Mission Possible: Sustainable High-quality ECE Programs Through Shared Services

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Poll: What is YOUR role in ECE?

• Center Owner, Director or Administrator
• Center Teacher
• Family Child Care Provider
• Other ECE Direct Service Provider
• Other (CCR&R staff, advocate, research, etc.)

If you are a child care provider, you may frequently feel like this...
...or you are pretty smooth and composed...so this is a more accurate picture

....or maybe you are just super skilled and can do this

ECE Program Director Job Description
Typical Solution: Hire More Staff

Shared Services Helps Programs Deliver High Quality ECE

Pedagogical Leadership
- Child development expertise
- Classroom coaching
- Teacher supervision
- Instructional leadership
- Child assessments

Business Leadership
- Full enrollment
- Fee collection
- Cost-per-child calculations
- Fundraising
- Reporting
- Regulatory compliance

High Quality ECE

Shared Services for ECE is about changing these pictures...

It’s about re-inventing the Early Care and Education Business Model so that it works – financially and programmatically – for children, families and caregivers.

It’s about creating jobs that have meaning and are manageable and enable professional growth.

It’s about building an organizational structure that is strong and sustainable.
Shared Services: Our Core Values

- Every director deserves an administrative team.
- Every teacher deserves pedagogical leadership.
- Every child deserves a reflective teacher.

Shared Services is a way to strengthen pedagogical and business leadership by pooling needs and sharing resources with others.

While the design of any particular Shared Services Alliance is unique to its participants, all share the goal of strengthening business and pedagogical leadership across sites by creating intentional structures to share staff, information and resources.
The Goal:
Work Smarter, not Harder

Strategic leadership that understands:
• Economies of Scale – strategies to help small ECE businesses attain some scale (e.g. bulk purchasing)
• Economies of Specialization – strategies to re-structure jobs so staff can focus on what they do well

A commitment to directing more resources to the classroom and focused on children and families
  » Better wages and benefits
  » More job satisfaction
  » Better results for children and families

What is Pedagogical Leadership?

The word Pedagogy means the theory and practice of education

Pedagogical Leadership refers to how we lead teaching and learning in early care and education programs

Leadership Behavior (from Wheatley)

Control
• Teachers/Directors accountable to regulators, funders, state standards
• PD is mandated & always delivered externally
• Peer communication is discouraged
• Staff wait to be told what to do
• Compliance with standards (licensing/QRIS/HS) is the goal

Order
• Teachers/Directors accountable to each other guided by a set of center-wide core values
• PD is woven into the daily work; with time & space for staff to reflect & learn from one another
• Curiosity and peer communication is encouraged
• Staff understand their role and feel empowered to act
• Standards are a platform or framework, not a goal
Leadership Based on Order Creates Energy

Classroom Teachers Begin to:
• See children’s strengths and competencies.
• Have a new sense of curiosity & purpose
• Gain confidence in observing children, conducting assessments and adapting environments.
• Find their own voice and leadership style.

Pedagogical Leadership:
How Shared Services Helps

• Site Directors can serve as instructional leaders (when freed up from multiple administrative tasks)
• Shared, embedded quality improvement staff can support teachers to strengthen teaching and learning
• Teachers have time ‘off the floor’ to think and plan; opportunities to reflect on their work in professional learning communities
• Children receive the individualized, reflective teaching they need to succeed

Business Leadership:
Focus on the “Iron Triangle”

The Iron Triangle of ECE Finance

• Ensure full enrollment, every day in every classroom
• Collect tuition and fees, in full and on time
• Revenue covers per-child cost (tuition, fees, and 3rd-party funding)
**Business Leadership:**

**How Shared Services Helps**

- Centralized, dedicated staff focusing on specific tasks:
  - Fiscal management: allows for greater expertise, efficiency, fewer errors
  - Enrollment: helps keep slots full
  - Fundraising: helps fill funding gaps
- Automation/technology reduces time on task and errors
- Skilled business leadership can track trends, forecast fiscal challenges/opportunities, ensure sustainability
- Joint procurement and shared staff can reduce costs

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**A Range of Approaches and Entry Points**

- Web-based ECC
- Training
- Networking
- Sharing Staff
- Sharing Information

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**Shared Services on the Web**

(Sharing information & resources)
States with Access to ECE Knowledge Hub
January, 2017

Shared Services on the Web
State-Specific Information

- For an interactive map with links to state websites, go to the Web-Based Alliance page on the OppEx website http://opportunities-exchange.org/alliances-in-action/

- You can also download a list of who to contact (names and email addresses) to sign up for the ECE Knowledge Hub if you are in one of the 26 states where the site is available. http://opportunities-exchange.org/wp-content/uploads/ECE-Shared-Resources_ListbyState-011117.pdf
A Range of Approaches and Entry Points

Examples:
Alliances with a Few Shared Services

Statewide Early Learning Alliance
New Hampshire

- Project of Early Learning New Hampshire (fiscal agent)
- Contract with Great North Advantage (property management company) for: insurance, risk mitigation, HR, marketing, regional purchasing (heating fuel, sand/mulch, auditor, waste removal, cleaning service), facilities project bidding and project oversight
- Contract with CCA Global for www.ECESharedResources.org
- Alliance members also collaborate on grant writing and professional development
- Regional communities of practice for participating providers
- Started with 10 centers; currently 35 member centers & growing
**SELA Member Success Stories**

*Actual Cost & Time Savings & Quality Improvements*

- **$5,200 annual savings** on commercial insurance
- Three members are saving **17-24% on their food costs** – one reinvested their annual $26,000 into serving more whole grains and fresh fruits & vegetables
- A teacher is saving **$430 per year** on her own home and auto insurance
- A member saved **$2,000 just last month** on a Discount School Supply order
- **$2,400 annual savings** on credit card fees
- Deep discounts for heating fuel for programs and for their teachers
- **$1,000 saved per year** with cleaning company
- **12% annual savings** on trash removal

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The San Francisco
Early Learning Alliance

**Services Provided**
- Enrollment & wait list management
- Subsidy eligibility determination
- Data management & reporting for government & philanthropic grants
- Fiscal Management – Billing and fee collection, accounting, audit, State Contract Monitoring Review (CMR)
- Human Resources – Payroll, benefits administration, compliance
- Online Resources – access to [www.ECESharedResourcesCA](http://www.ECESharedResourcesCA) online source of tools, resources, and cost savings.

Shared Staff for Network housed at Mimi and Peter Haas Fund
Funded with mix of membership fees and foundation dollars.
For more information go to [http://www.sfela.org/](http://www.sfela.org/)

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A Range of Approaches and Entry Points

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Example:
Established Alliance with Shared Program Leadership

Sound Child Care Solutions
Seattle WA
Nonprofit 501c3 consortium of 7 centers with central administration
- 31 classrooms in diverse neighborhoods (12 dual-language)
- 135 staff from 18 countries

Shared central functions:
- Financial – payroll, benefits, billing, purchasing, reporting
- Staff recruitment and substitute pool
- Pedagogical Leadership and PD (cross-site learning communities; internal coaches)
- Structure for collaborative decision-making and leadership

Directors’ time freed up to focus on teacher supervision, family relationships, quality early learning

Critical element: intense focus on working from a sense of meaning and shared core values
SCCS Approach to Pedagogical Leadership

- Cross-center Pedagogical Leaders group
  Teachers apply to participate and study together
- Cross-center Directors group
  Directors at each site meet monthly
- Coaches for City PreK hired by SCCS
  Part of Pedagogical Leaders group (also invite other coaches)
  Agree to follow City requirements, reporting, etc. but paid by, and report to SCCS central office
- Relief Squad available to all sites
  Provides staff support to all sites, using shared floaters + a shared substitute pool

Results: Sound Child Care Solutions

**Finances** – Stronger revenues due to better management, reinvested in teaching and learning

**Time** – Staff time savings in administration, operations, HR

**Teachers** – Better qualified (most have degrees), higher staff salaries and benefits, internal career ladder, low turnover, strong professional development and teacher reflection/mentoring

**Core values** – Directors and teachers at all sites focus on pedagogical leadership, family relationships, racial equity

**Child outcomes** – All children score well on child assessments; top ERS scores in Seattle
Examples: Emerging Alliances

Liberty City Alliance
Miami, FL

- Emerging Alliance of 4 African-American owned child care centers in high-poverty neighborhood in North Miami
- First step was an Alliance between 2 centers to share billing and fee collection
- Now contracting with a local non-profit to help develop pedagogical leadership (MCI, a neighborhood development organization similar to Harlem Children’s Zone)
- Supported by local funder

Miami Children’s Initiative (MCI) 501c3

- Excel Kids Academy (3 sites)
- Shining Light (1 site)
- Future Advanced Center(s)
- Sheyes of Miami (3 sites)

Shared Services on the Web [www.SharedSourceFL.org]
liberty city alliance business plan

pedagogical leadership

• Each site identifies Pedagogical Leader
• Pedo leaders meet in monthly Learning Community, with facilitator from UF
• Pedagogical leaders observe/coach teachers at their sites
• Sites commit to paid time, off-the-floor for teachers & pedagogical leaders to work together
• MCI raises money to help sites pay for teacher/leader release time
• PL Coordinator at MCI creates tools/templates, structures, models to help support classroom teachers
• Plan to align PD/TA from all local initiatives

business leadership

• Each site agrees to use ProCare and QuickBooks
  ✓ Hardware, software, as needed
  ✓ Business Leadership Coordinator provides assistance and/or coordinates training
• Sites agree to report Iron Triangle metrics for shared data reports:
  ✓ Enrollment (vacancy by age)
  ✓ Fee collection (bad debt – public & private)
  ✓ Cost Per Child (by age)
• Sites agree to track and report:
  ✓ # of hours, and estimated cost, of paid time for staff to participate in planning/coaching
  ✓ MCI staff explore offering additional Shared Services (e.g. legal support, HR and payroll, insurance, internet, phones, etc.)

eci webinar march 29, 2017

Collaborative Teachers Institute
Santa Fe, NM

• Incubated by the Santa Fe Community Foundation’s Baby Fund
• 7 ECE programs currently participating
• Programs and staff must commit to: participate for at least one year, identify a lead facilitator who will attend monthly trainings, participate in on-line dialogue and work with teachers
• Community Foundation will fund substitutes in first year; on-going links to state QRIS and PreK funding

Collaborative Teachers Institute Structure

1. Monthly Facilitators Training Meetings
   • Each participating program selects a “Facilitator” – the Center Director or an interested teacher
   • Facilitators are trained to support teacher inquiries and team collaboration
   • Facilitators learn to strengthen the connection between teachers’ learning and children’s learning

2. Onsite Collaborative Teacher Meetings
   • Regular, structured meetings for all teachers at a particular site
   • Meetings follow a protocol to support learning
   • Documentation of children’s interests is shared and collaboratively interpreted
   • Teachers learn to deepen the children’s learning as well as their own

3. Shared Substitute Teacher Pool
   • Centers have access to a virtual pool of substitute teachers
   • Substitutes are made available during the Collaborative Teacher meetings
Infant Toddler Family Day Care
Fairfax VA

Network of 125 home-based providers, most of whom are new Americans
Centralized business support includes:
  ✓ Fiscal management – parent billing/fee collection, CACFP administration, etc.
  ✓ Enrollment – recruiting families, managing business relationship
  ✓ Training and Professional Development, including bilingual support
  ✓ On-site Technical Assistant – licensing, quality, etc.
  ✓ Liability Insurance and other support

Strong Results Require Real Change

• Intentional teaching will strengthen child outcomes
  Requires strong leadership and dedicated supervision to help coach and mentor teachers
• Intensive focus on the Iron Triangle will increase revenue
  Requires dedicated staff, shared technology, openness to new approaches
• Classroom teacher wages and benefits can increase
  If dollars are shifted from administration to classroom
• Working conditions can improve
  When centers are linked by a set of shared, core values

A Shared Services Policy Agenda:

• Re-think professional development and credential requirements to encourage shared staff
• Create new compliance pathways for multi-site centers
• Give priority access to funding for networked providers
• Re-invent Family Child Care networks and explore new center-based networked structures
• Provide State support for Shared Services on the web

http://opportunities.exchangep.org/shared-services-central/#be6191fabefef621d
Summary: What is (and is not) Shared Services?

Shared Services IS...
- A change in roles/responsibilities
- A capacity-building strategy
- A way to reallocate resources from administration to classrooms, and focus more deeply on child outcomes

Shared Services is NOT...
- Simply a way to save money
- Just a provider network
- A franchise or a project or a template
- The same in every community

Explore Shared Services

Opportunities Exchange website: [www.opportunities-exchange.org](http://www.opportunities-exchange.org)
- Profiles of current alliances
- Tools, such as examples of management agreements
- Articles and presentations
- Videos and multi-media