward based on review of potential impact to the early learning system.

- **Media and Broader Public Engagement-** This includes reaching out to key media contacts when necessary to advise of potential positive or harmful impacts to the state’s early learning system, identification of key contacts with the media, determining which organization within the Consortium is best suited to respond to media inquiries and requests for comment, identifying new opportunities for expanded outreach to other business and civic organizations to build sustainable momentum for early learning.

Consortium Members:

Leadership in this area includes identification of media and public speaking opportunities to expand the messaging and reach on the importance of early learning, working with the System Development lead on targeted follow up action steps that maximize exposure on early learning system development, working with the Strategy lead to determine proper engagement of the media in regards to Consortium legislative and early learning system priorities, and providing information to the Consortium on media stories regarding the state’s early learning system.

- **Communication, Branding and Messaging-** This includes developing universal talking points to ensure consistency of messaging among stakeholders, designing Consortium branding, assisting with infographics, joint press releases and resources for Consortium members to use with stakeholders and legislative members.

Consortium Members:

Leadership in this area includes working to increase the statewide brand awareness of the early learning system development opportunities and the Early Learning Consortium efforts to support that work, creating social media strategies that Consortium member organizations can use to bring attention to potential positive or negative changes to the

state's early learning system and deploying a system of stakeholder communication that produces maximum results.

Consortium members including local counterparts, and staff are encouraged to participate in any of the focus area activities outlined above. Each organization will need to identify one voting member, but multiple individuals are encouraged to engage and participate. Due to the limited constraints of project timelines, legislative requests, and the need to be responsive, each organization may need to work to quickly identify its individual expert that it would like to take part in the input and review of materials. If a Consortium member identifies an individual internal resource as the point person on an issue that person shall have final decision making authority for that organization. For all recommendations the goal is to get the full consensus of the Consortium. However, in instances where feedback time is limited either the Project Manager will try to contact each Consortium member to get their input. In an instance when they are unable to get all member's input the majority consensus of the Consortium shall be used to push a recommendation forward.

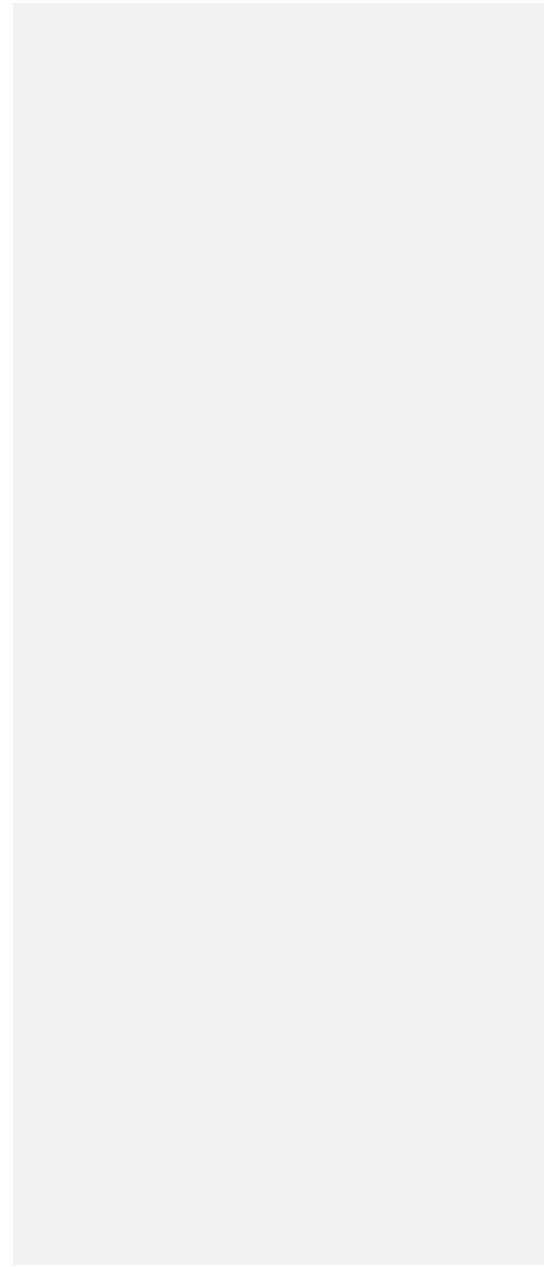
**PROCESS FOR EARLY LEARNING CONSORTIUM MEMBER REMOVAL**

If it has been determined that any member of the Early Learning Consortium is unable to continue its commitment to the rules of engagement set forth in this business plan the remaining membership may call into question the continued membership of an organization. The removal of a member must be unanimous minus the vote of the organization in question. Following any vote for removal formal communication shall be given from the Fiscal Agent identifying the termination date. If a member voluntarily removes itself from the membership they may not rejoin unless the current membership unanimously approves reentry into the Consortium. Upon reentry the organization will be required to pay the \$10,000 initial membership fee again and any previously unpaid dues.



*Early Learning Consortium*

**Business Plan**



**APPENDIX B**

**2019 Legislative Session Estimated Project Plan**

In preparing for the 2019 Legislative session the following project plan and priorities have been identified by the Consortium:

**School Readiness Payment Cost Modeling:** Revise the Early Childhood Cost Modeling work with Early Childhood Finance Experts to develop a plan that supports increased investment for the School Readiness program. This work will help define industry standards and performance benchmarks needed to create a payment rate structure that ensures that providers can afford to offer services to School Readiness program participants and not sacrifice program quality. This work includes creating a methodology and data analysis that provides information on investments needed to support a revised payment structure to the Early Learning System.

**Support for Florida’s VPK Program:** This includes providing analysis and support on and potential substantive and funding implications filed during the 2019 legislative session. To include analysis, impact, bill language or amendments, or proviso that supports the Consortium’s position on the need for changes to the VPK Assessment processes and calculation of a Readiness Rate and increases to the Base Student Allocation (BSA) to support the quality of the VPK system.

**Support for Consortium Member Priorities:** Provide support for Consortium member priorities such, funding requests for “Help Me Grow” \$4.5 million, maintaining an appropriation for TEACH \$10 million, \$600,000 for WAGE\$ infrastructure and any other priorities agreed to by the Consortium. This includes helping draft amendments, proviso, development of talking points, and ensuring consistent messaging.