



The Nuts and Bolts of Building Early Childhood Systems through State/Local Initiatives

Webinar Presentation
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Build
Strong Foundations For
Our Youngest Children

Welcome

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Welcome

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National Research

BUILD conducted national research on state/local initiatives and profiled 12 states.

Arizona

Colorado

Kansas

North Carolina

South Carolina

Virginia

California

Iowa

Michigan

Oklahoma

Vermont

Washington



Key Components Reviewed Across the Profiled States

- Mission and Vision
- Reasons for State/Community Collaboratives
- Governance Structure at the State and Local Level
- Funding at the State and Local Level
- Staffing at the State and Local Level
- Technical Assistance
- Accountability/Measuring Results
- Advocacy
- Major Accomplishments
- Lessons Learned



Mission and Vision

- Focus on school readiness and encompass a comprehensive approach that begins at birth or prenatally and extends through age five or age eight.
- State AND community-based approach
- Need for it to be collaborative
- Systems building versus individual programs
- NOT about an individual program



Reasons for State/Community Collaboratives

- Local level systems must be in place to respond to the diverse needs of children and families
- Must be a partnership between the state and local level
- Local decision making essential to assure local buy-in and advocacy
- Public/private partnership approach

Those states that progressed to a **COMPREHENSIVE** systems building approach have been more successful and more sustainable (versus individual programs).



Governance Structure at the State and Local Levels

- State level governance may be in state government, quasi-governmental organization or a nonprofit.
- Local level governance may be a nonprofit, local government or collaborative board of directors with a fiscal agent.
- There should be some sort of formal structure established at BOTH the state and local levels. This is not about creating an informal coalition. Think long term and sustainable.
- Set the expectation for statewide coverage from the beginning.
- Design it in a way so that there is local ownership and buy-in. Give communities a seat at the state planning table.
- Emphasize an approach that each local collaborative is part of a bigger statewide movement.



State and Local Governance

- States that have local collaboratives but do not have the state level governance component are less effective and often not sustainable.
- The role/impact of local collaboratives is substantially minimized if they are not also represented at the state-level systems building table.

State and Local Level Funding

- State Level Funding - Ranges from as little as \$1 million in resources to as much as \$450 million. In all states, the vast majority of funding goes to support the local level work.
- Local Level Funding - Ranges from as little as \$5000 to more than \$50 million. Funding supports collaboration, staffing, evaluation, local programs, overall systems building efforts.
- Ideally, funding is flexible so that communities can use resources innovatively or as bridge builders and gap fillers and as leverage to blend/braid.
- Funding is a mix of public and private funding.
- Some states require a local “match” on state dollars.
- Think strategically about how local collaboratives should use limited vs large levels of funding.



State and Local Level Staffing

- Staffing at the local and state levels is essential.
- Creating and sustaining a comprehensive state and local system cannot be a purely volunteer effort.



Technical Assistance

- Broad-based technical assistance to local collaboratives is essential on a range of topics including governance, leadership, evaluation, effective programs, family engagement, advocacy, public engagement, how to blend/braid resources, system building.....
- Peer learning should be a key component of the technical assistance.



Accountability/Measuring Results

- Evaluation – local and/or statewide
- Local reporting on outcomes
- Population data-based approach with common indicators used to measure each region
- Studies focusing on specific components to analyze success



Accountability/Measuring Results

- While there is local decision-making, set some parameters from the beginning that help align the locals/regions to overall statewide goals and allow you to tell a statewide story.
- Set common outcomes from the beginning and start early thinking about how you will measure.
- Build on existing outcomes or performance measures if feasible and if it makes sense.

Advocacy/Public Education

- Local collaboratives can be the local infrastructure for advocacy, public education and engagement on a statewide basis.
- Local collaboratives are doing the ground work at the local level and are best positioned to build buy-in and ownership and share success stories with the public and policymakers.
- State and locals should advocate/educate on the components of the early childhood systems policy agenda.
- Technical assistance is essential to build local capacity for public education/advocacy.



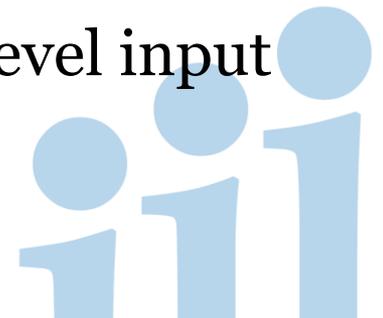
Major Accomplishments

- Higher graduation rates
- Improved third grade and NAEP test scores
- Improved community capacity and local systems results (Ex. more children in better programs)
- Reduced kindergarten retention rates
- Increased parent leadership on behalf of young children
- Unprecedented community engagement and mobilization
- Improved collaboration
- Leveraged resources/blending and braiding
- Increased private sector contributions
- Improved coordination at the state level
- Increased business engagement
- Increased support for early childhood by legislators
- Greater public awareness of early childhood issues
- Community leaders are now thinking about systems and not just programs
- Turf issues are being substantially reduced



Lessons Learned - Final Words of Advice

- It takes time. Think long term! There is no finish line.
- Dedicated resources are needed.
- All of the elements should be incorporated to be successful – do not “cherry pick” between components.
- Building strong local leaders is essential. It is all about leadership.
- Involve parents as much as possible in the developmental process.
- State planning should always incorporate local level input and involvement.



Lessons Learned - Final Words of Advice

- “Some communities have been doing this work for a long while. Design your regional approach in a way that values and respects what the communities are already doing.”
- Celebrate each step along the way.
- Coordination and collaboration at all levels are essential.
- This is NOT a program/project. It is a systems building initiative that is bigger than an individual program.
- Create a balance of local autonomy and statewide alignment.
- Create a sense of a statewide network moving together toward a common vision. “We rise and fall together.”



State and Local Examples Governance

Karen Ponder
BUILD Initiative



Karen Pautz
First 5 Siskiyou
California



State and Local Examples Technical Assistance



Elinor Mattern
First 5 Association
California

Kris Meyers
Greater Roanoke Valley
Smart Beginnings
Virginia



State and Local Examples Accountability

Donna White
North Carolina
Partnership for Children



Cindy Watkins
Guilford County
Partnership for Children
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State and Local Examples Advocacy



Julie Coffey
Bright from the Start
Vermont

Linda Leonard
First Steps to
School Readiness
South Carolina





To access the Nuts and Bolts brief and State Profiles, go to:

<http://www.buildinitiative.org/OurWork/StateandLocal/StateLocalSystems.aspx>

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