



Early Childhood Professional Development

The Detroit Landscape

January 2019



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Detroit has placed a high priority on addressing the needs and improving the health, education, and well-being of young children and families. Recognizing the critical importance of building a strong foundation in the early years to ensure long-term success in school and in life, the “Hope Starts Here” report called for a comprehensive, community-wide commitment to providing young children with high-quality early learning environments staffed by knowledgeable and well-prepared educators.

Purpose

This report was produced to support and inform ongoing community-wide efforts to create a strong system of professional development and program quality for early childhood education. It focuses deeply on the importance of building the capacity of the early care and education workforce through professional learning and career advancement.

How the Report Is Organized

Part 1: Literature Review. This section reviews the current research, emerging issues, and best practices for early childhood educator professional learning. Findings reflect prevailing convictions that to be most effective, professional learning opportunities must be embedded in teacher practice and integrated into a well-defined and comprehensive system of professional learning and career advancement. Key focus points of this section include:

- Discussion of what’s needed to create strong systems that can effectively support professional learning and career advancement.
- A set of research-based guiding principles and key design elements for creating opportunities that lead to adult learning and effective teaching practice.
- A review of professional learning content that reflects growing science-based understanding of children’s learning trajectories and developmental capabilities.
- Examination of professional learning structures and delivery processes that support effective transfer of knowledge to practice.
- Review of the evidence supporting the important role of instructional leadership and attention to sustaining positive organizational conditions.



Part 2: Guide to Professional Learning Opportunities in Michigan and Detroit. This section provides an overview of professional learning supports and services available to early childhood educators offered through state agencies and organizations and in Detroit. Findings represent a compilation of information collected through document reviews; a teacher survey; and interviews with national content experts and state and local stakeholders including philanthropists, program administrators, educators, professional development providers, and community leaders.

At the state level, the report outlines policies and programs that have been implemented to meet priorities for achieving positive outcomes for children and to build a comprehensive system of policies and programs that will improve program quality and support professional learning across all early learning settings. Programs and policies highlighted include:

- The Michigan Core Knowledge and Core Competencies Framework.
- The Michigan Early Childhood Workforce Registry and Career Ladder.
- Great Start to Quality: Michigan’s Quality Rating and Improvement System.
- The Great Start to Quality Collaboratives and Resource Centers.
- Statewide Early Literacy and Math Initiatives
- Programs and initiatives implemented through the Race to the Top—Early Learning Grant.

At the local Detroit level, the report provides an overview of the characteristics of the current early childhood education workforce; a discussion of the opportunities for and barriers to accessing training; a summary of available training content and structures; and an analysis of prevailing challenges, as well as opportunities and exemplary local approaches to creating a more comprehensive set of supports and services needed to build workforce capacity in early childhood education. Identified opportunities to enhance professional learning supports and services focus broadly on three key areas:

- Training content.
- Training structures and process.
- Considerations for implementing systems-level strategies.

Together, findings from the research; synthesis of available professional learning supports and services; examples of promising national, state, and local practices; and key considerations for leveraging opportunities and addressing barriers can serve as a guide to next steps for Detroit in supporting and building a strong early childhood education workforce for the city of Detroit.

SECTION 1

LITERATURE REVIEW AND BEST PRACTICES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

INTRODUCTION

Research demonstrates that teacher quality is the best predictor of positive learning outcomes for young children.ⁱ To support teaching quality, educators need access to effective and ongoing professional learning opportunities that are based on principles of adult learning and grounded in the contexts in which teachers work. In its 2015 publication *Transforming the Workforce for Children from Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, the Institute of Medicine characterized effective professional learning as “ongoing, intentional, reflective, goal-oriented, based

on specific curricula and materials, focused on content knowledge and children’s thinking, and situated within the classroom.”ⁱⁱ To be most effective, professional learning opportunities should be integrated into a well-defined and comprehensive system that facilitates ongoing access to an articulated and ongoing set of learning experiences that are defined by a set of standards and processes to ensure training quality and the qualifications of those delivering training and support.

SYSTEMS SUPPORTING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Systems can provide consistency and a common set of expectations for the delivery of high-quality early learning that results in positive outcomes for children.ⁱⁱⁱ To that end, effective systems must be designed to inform practice and policy across all settings and sectors of early education and care, including both publicly funded programs and private programs operating in schools and in community-based centers and homes.^{iv} Systems developed at the state level can include Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS), Knowledge and Competency Frameworks, workforce registries and training approval systems, career pathways and career and credential requirements, and online professional development information systems (PDIS). These systems create continuity across programs and settings and provide a framework for systems building at the local level.

Learning Forward has developed a set of standards for professional learning that provide a clear set of guidelines for creating more robust systems of professional learning as well as informing the design and processes needed to deliver training and supports that best address the needs of the adult learner and lead to positive outcomes for children.^v Standards include the following:



- Learning Communities support collaborative problem solving, collective responsibility, and a commitment to continuous learning and improvement.
- Leaders build capacity and create the support systems that make professional learning possible.
- Resources (including time and money) are coordinated and monitored.
- Data focused on students, teachers, and programs are used to plan, assess, and improve professional learning and changes in practice.
- Learning designs are built on research and best practices for supporting adult learners.
- Implementation integrates developmental science and change theory to ensure sustainability and ongoing engagement.
- Intended outcomes are linked to teacher performance and child learning standards.

Prerequisites to effective professional learning include recognition that teacher commitment to ongoing learning and quality improvement is critical. Teachers must be willing to commit to continually building their knowledge and skills. Learning Forward contends that without ongoing learning and development, teaching practices degrade, and teachers become less flexible and self-confident. Next, professional learning must be specifically designed to meet the needs of each educator. Adults learn at different rates and in different ways, and some may need more direct support to translate knowledge into classroom practice. Finally, to be most effective, professional learning must facilitate collaborations and peer exchange as ways to deepen the culture of learning among educators.^{vi} Teacher commitment to ongoing and appropriate professional learning opportunities can be enhanced and supported when training is linked to career pathways and opportunities for incremental career advancement.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND KEY DESIGN ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The research on professional development (PD) and the processes that must be in place to support teacher learning and effectiveness suggests that professional learning/development for early childhood educators may be most effective when it includes the following elements:

- Is content focused.
- Incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory.
- Supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts.
- Uses models and modeling of effective practice.
- Provides coaching and expert support.
- Offers opportunities for feedback and reflection
- Is of sustained duration.^{vii}

Practice Spotlight: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Adult Learning (DAPAL)

DAPAL is a framework for designing effective professional learning experiences for early childhood educators. By examining the core considerations of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) for Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8^{viii} through the lens of adult learning theory, this framework asked the following three questions:

1. From DAP: What is known about the ways children develop and learn? To DAPAL: What is known about the ways adults learn?
2. From DAP: What is known about each child as an individual? To DAPAL: What is known about each adult learner as an individual?
3. From DAP: What is known about the social and cultural contexts in which children live? To DAPAL: What is known about the social and cultural contexts in which adult learners live and work?

Based on these considerations and beginning with answers to these three key questions, adult educators can design effective and meaningful learning experiences by using the following strategies:

- Involve adults in planning their own learning.
- Draw on adults' rich experiences.
- Ensure topics are relevant to the roles and responsibilities of the adults engaged in learning.
- Include activities designed to get to know each learner as an individual.
- Be aware of personal biases and assumptions.^{ix}

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CONTENT: WHAT EDUCATORS NEED TO KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO

A major goal of the report *Transforming the Workforce for Children from Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, published by the Institute of Medicine (IOM), was to help create a more uniform approach to teaching and learning across all early education sectors and settings. A key component of the study was the development of a set of research-based knowledge and competencies educators need to support children's success. For those working directly with young children, the IOM identified the following knowledge and competencies:

Core knowledge base for those working directly with young children

- Knowledge of the developmental science that supports development across domains.
- Knowledge of how domains interact to facilitate learning.
- Knowledge of content and concepts.
- Knowledge of learning trajectories—or how learning progresses within content areas (e.g. literacy, math, etc.).
- Knowledge of influences on learning, including positive interactions and the negative impacts of chronic stress.
- Knowledge of principles of using assessments with young children.

Practices that help children learn

- Establish positive relationships and interactions with children.
- Create and manage the learning environment.
- Establish routines.
- Use a variety of instructional approaches.
- Set individual goals.
- Use knowledge of how learning progresses to plan activities.
- Use formal and informal assessments.
- Integrate technology into the curriculum.
- Promote positive social/emotional development.
- Recognize factors outside the program that are impacting children's learning and adjustment.

In response to recent work in states to develop knowledge and competency frameworks, the IOM committee also reviewed and analyzed a number of state frameworks, examining their specificity and the completeness of definitions and guidelines. The committee identified six “opportunities for states to better reflect the science.” These findings were included in the report in order to improve continuity as well as identify areas where it was likely early childhood

educators were not receiving adequate training and support. The areas included:

- Teaching subject matter-specific content.
- Addressing stress and anxiety.
- Fostering social-emotional development and general learning competencies, including self-regulation and executive function skills.
- Working with dual language learners.
- Integrating technology into the curriculum.

DELIVERY PROCESSES FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING: WHAT EDUCATORS NEED TO CONNECT KNOWLEDGE TO PRACTICE

Research focused on the process and structures for delivering professional learning has identified the following key ingredients for delivering effective professional learning:

- Learning is job-embedded.
- Teachers are supported through coaching.
- Teachers have opportunities to work together in professional learning communities (PLCs).
- Work is supported by informed and engaged leadership.

Job-Embedded Professional Learning

The research is clear: to change practice and improve instructional quality, teachers need ongoing and sustained learning opportunities that are integrated into daily practice. By contrast, training that takes the form of single, short-term workshops or training events, often referred to as “one-shot drive-by” or “fragmented spray-and-pray” events, will most likely have no impact on children’s learning.^x



Learning opportunities lasting less than 14 hours show no statistical impact on learning outcomes. (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss & Shapley, 2007)

Job-embedded professional development (JEPD) has been identified as an effective approach to the delivery of practice-focused professional development grounded in day-to-day teaching practice, designed to enhance teachers' content-specific practices and improve student learning.^{xi} JEPD is primarily school- or classroom-based and is integrated into the workday, with teachers assessing and finding solutions for authentic and immediate problems of practice as part of a cycle of continuous improvement.^{xii} Research demonstrates that job-embedded professional learning is most successful when it includes the following elements:

- Collaboration: Teachers have time and opportunities to work together across and within levels of learning to align curriculum and instructional practices.
- Links between curriculum, assessment, and professional learning: Professional learning focused on specific subject matter content areas must address both teacher knowledge and instructional practices.
- Active learning: Professional learning is active when it allows teachers to try out new knowledge and skills, receive feedback, and reflect.
- Sustained over time: Research indicates that job-embedded learning that spans multiple days and weeks (30–100 hours over six months to one year) has the greatest impact on child outcomes.

Coaching

The use of coaching as a strategy to support teachers' implementation of effective instructional practices and continuous quality improvement has increased in recent years. Training coupled with coaching opportunities that involve modeling positive instructional approaches, and that allow for feedback on implementation, have been found to be most effective in supporting and reinforcing teaching and learning in the classroom.^{xiii} Effectively implementing

coaching requires developing a systematic way to select, prepare, or provide ongoing support to early childhood coaches and includes evaluation activities to ensure that the coaching program is being implemented effectively and with fidelity.^{xiv} Programs can benefit from considering the following lessons learned and important questions as they prepare to use coaching as part of their job-embedded professional learning strategy:

- Create a plan that identifies goals and intended outcomes.
- Develop a clear structure for implementation.
- Implement a structured model to ensure consistency.
- Provide coaches with formal training before beginning work with teachers.
- Provide coaches with ongoing support from a coaching manager.



Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

With evidence of their power to improve outcomes for children, PLCs are being implemented in early education settings to support quality improvement and teachers' instructional practice. PLCs are effective ways to create space for collaboration and discussion of instructional issues—including joint examination of data.^{xv} According to educator Richard DuFour, a professional learning community is “an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.”^{xvi} The use of video-based collaboration has proven success as part of both PLCs and coaching.

Supportive and Informed Leadership

After teachers, research shows that school leaders have the greatest influence on child outcomes.^{xvii} Research now supports the positive impact of leadership investment on teacher efficacy and classroom practice.

Educational attainment and ongoing professional learning among program directors has been linked to teacher retention and job satisfaction and better use of data to inform instruction. Program directors, school administrators, family childcare owners, and other supervisors and administrators play an important role in creating a culture and a learning organization that value ongoing professional learning and quality improvement, ensuring teachers have the time, resources, and supports they need to build their own skills and knowledge, and make professional learning an integral part of their everyday work in the classroom.^{xviii, xix} To fulfill the role of instructional leader, program administrators must:

- Build their own knowledge of early childhood research and best practice.
- Focus on teacher fidelity and effective use of developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically responsive curricula, instruction, and assessment.
- Ensure that professional learning opportunities and supports directly impact practice.
- Provide feedback and support connected to professional learning.



Program and school leaders must also value continuous learning and development by allocating adequate funding and time for staff to participate. Leaders should reinforce what teachers are learning through professional development by giving them the space to practice new skills and incorporate developmentally appropriate practice. This may be challenging because leaders do not always have formal training in or experience teaching young children.

(Lieberman et al., 2018)

The creation of **distributed or shared leadership** within schools and programs is gaining attention as an effective strategy for moving away from fragmented professional development to building new leadership capacity and more effective ways of supporting teacher development and ongoing professional learning. In a distributed leadership model, teacher leaders work with a team of teachers, have direct day-to-day contact with team members, and are responsible for building instructional capacity and improving learning outcomes. School and program leaders play an important role both in identifying and preparing teacher leaders, and in creating a shared mission for the work. Leaders are also responsible for establishing policies and structures that provide teacher leaders with the time and authority they need to effectively support change.^{xx}

Emerging Issue: Organizational Conditions and the impact of teacher stress on program quality

Research now clearly confirms the important role early education teachers play in securing children's academic success and positive social-emotional development through effective teacher-child interactions. Studies also

confirm that teacher wellbeing is key to achieving positive child outcomes^{xxi}. However, well-being is being compromised by high levels of stress among a growing number of teachers^{xxii}. High levels of teacher stress and depression can interrupt positive teacher child interactions, resulting in increased incidence of conflicts with children.^{xxiii} Early studies of preschool expulsion found higher incidence of teacher self-reported stress among those who expelled children from their programs.^{xxiv}

Efforts are now underway to identify the causes of stress and to implement effective intervention strategies. Findings from teacher surveys indicate that contributing factors include lack of public support for the field, poverty-level wages, effects of secondary trauma, and lack of adequate support services and supports.^{xxv} Isolation within a classroom or small home-based programs has also been linked to higher levels of teacher stress and negative interactions with children.^{xxvi} Efforts to identify factors that support teacher well-being find that a combination of both formal and informal supports are needed. These include a sense of control over the environment, access to ongoing professional development, opportunities to collaboratively with others, feeling valued and respected, and engagement in decision-making.^{xxvii}

At the classroom level, promising approaches to addressing teacher-wellbeing and reducing stress include: access to mental health consultation that includes training and coaching to support teacher's ability to address children's challenging behaviors as well as supports for addressing their own needs; professional development that includes wellness promotion, mindfulness, and the development of executive function skills,^{xxviii} organizational conditions that include strong program leadership and targeted strategies to support teacher development shared decision-making peer collaboration.^{xxix}

CONCLUSION

Putting It All Together

To ensure professional learning opportunities are effective and lead to positive outcomes for children, it is important to ensure teachers have access and the ability to use data focused both on their own classroom practices (e.g., teacher and program observations) and on children's learning outcomes and trajectories. In addition, professional learning programs that use a variety of individualized and contextualized approaches and delivery strategies, and that build teacher agency and efficacy, are most likely to have the biggest impact and sustain practice over time. Finally, it is important to recognize that professional learning programs and initiatives will be most impactful if they are informed and supported by comprehensive and robust state systems.

Program Spotlight: Effective Use of Multiple Professional Learning Processes

The Ounce of Prevention has developed an approach to job-embedded professional development that is built on multiple contexts, all of which must work together to result in sustainable changes in practice leading to improved instruction and interactions and positive learning outcomes for young children. The four contexts employ many of the elements of effective professional learning and include:

1. Knowledge development: Teachers need to possess a foundational set of early education core knowledge and competencies. To best gain new knowledge, **training and other content-focused experiences, including course work, workshops, webinars, conferences, and shared readings**, can be effective means to ensure teachers understand what a practice is and why is it important.
2. Supports for transferring knowledge to practice: Teachers need support and guidance in taking the next step of putting new knowledge into practice in their classrooms. Strategies including **coaching, mentoring, and consultation** can help teachers to overcome obstacles and clarify steps to implementation. These supports can also be individualized and tailored to meet the developmental and contextualized needs and interests of the teacher.
3. Routines of collaboration: When teachers are able to work and problem solve together, change happens. Collaborative practices such as **professional learning communities, team lesson planning, looking at children's work and data, and teaching rounds or open classrooms** allow teachers to leave the isolation of the classroom to reflect together on their practice and generate new approaches to teaching and learning. Looking at data as part of a collaborative process can be especially powerful in helping teachers deepen understanding of what the data mean and build capacity to use data to inform planning and set improvement goals.
4. Reflective supervision, dialogue, and feedback: **Observation and feedback making use of reflective dialogue**, and focused on increasing learning rather than on evaluation and compliance, help to build teacher efficacy and improve practice. Reflective supervision enables teachers to look critically at their work through observational data, identify strengths, and address challenges in a mutually supportive environment. Through the use of active listening and inquiry, supervisors can work together with teachers to identify next steps for learning and quality improvement.^{xxx}

SECTION 2

GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN MICHIGAN AND DETROIT

INTRODUCTION

The City of Detroit has placed a high priority on addressing the needs and improving the health, education, and wellbeing of young children and families. Recognizing the critical importance of building strong foundations in the early years to ensure long-term success in school and in life, providing young children with access to high-quality early learning experiences staffed by knowledgeable and well-prepared educators has been a cornerstone of these efforts.

Detroit's work to increase access to quality early learning and boost educator capacity is taking place within the context of similar efforts at both the national and state level. Efforts at the national level have been informed by a 2015 report from the Institute of Medicine (IOM), *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth to Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*, which elevated the need and created a national dialogue on the importance of developing an early care and education workforce united by a common set of knowledge and competencies that could improve learning outcomes for all children.^{xxxi}

At the state level, Michigan is leveraging funds from its Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant to build a comprehensive system of policies and programs that will improve program quality and support professional learning across all early learning settings. In its 2016 publication, *Building a Better Childcare System: What Michigan Can Do to Help Parents and Children Access Quality Care*, authors identified support for the early childhood workforce as a high-priority goal, stating: "It is simple. Our state will never have a quality childcare system if we do not adequately train and support our early childhood workforce. The state and its partners can support a range of policies in the pursuit of quality, but without a focus on the providers themselves, efforts will ultimately fall short."^{xxxii}

Hope Starts Here: Detroit's Early Learning Partnership, is a collective that represents of diversity of stakeholders from across the city. In 2017, it released a community framework and comprehensive 10-year strategic plan



designed to improve the lives and futures of Detroit’s young children and their families. Through the articulation of six key imperatives and 15 recommended strategies and related action steps the work of the city has gained momentum and continues to evolve. A key focus of the plan is on ensuring all children have access to high-quality early learning programs staffed by effective and well-qualified educators. To meet that goal—and building on an understanding of the important role that teachers play in supporting children’s positive learning outcomes—the plan lays out the following solutions:

- Develop new professional development offerings and channels, including additional administrative professional development opportunities.
- Increase awareness of and participation in professional development opportunities for early childhood providers.

- Develop clear early childhood career pathways and supports.^{xxxiii}

Work across the city continues to evolve, providing a unique opportunity to leverage the commitment and energy to build the capacity of Detroit’s early childhood care and education professionals and raise awareness of the important role they play in reaching long-term goals for the city. Work in Detroit can build on efforts at the national and state level to create a comprehensive and responsive professional development system. Following is an overview of state-level programs and policies that can help to inform and strengthen Detroit’s efforts to increase early childhood educator capacity.

STATE SYSTEMS: POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

The Office of Great Start (OGS) in the Michigan Department of Education oversees policies and programs designed to create a coordinated system of early learning. With the award of a federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) grant in 2014, the office established partnerships and enhanced programs in order to develop a more qualified and highly effective early childhood education workforce. Through partnerships with the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) and the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MIAEYC), the following programs are currently in place to support ongoing professional learning and career advancement.

Michigan Core Knowledge and Competencies Framework: In 2014, the Office of Great Start and Michigan Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) revised the state’s Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for the Early Care and Education Workforce (CKCC). The framework defines what adults who work with young children need to know, understand, and be able to do in order to ensure that children have the best possible environments, experiences, and relationships



in which to grow and learn. The framework addresses eight key areas, including **Child Development; Interactions and Guidance; Teaching and Learning; Observation, Documentation, and Assessment; Health, Safety and Nutrition; Family and Community Engagement; Professionalism; and Management**. The framework is designed to be accessible to educators across levels of experience, preparation, and training and to serve as a road map for ongoing career advancement. To that end it is aligned with other state and national personnel preparation and certification standards and guidelines.

Early Childhood Workforce Registry and Career Ladder: The Michigan Registry© for early childhood and school-age educators (MIRegistry©) was launched in 2018. The MIRegistry© is managed by Registry, Inc. for which the Office of Great Start holds the contract. The Registry supports individual educators, trainers, and training organizations. Individuals can use the registry to track employment, education, and training history, plan professional development, and access information on available training statewide. Supports and resources for individual educators include:

- Career pathway: The Pathway includes an eight-level career advancement framework moving from entry-level foundational skills (levels 1–3) to advanced professional levels moving from Child Development Associate (CDA) to PhD (five levels). Each level is cross-walked with corresponding career opportunities.
- Statewide training calendar and catalog: A training catalog enables educators to search for training by title, by CDA content area, by core competency area on the Workforce Core Knowledge and Competency Framework, and by qualification. The training calendar provides a searchable database of trainings that can be sorted by geographic area/location, date, subject matter content, and type of training (e.g., face-to-face, e-learning, correspondence, blended, etc.). A training description, including cost and credit hours, accompanies each entry in the catalog.
- Online learning record: Individual educators can create an online learning record to track training and credentials and



access resources to support creating accounts and managing data. Many of the training opportunities currently listed through the catalogue are offered through national training agencies offering subscription-based on-line training. Training offered through the Great Start to Quality Resource Centers can also be located in the catalogue.

Great Start to Quality, Michigan’s Quality Rating and Improvement System: Great Start to Quality (GSQ) is a voluntary five-star system designed to measure program quality and provide families with a resource for selecting care. Quality is assessed across five broad categories including the following:

- Staff qualifications and professional development—training and support provided as well as training and education or degrees completed by providers and staff.
- Family and community partnerships—family engagement practices, interactions and supports available.
- Administration and management—operational policies and practices.
- Environment—program safety and support for the health and wellness of the children.
- Curriculum and instruction— tools used to teach, accommodate needs, and track development of the children.

Indicators and points awarded for staff qualifications and professional development address:

- Credentials, degrees, and hours of formal training in child development for administrators, lead teachers, and assistants.
- Annual number of clock hours of professional development.
- Evidence of specialized training in cultural competence or supporting diverse populations of children and families.
- Development of individual staff quality improvement plans.
- For directors and lead teachers without an advanced degree, monthly consultation with early childhood specialists holding graduate degrees.

TRAINING AVAILABLE THROUGH STATEWIDE SYSTEMS

Great Start to Quality Resource Centers: The Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) and the statewide network of Great Start to Quality Resource Centers support center-based and home-based programs and providers with professional development, resources, and consultation. Available assistance includes coaching and consultation for developing quality improvement plans, financial assistance for improving the childcare or preschool setting, information about professional development and training opportunities, and a resource lending library. The ECIC provides an annual planned program of technical assistance to resource center directors, quality improvement consultants, and quality improvement specialists. The planned program includes training, coaching, consultation, a bi-weekly bulletin of information and resources, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities.

Great Start Collaboratives: Great Start Collaboratives are unique to Michigan and have been operating across the state since 2005. Each intermediate school district (ISD) or consortium of ISDs that receives funding from Great Start to Readiness (the state-supported Pre-K program) must convene a local Great Start Collaborative and a Great Start Parent Coalition to ensure the coordination and expansion of local early childhood infrastructure and programs that allow every child to achieve Michigan’s goals for early childhood outcomes. The ECIC provides an annual planned program of technical assistance to Great Start Collaborative directors and parent liaisons that includes training, coaching, consultation, a biweekly bulletin of information and resources, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities. The Investment Corporation also hosts a technical assistance consultation phone line and email box to respond to day-to-day questions and provide immediate consultation on emerging issues.

Consultation and Training supported through the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant (RTT-ELC): Social-Emotional Consultants and Child Care Health Consultants have provided consultation, as well as professional development to providers in select areas of the state, including Wayne County. Now ended, Family Engagement Consultation provided an opportunity for license-exempt providers to reflect on their practices and relationships through a Strengthening Families lens. The Child Care Health Consultation and Social-Emotional Consultation will sunset at the end of December, when the RTT-ELC grant ends. The Social-Emotional work will continue post-RTT-ELC with funds from the Department of Health and Human Services.

A program designed to provide training and supports to cohorts of licensed exempt providers across the state was also funded through RTT-ELC funds. Designed by the ECIC, Great Start to Quality Resource Center staff



were trained to facilitate Professional Learning Communities. Home-based providers received materials and information and established important and sustainable peer-to-peer relationships. The cohort model created an opportunity to engage these providers in professional learning and bring them into the first level of Great Start to Quality (GSQ), the state Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS).

Early Literacy Initiative: The state of Michigan has placed a high priority on boosting early literacy development and ensuring more children are reading with proficiency by third grade. Efforts include enactment of the Read by Grade 3 Act, and multiple efforts within the Michigan Department of Education, including Literacy Essentials led by an Early Literacy Team and focused on supporting instructional practice through training, coaching, and the development of literacy networks across the state. At the Pre-K level, resources include an Early Learning Coaching Model, a statement outlining essential practices for supporting early literacy in Pre-K, and a set of training modules for Pre-K literacy development.

T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps): T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® MICHIGAN, which is housed within the Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children, played an integral role in supporting the state's efforts to build a strong early childhood workforce through RTT-ELC. T.E.A.C.H. is a statewide scholarship program designed to help childcare center teaching staff, preschool teachers, family childcare providers, group home owners, center directors, and early childhood professionals and administrators meet their professional development goals, while continuing their current employment in regulated early childhood and school-age care settings. The program covers a portion of the cost of tuition and books, gives the scholarship recipient paid release time for work to attend classes or study, reimburses the center for a part of the cost, and awards the recipient a bonus or a raise upon completion of the contract requirements.

The Program supports career advancement at a number of levels including progress toward an associate's degree

(AA) or Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, CDA renewal, bachelor's degree (BA), master's degree (MA), and a foundational scholarship for educators who are weighing options with regard to pursuing a degree. To accommodate non-traditional learners in pursuing CDA credentials, T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood MICHIGAN recently launched a cohort model in three areas of the state. Through new

childcare funding, the T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program was awarded a \$1 million increase to provide supports for childcare providers seeking to enroll in the Great Start to Quality program or raise their star rating. This funding will expand the impact of T.E.A.C.H. and help more individuals to obtain the credential or degree necessary to improve their star quality rating.

TRAINING AVAILABLE THROUGH LOCAL PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

United Way of South Eastern Michigan (UWSEM): The United Way's Office of Early Childhood Innovation provides services and supports for children from birth to age five. Through its Early Learning Communities (ELCs), a place-based initiative operated with five community partners, both families and providers have access to training and resources. The ELCs are operated in partnership with the Wayne-Oakland-Macomb Great Start to Quality Resource Center housed at the United Way. In keeping with its mission to improve educational opportunity and economic prosperity in the region, UWSEM is launching a new workforce development initiative. An expanded CDA training that combines an adult literacy and work readiness focus with the traditional 120 hours of child development and early education will be offered through one of the Early Learning Communities. This will help address 2 persistent challenges: gaps in foundational skills needed to succeed in work and a persistent lack of qualified early childhood educators

The Wayne-Oakland-Macomb Great Start to Quality Resource Center: The Wayne-Oakland-Macomb Resource Center is one of 10 resource centers located across the state providing resources and supports to providers participating in Great Start to Quality (GSQ). Housed within the United Way for Southeastern Michigan, the Resource Center serves families and providers in the tri-county area. Ongoing training is available to all providers regardless of participation in GSQ and is offered in community-

based programs that serve as hubs for the Early Learning Communities. Detroit-based program partners offering training and provider professional learning include **Leaps and Bounds**, **Starfish**, and **The Black Family Development Center**. Each center maintains a monthly training calendar listing professional development opportunities available. In addition to offering training required for licensing, training topics reflect the changing needs of providers. Quality specialists and GSQ consultants work on a daily basis with providers and are able to identify common training needs as they arise. In addition, the Resource Center maintains close ties with licensing specialists, who also share insights on training needs and interests. All training offered through the Early Learning Communities is at no cost to the provider. Services and supports available through the Resource Center include:

- Free and low-cost supports for obtaining the CDA credential.
- Training sessions and workshops addressing a variety of early childhood development and education topics. Most training sessions meet licensing requirements or are directly applicable to indicators on the Great Start to Quality self-assessment survey and Program Quality Assessment (PQA).
- Peer-to-peer networking opportunities.
- Navigators/quality specialists who are available to provide information and support for beginning the GSQ process.

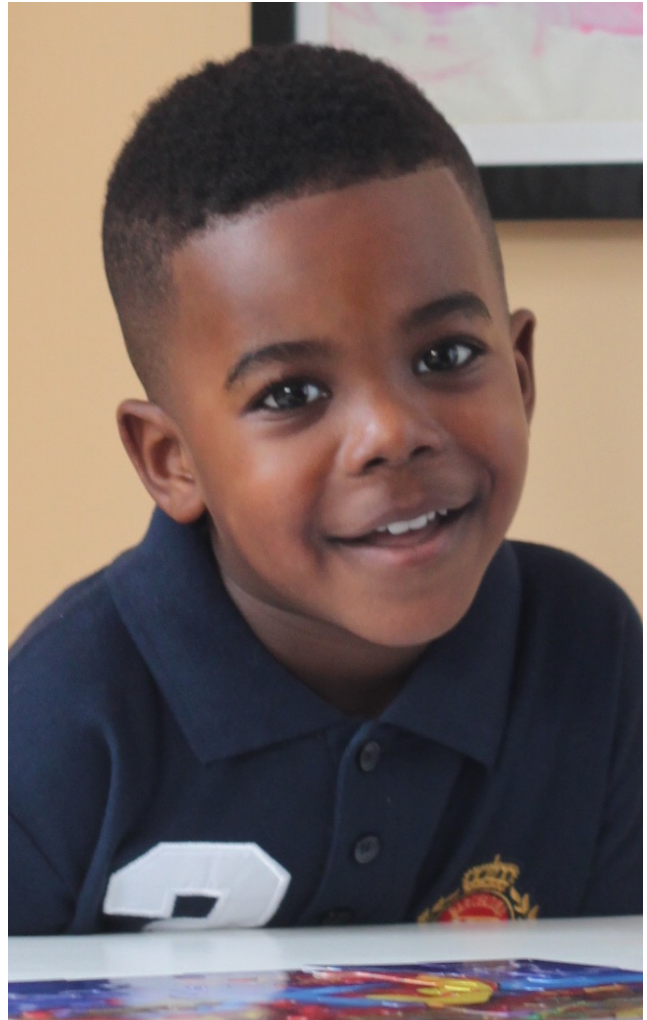
- Coaching and consultation for developing quality improvement plans.
- Foundation/orientation to GSQ training for unlicensed providers, which enters them into the system and meets requirements for receiving childcare subsidy payments.

Wayne Regional Education Services Agency (RESA):

Wayne RESA provides a broad spectrum of services and support to Wayne County's 33 school districts aimed at improving student achievement and maximizing economies of scale in staff development, purchasing, and administrative services. Supports for professional development include focused in-service workshops and technical support as well as sustained professional learning opportunities. Half- and full-day workshop sessions and training series cover a variety of topics. Sustained professional learning opportunities are long-term and cohort-based, and utilize a variety of modalities, including action planning, professional study, practice, reflection, and peer networking. The Wayne RESA acts as the local fiduciary for the Michigan Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) and offers trainings aligned to GSRP training expectations/requirements. Training is free for GSRP staff and available for a fee to other providers in the area.

Detroit Public Television (DPTV): As a public television affiliate, DPTV offers programming focused on professional learning for educators, including the PBS Teacher Line, offering online training. Training is fee-based, and some offerings provide continuing education credits (CEUs). Locally sponsored early childhood educator professional learning opportunities include the following:

- Early Educator Ed Camp offers a series of workshops designed on the basis of teacher surveys of interests and need. Topics identified by teachers for the 2018 Ed Camp included behavior management and dealing with trauma, teaching strategies and activities, family engagement, supporting diversity, and teacher-child interactions. Sessions are interactive and provide opportunities for teachers to



share ideas with one another as well as learn new strategies and practices.

- Preschool U Training for providers in the Brightmoor community is a PBS parent education and training program offering simple activities for parents to do at home with their children. The DPTV will deliver training and provide ongoing supports and resources to providers in the Brightmoor community to deliver the training to parents. By training staff to deliver this training, DPTV is helping to increase staff knowledge and skills, and enhance their ability to work more effectively with families.

HighScope: HighScope offers a variety of training topics and delivers training through both online and in-person formats. Trainings include both short-term workshops and intensive courses. Training topics focus primarily on implementing the HighScope curriculum; however, trainers are available for delivering other training topics as well. Currently most trainings have been approved for state continuing education clock hours (SCECHs) or continuing education units (CEUs). The HighScope Preschool Curriculum Course or Infant-Toddler Curriculum Course fully satisfies the 120-hour professional learning requirement of the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential. Those who complete the course requirements receive a certificate from HighScope that can be included in the application packet that the Council for Professional Recognition requires. HighScope places a high priority on ensuring program administrators support staff participation in training, and encourages administrators to provide the following supports:

- Arrange for adequate release time for participants to attend training.
- Provide time and encouragement for participants to study course materials and complete assignments.
- Allocate time and resources for participants to implement the curriculum or train other staff members during the weeks between training sessions.
- Communicate with the HighScope consultant as needed.

Through a federally funded Investing in Innovation (i3) grant, HighScope, in partnership with Detroit Public Schools, is conducting a randomized control trial to measure the impact of learning opportunities focused on conflict resolution and the development of executive function skills on child outcomes. The results of the study will inform additions to the HighScope curriculum and development of related staff training focused on these two areas.

Additional Training Opportunities in the Detroit Area:

- Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency offers the Leap to Teach Apprenticeship, a program supporting high school students to gain a CDA credential and work in a Head Start program. The apprenticeship includes training, mentoring, compensation, and placement in entry-level teaching position.
- Living Arts Detroit: The Wolf Trap of Detroit offers arts training to teachers.
- Detroit Public Schools Foundation: The foundation funds projects and is engaged in the HighScope i3 randomized control trial that will influence changes to the curriculum and address teaching needs for children in Detroit.
- Wayne County Great Start to Quality Collaborative: The GSQ Collaborative offers online resources for providers.
- Keep Growing Detroit: Part of the Hope Starts Here initiative, Keep Growing Detroit offers grants and services to providers interested in growing fresh foods. Its ECE program includes a newsletter, suggested activities, and strategies for making connections to early learning domains.

Kresge Foundation Detroit Early Childhood Education Support Initiative: Through its Early Childhood Education Support Initiative, part of the Kresge Foundation's commitment to Hope Starts Here, a series of grants have been awarded to nine Detroit organizations working with formal, licensed childcare centers. Grants provide three-year program support for Detroit-based, high-quality early childhood programs that take a whole-child approach to serving young children ages 0-5. This initiative supports these organizations to:

- Continue providing high-quality programming that incorporates whole-child tenets to provide wraparound services to Detroit young children ages 0-5; or
- Expand existing models of high-quality programming that currently provide wraparound

Grants are based on the Foundation’s focus on supporting centers to implement a whole child approach based on the four tenets:

- Healthy Living
- Kindergarten Readiness
- Creative Engagement
- Support for Families and Other Caregivers

To that end, grants support programs designed to provide children and families with arts and creative enrichment, behavioral and mental health services, parent education and engagement, and programs promoting healthy living and eating. The nine organizations and their proposed projects are:

- **ACCESS** to develop a model to support early childhood centers to more effectively access and coordinate with human services resources.
- **Children’s Center of Wayne County, Inc.**, to develop the capacity of center staff to deliver behavioral health interventions to children at their centers. This includes direct service and staff training.
- **Detroit Educational TV**, to expand enrichment programming, creative learning workshops and other efforts aimed at children, parents, and early childhood education providers.
- **Detroit Hispanic Development Corp.** for workshops on leadership and child development, particularly professional development to help early childhood personnel to work effectively with Hispanic students.
- **Keep Growing Detroit** to develop garden-based activities and programming at early childhood centers and train early childhood staff to deliver programming related to access to fresh, local produce and healthy eating.

- **Learn Early** to conduct educator workshops and training to integrate arts and creative learning into literacy and STEM learning, and to engage parents in these efforts.
- **Living Arts Detroit** to expand residencies in early childhood centers and expand educator and parent workshops on art-based learning in every day teaching and at home.
- **Mothering Justice** for efforts developing women leaders who have young children in advocating for affordable, high-quality child care. This includes building a public coalition of advocates for a more affordable childcare system in the city of Detroit.
- **National Kidney Foundation** to work with parents and staff to integrate nutrition education and healthy living principles in young children’s education and the daily practices in their homes.

Mindful of the interrelationships among all groups and institutions in Detroit to collectively contribute to the well-being of the city’s children, families, and early childhood educators, Kresge will support programs to work together as a cohort to leverage impact and expand capacity.

Training Available Through Institutions of Higher Education: Community colleges, colleges, and universities in the Detroit area offer a variety of degree and credential programs, from CDA/AA through PhD, as well as in-service and professional learning opportunities for early childhood education (ECE) providers. Following is a description of available programs.

- **Henry Ford College:** Children and education programs are divided into two areas—the Children and Families Program and the Pre-Education Program. The Children and Families Program prepares graduates to work as professionals in early childhood settings such as home childcare and center childcare programs, Head Start, the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), and private pre-kindergarten programs. This program completes the first half of a baccalaureate (BA) degree and prepares

- students for transfer to four-year universities. The Pre-Education Program consists of five areas of study: child development, pre-elementary, pre-secondary, pre-special education, and an Educational Paraprofessional Certificate. The four associate programs fulfill requirements for the first half of a baccalaureate (BA) degree, and prepare students to transfer to a four-year university formal teacher-training program and teacher certification. Both provide students with hands-on educational experiences designed to transfer educational skills to the workplace or to continue learning at a university.
- **Wayne State University:** The Wayne State University College of Education offers degrees, endorsements, and certification programs in early and elementary education. In addition, two early childhood centers offer laboratory experiences for pre-service students as well as professional learning opportunities for ECE programs and staff in the community.
 - **The Merrill-Palmer Skillman Institute at Wayne State University:** The Institute provides professional development opportunities including a two-day professional development conference, half-day professional development seminars, and customized trainings. Training addresses topics including social emotional development and trauma-informed care, early brain development, infant-toddler development, and preschool behavior management.
 - **Wayne County Community College District:** The district offers both an AAS degree and CDA certification.
 - **University of Michigan Dearborn (UM-Dearborn):** The College of Education, Health, and Human Services offers undergraduate degrees in Children and Families and Early Childhood Education, with elementary school teacher certification, and an MA in Early Childhood Education. The 2+2 program combines selected two-year community college associate degree programs with two years of advanced coursework at UM-Dearborn.
 - **Michigan State University (MSU):** The bachelor of arts in Early Care and Education is a collaborative, multi-institutional-limited enrollment program focused on the intellectual, social, emotional, and biological development of children. The program includes planning and design of related human services and care/educational settings, and preparation related to employment in ECE settings. Through online training courses, the program provides flexibility for working professionals who need to maintain employment while advancing their educational opportunities. The College of Social Science, in collaboration with the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (GPIDEA), offers this program by faculty from multiple land-grant universities. The MSU Extension Services' Early Childhood Development program provides resources and training including online workshops and classes focused on school readiness and supporting social-emotional development.

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN INSTITUTIONS THAT OFFER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TRAINING

CDA TRAINING	BACHELOR'S DEGREES
Mott Community College	University of Michigan – Flint
St. Clair Community College	Oakland University
Macomb Community College	Rochester College*
Oakland Community College	Eastern Michigan University*
Schoolcraft Community College	Madonna University
Washtenaw Community College	Marygrove College*
Wayne County Community College	Wayne State University
Henry Ford Community College	University of Michigan, Dearborn*
Monroe Community College	
Baker College (<i>locations throughout the Southeast Michigan area</i>)	<i>*will transfer credits from associate degree toward a bachelor's degree</i>

Source: [Detroit Head Start Talent Strategy 2016](#)

COMMUNITY AND PROGRAM COLLABORATIVES

Currently, a number of efforts to leverage information and resources by creating collaborative structures and peer support networks are underway in Detroit. Two initiatives, the Brightmoor Community Quality Initiative and the Woodward-Corridor Consortium, are supporting program administrators and the Head Start innovation fund provides support and resources to area Head Start Programs.

Woodward Corridor Consortium: Founded by faculty from the Merrell Palmer Skillman Institute and Early Care and Education faculty in Wayne State University's College of Education, the Woodward Corridor Consortium is a collaboration among the directors of early childhood centers in the area surrounding Wayne State University and community partners. The consortium provides support and training to a network



of early care and education program directors and connects them to needed resources and information from partnering agencies and organizations. Directors attend monthly information-sharing and training meetings where they learn about emerging issues and professional development opportunities. Four centers receive on-site coaching and mentoring supports. The Consortium provides an annual conference open to staff and directors as well as specialized professional learning focused on the roles and responsibilities of program administrators.

Brightmoor Community Quality Improvement Initiative: Supported by the Fisher Family Foundation, the Brightmoor Child Care Quality Initiative began in 2010 and today engages 17 providers serving 586 children in the Brightmoor community of Detroit. Initially designed as an opportunity for center and home-based providers to access training and create a strong network of peer support, the initiative has undergone a number of shifts and implemented a number of innovative strategies. Shifts include holding training sessions and meetings in the evening when home-based providers were able to attend; including groups of teachers and lead teachers as well as directors in some professional learning experiences; and moving away from periodic training sessions to an intensive, immersion model that included a train-the-trainer component, enabling programs to build internal capacity to offer training and monitor fidelity of implementation. Effective strategies included developing a train-the-trainer model for program directors to support them in their roles as instructional leaders; planning site visits to exemplary programs in other cities and states; offering on-site coaching; and developing a pool of substitutes to support teachers and directors attending professional learning opportunities during program operating hours.

Head Start Innovation Fund: Supported by a funding collaborative headed by the Community Foundation for Southeast MI, the Innovation Fund awards competitive grants to Head Start providers, as well as

offering strategic support for system-wide needs. The Fund recognizes the value of working together as a region and supports cross-organization collaboration that has resulted in systems-level change for children, families, and staff. Programs represent a regional collaborative that includes Detroit Birth to Five (Detroit Birth to Five is one of the Birth to Five Pilots funded by the Office of Head Start and includes Matrix, New Saint Paul, Starfish, and United Children and Family); Wayne County—Guidance Center, Starfish Western Wayne, Wayne Metro Community Action Center; Oakland County—Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency; Macomb County—Macomb County Community Action Agency.

Examples of program innovations focused on teacher professional learning and career advancement:

- Matrix Human Services—Matrix Online Learning Lab Environment: To address the cost and logistics of convening large numbers of staff for site-based training, Matrix developed the Matrix Online Learning Lab Environment (MOLLE) as a depository for Head Start and Early Head Start training material, curricula, and resources supporting the professional learning for Matrix staff, parents, and childcare partners. As new content is developed, it is placed online. Training materials include publications, videos, webinars, podcasts, and more. MOLLE has the capacity to serve 1,500 staff, parents, and partners.
- New Saint Paul Tabernacle: To support retention and increase access to training for staff and parents for whom transportation is a barrier, New Saint Paul Tabernacle offers on-site training for the infant/toddler certification and CDA cohort training. In addition to building teacher capacity to support language and math skills, staff training focused on improving teacher-child interactions as a strategy to improve child outcomes in these two content areas is also available to parents and teachers across the agency.

WHAT WOULD MAKE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MORE EFFECTIVE? WHAT'S MISSING FOR ECE TEACHERS IN DETROIT?

Snapshot of the ECE Workforce in Detroit

The city of Detroit is home to two very different groups of ECE educators: (1) those who are well qualified by virtue of holding higher education degrees and are most likely working in state or federally funded programs or in a few privately owned, high revenue-generating programs where educators are better compensated and have access to ongoing professional learning opportunities, and (2) those who have less formal training and are working in private community-based programs with narrow profit margins and few opportunities for access to professional learning or career advancement opportunities. Detroit is facing a persistent shortage of qualified teachers, and many programs struggle to retain the staff they need.^{xxxiv} This

situation is exacerbated by extremely low compensation levels, which in turn have resulted in a culture of competitiveness where, with even small increases in salary, teachers will move from one program to the next. As a result, teacher turnover is high, negatively impacting program quality and forcing administrators to be continuously engaged in training and retraining new teachers. Efforts to address teacher recruitment and retention are ongoing across the city, but are hampered by salary rates that are among the lowest in the state.

In terms of demographics, many educators in Detroit's most marginalized neighborhoods reflect the population of children they serve. Enabling children to see teachers who look like them and share their racial and cultural backgrounds is a positive and important

element of building children’s self-identity and sense of community. However, many of these teachers are poor, live in the same neighborhood, and must contend with the same trauma-related situations faced by children and families they serve. For these teachers, the challenge is to find ways to support children who are exhibiting signs of stress while coping with the same issues themselves. As one community stakeholder noted, teachers are “cognitively exhausted,” severely impacting their capacity to “do what they are being asked to do.” Research supports the importance of addressing organizational conditions that can alleviate work related stress by offering on going professional learning opportunities and engaging teachers in planning professional development and collaborating with other teachers through communities of practice and other peer networking activities.

Who Is Getting Training and Who Is Not?

Access to training in Detroit is uneven, with some programs having resources and time to invest in ongoing professional development while others do not. Not unique to Detroit, this situation is common across the country and is the result of programs being delivered in fragmented, non-systematic ways with differing qualities and types of support across settings and systems.^{xxxv} For example, in publicly funded programs such as state Pre-K and Head Start, where clear expectations and guidelines are set, teachers have more access to training and support. In contrast, for teachers working in community-based private settings, expectations and requirements tend to be lower—with some educators having little prior early education or training. For those educators, ongoing professional learning may be the most formal training they receive.^{xxxvi} Some leveling has occurred across settings as programs seek accreditation or choose to participate in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS). For privately funded programs not participating in QRIS or seeking accreditation however, teachers often have the most limited access to training and support.^{xxxvii}

The [Detroit ECD Ecosystem Map](#), created to inform the Hope Starts Here framework, illustrates the major

areas that impact the development of young children living in Detroit and the key actors working within specific areas impacting that development. With regard to resources and supports for the professional learning of the ECE workforce, findings indicate there is a need for more workforce development resources in the City of Detroit for teachers, assistants, and directors working in licensed early childhood development centers and for caregivers in unlicensed, home-based centers.^{xxxviii} The launch of the Michigan Professional Development Registry will help to provide a single point for providers to learn about available resources and training. Nevertheless, stakeholders contributing to this report noted that there were sharp divisions within the city with regard to who was “plugged in” to information about available training and who was not.

What Gets in the Way of Accessing Training?

In addition to a lack of available professional learning resources and programs, ECE providers in Detroit face a number of barriers and challenges to accessing the services that are available. These include:

- Lack of qualified substitute teachers to cover classrooms so teachers can attend training.
- Lack of funds to pay for training and other professional learning supports.
- Lack of time to participate in training.
- Lack of transportation to attend training offered outside the program or in other parts of the city.
- Lack of a professional community—especially for educators working in private community-based childcare centers or homes.
- High staff turnover—resulting in the need to retrain new teachers.

To address the need for more substitutes qualified and available to support classroom teacher participation in professional learning, the Brightmoor Quality Initiative has created a substitute pool serving programs in the area, and New Saint Paul has established as partnership with a local temp program.

Solutions

To address barriers to accessing professional learning opportunities, contributors to the 2016 Childcare Study recommended offering training that has these characteristics:

- Low or no cost.
- Available at convenient times (evenings and weekends).
- Offered in multiple locations.
- Available online and on demand.
- Relevant and focused on early learning and development, classroom management, social-emotional intelligence, and quality standards (i.e., beyond basic health and safety requirements).

For many private providers in Detroit who may have been serving children for many years with little formal training or education, participating in professional learning and training may be intimidating or may seem irrelevant to their needs and interests. For providers working in small or home-based programs, the lack of opportunities to connect with others, as mentioned earlier, results in limited access to hearing about alternative or innovative approaches.

"College was a bridge too far. Even though it was close by, even though it was accessible, there were just life barriers that prevented people who wanted to get the training."

Finally, many providers may be reluctant to enroll in credit-bearing courses offered on college campuses. The creation of professional learning communities (PLCs) and establishing learning cohorts are two strategies currently being implemented locally to address these barriers.

"Centers are strapped for resources to be able to pay for their staff to go to workshops or conferences...and transportation is the other thing."

Some of the childcare staff have to rely on public transportation, which has improved, but is not the greatest in the Metro Detroit area"

Content: What content areas are available through training?

Training topics tend to fall into four categories:

1. Training focused on boosting GSQ rating. GSQ Resource center trainers utilize observation and input from providers to plan training topics that reflect emerging or common needs.
2. Training focused on improving teacher/classroom quality assessment scores. Scores on observation tools such as the CLASS are used to hold programs accountable to meeting quality guidelines. Programs falling below required levels often focus training exclusively on topics designed to boost scores.
3. Training required for meeting licensing requirements including basic health and safety.
4. Training approved and aligned to Michigan Core Knowledge and Competencies Framework and GSRP standards that can be used for career advancement. The Core Knowledge and Competencies framework includes a crosswalk with state credentialing requirements.

The new Michigan Registry is designed to serve as a statewide clearinghouse for information and links to available training. The State continues to encourage training entities to complete the training approval process and list offerings on Registry website. Educators can search topics aligned to each of the Core Knowledge and Competencies. A high-level review of available training opportunities aligned to the 8 Core Knowledge and Core Competency areas reveals uneven availability with most training available in Child Development, Teaching and Learning, and Interactions which include among other topics, training focused on Special Education; social-emotional development, behavior management, and trauma informed care; and curriculum content areas. Fewer training options are

available for Observation and Assessment, Family Engagement, Professionalism, and Program Management. Most trainings target the first level of competency development - developing with fewer opportunities offering content designed for the top two levels, achieving and extending.

How is Training Being Delivered?

Training opportunities for Detroit early childhood educators are limited primarily to single-session or short duration workshops. Understanding that more sustained and targeted training builds teacher knowledge and instructional skills, some programs are now beginning to limit the number of topics covered in professional learning to provide deeper, more sustained training focused on a single content area. Other programs have opted to “immerse” selected teacher leaders in intensive, longer-term programs that include a train-the-trainer component, thus building internal capacity and increasing opportunities for teachers to have the support they need to link training to classroom practice.

“Most of the conferences and workshops are one and done. We know that that is the least effective way to impact practice in the classroom—that if a teacher attends a PD about 10% of what she heard on that day would be implemented.”

Coaching is recognized as an effective and preferred approach to professional learning, particularly when coaching is part of more intensive job-embedded supports linked to training. Coaching is currently being implemented in GSRP and Head Start/Early Head Start programs, and programs participating in GSQ. Two new opportunities for coaching in Detroit include the new Literacy Essentials training-of-trainers model designed to build capacity statewide to deliver early literacy training across multiple settings, including family childcare. While coaching could potentially be an option for supporting teachers after training, it is unlikely given the current system of deploying trainers

that coaching supports would be widely available. The ECIC has also received a grant to develop and pilot a new coaching model in the Detroit area that will focus specifically on curriculum implementation and teacher-child interactions. With the goals of both boosting quality and encouraging more providers to enroll in GSQ, Detroit-based coaches will be trained to work with providers across settings including those not currently enrolled in GSQ.

How Are Teachers Making Decisions on What Training to Access?

For programs participating in GSQ, administrators are required to create professional development plans with their teaching staff. However, it has been reported



anecdotally that teachers make training choices based on convenience, cost, and required subject matter/number of hours required for licensing and GSQ (16 hours center-based programs; 24 hours quality-rated programs). As a result, training is not cohesive and does not necessarily help move teachers

along a career pathway. With expanded use of the MiRegistry©, it is likely that educators will have access to additional tools and information that can help inform decision-making to drive career advancement as well.

WHAT IS NEEDED: CONTENT

What are the identified gaps in the current professional learning landscape with regard to training content?

- Training that builds deeper knowledge of subject matter content and how to teach it.
- More opportunity for including teacher voice in planning content of professional learning.

What is taking place in Detroit now that can inform broader efforts to fill gaps in content?

- Building deeper knowledge of content: ECE programs in the Brightmoor community have invested in immersion training in curriculum implementation that builds internal capacity by preparing lead teachers to offer training and monitor fidelity.
- Building deeper knowledge of content: Professional development supports available to teachers working in the Wayne State University preschool laboratories will focus deeply on math instruction. The training decision is based on teacher observation and emerging state priorities. *“Staff has told me, and I have, from observation, noticed that we really need to think about, how are we infusing mathematical thinking and mathematical language within the context of what we’re doing in the classroom. Staff and services this year will focus on mathematics with young children.”*
- Building deeper knowledge of content: Great Start to Quality Early Learning Communities in Detroit created a series of informal “Learning Labs” which grew out of provider interest in moving from basic

training on cultural competence to finding ways to implement practices in the context of their own classrooms.

- Teacher voice: Great Start to Quality Resource Center specialists and consultants are in regular contact with providers across the community and gather information from directors and staff with regard to emerging and high-priority training needs.
- Teacher voice: Providers participating in the Brightmoor Quality Initiative are directly engaged in identifying training needs and designing appropriate learning experiences. *“The providers are at the table, helping to co-design whatever services are going to be provided through their programs for families and for professional development. And so we kind of all work together to make sure that it’s all reflective of the needs of everybody and what is most fitting for the childcare providers.”*
- Teacher voice: The annual Educator Camp hosted by Detroit Public Television utilizes teacher surveys to collect information on teachers’ priority training topics and uses input to design program offerings.

Input gathered through a survey of Detroit teachers and interviews with local, state, and national experts identify the following professional learning topics as being most important for building teacher capacity to address the learning needs of young children. This list reflects feedback on content that had the greatest relevance to early childhood education in Detroit, and is based both on overall availability of training across content areas as well as training topics that pertain

specifically to meeting the needs of children in Detroit. These learning topics include the following:

Basic child development: A number of Detroit-based stakeholders providing input for this report indicated a general need among educators to deepen their understanding of developmental milestones, and what children’s learning and development look like across ages and stages. This need was also identified by teachers responding to the teacher survey.

“If I had to prioritize [training] content I would say priority one is that teachers need grounding in child development, developmental psychology, the developmental science of young children, infants and toddlers to pre-school age children.”

Brain development: With new research on children’s early brain development continuing to emerge, early childhood educators will need ongoing opportunities to learn about the impacts of the learning experiences, relationships, and environments that best support development and learning. In addition, teachers need to develop a deep understanding of the impacts of stress and toxic stress on children’s learning and long-term health and well-being. Input from national experts indicate that knowledge of the science of brain development in young children is foundational to supporting children’s learning.

Social-emotional development and trauma-informed care: Children’s social-emotional development requires skills such as the ability to communicate, connect with others, resolve conflict, self-regulate, display kindness and empathy, and cope with challenges. These skills are crucial for school readiness. For many children today, their ability to develop these skills is compromised by exposure to adverse experiences causing stress and related behavior problems. Teachers play an important role in supporting healthy social-emotional development and, to that end, need professional learning opportunities that specifically address how to promote social-emotional development. In addition, teachers need specialized supports and training to

address the needs of young children exposed to high levels of stress.

SPOTLIGHT: San Jose, California—Explicitly Teaching Social Emotional Skills. This professional development program is designed to improve social-emotional learning and increase teachers’ classroom management skills. Effective elements of the program include using a research-based model of social-emotional development (Teaching Pyramid Model); building collaboration by combining training, coaching, and professional learning communities; and using data to track child outcomes. Teachers are given both “voice and choice” in designing their professional learning opportunities, and work is embedded into daily classroom practice. In partnership with administrators and teacher leaders, teachers developed the Quick Check, a 10-minute online survey that is loaded on their phones and enables them to track children’s progress on key social-emotional indicators daily.

SPOTLIGHT: Supporting mental health needs of children and families. Recognizing the impact of unresolved trauma on children’s learning and well-being, Starfish Family Services in Detroit is developing a “playbook” for other childcare providers to better support parents and children with mental health needs. The creation of a playbook holds tremendous potential to improve the health, development, and well-being of all Detroit children.

Early literacy and math: National experts who observe teaching practices across the country have found that in spite of a strong focus on literacy development in the early years, in many classrooms, literacy experiences are limited to teacher-directed activities and a book area in the classroom. These experts further contend that teachers need targeted support for developing new ways to integrate informal literacy and language learning across areas of the classroom and developing opportunities for self-directed learning through play. Mathematics learning has been linked positively to later reading skills and has been identified at the state level as a learning “essential.” Teachers need both content knowledge and resources for integrating opportunities for children to master key concepts through exploration and play.

Infant-toddler development and care: Meeting the needs of infants and toddlers in group care requires a specialized set of skills and knowledge. Unfortunately,



as more and more young children from birth to age three are being placed in group care, access to appropriate education and training has not kept pace. As is the case across the country, professional development focused on infant-toddler development in Detroit is limited and difficult to access.

SPOTLIGHT: To help alleviate this gap, the State of Michigan developed Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality Infant and Toddler Programs. The standards provide both a framework describing children's development and learning and the quality standards for environments that enable infants and toddlers to progress in their development and learning.

In addition, the Great Start to Quality Resource Centers are offering Infant-Toddler Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) that bring providers across programs together, providing opportunities for peer support and quality improvement.

In Detroit, the United Way for Southeastern Michigan has developed a new training, “*Baby Basics*” designed by Early Learning Community delegates which will be piloted across all ELC’s in the future.

Family engagement: In 2016, the US Departments of Education and Health and Human Services released a joint statement of family engagement in early learning programs stating that “strong family engagement in early childhood systems and programs is central—not supplemental” to promoting children’s healthy development and preparing them for school. The statement defines family engagement as the systematic inclusion of families in activities and programs that promote children’s development, learning, and wellness, as well as in the planning, development, and evaluation of such activities, programs, and systems.

For family engagement to be integrated throughout early childhood systems and programs, providers and schools must engage families as essential partners when providing services that promote children’s learning and development, nurture positive relationships between families and staff, and support families.^{xxxix} Finding ways to authentically engage families can be a challenge—particularly in traditionally marginalized communities. Detroit teachers have identified family engagement as a high-priority training need.

SPOTLIGHT: Tellin’ Stories. Developed by Teaching for Change, this family engagement model connects families, schools, and communities. Designed specifically to support families of color and those who are low-income, the Tellin’ Stories approach engages families and staff using the power of story to “connect people from diverse backgrounds, to pass on valuable information and experiences, and to organize collective action.”

SPOTLIGHT: Ripples of Transformation Family Engagement Toolkit. Developed by First Five Alameda County (California), Ripples of Transformation expands the concept and practice of family engagement from a separate strand of programming to an integrated, continuing stream of opportunities for parents to be leaders in their families, schools, and communities, as well as in policies and systems. This approach extends family engagement from the preschool classroom, where most resources have been focused, into early childhood systems of care, including family support, children’s health, and mental health. By empowering families to shape systems—as decision-makers, advocates, partners and providers—outcomes improve for both families and systems.

WHAT IS NEEDED: PROCESS

What are the identified gaps in the current professional learning landscape with regard to training process?

- Learning experiences sustained over time and embedded in daily practice.
- Opportunities for teacher collaboration and peer support.
- Supports for teacher professional development planning.

What is happening in Detroit now that could inform broader efforts to fill gaps?

- Linking training to daily practice: A new coaching program offered through the Great Start to Quality Resource Centers will help link new teacher knowledge to classroom practice, targeting specific aspects of instructional practice and program implementation.
- Teacher cooperation and peer support: Teachers in the Brightmoor area have been engaged in site visits

to exemplary programs in other cities and states. Enabling teachers from the same program to participate together resulted in peer support and problem solving as they worked to implement new practices in their classrooms.

- Linking training to career development: *With a grant from the Detroit Regional Workforce Fund (DRWF) United Way of Southeastern Michigan is developing a training that links attainment of the CDA credential with adult education foundational skills.*

The following professional learning delivery processes have been identified as important strategies to fill current gaps.

Increase job-embedded professional learning opportunities including coaching and professional learning communities: A shift in consensus on what it takes to provide teachers with learning opportunities



that will lead to better outcomes for children through high quality instruction, now recognizes the critical importance of ongoing, job-embedded professional learning as the key to continuous improvement.

Education leaders in Detroit recognize the need for additional coaching and other job-embedded supports. The Hope Starts Here plan addressed the need for increased access to coaching supports, calling for expanded and improved citywide coaching models to support impactful teacher-child interactions: “*Studies have found that the on-the job professional development experienced by most teachers and staff is ‘inconsistent, fragmented, and often chaotic,’ which contributes to staff turnover. In contrast, the most effective forms of professional development are ongoing, intensive, and individualized models rather than one-time workshops where teachers might forget what they learned and that lack continuing feedback as they try to apply new strategies.*” (Hope Starts Here, p. 79) A shift to job-embedded professional learning and the use of coaching models that specifically support classroom practice linked to training and new knowledge development will require supports and resources at both the program and systems levels.

“When you don't know what to do, you just do what you think you should be doing. Modeling really goes a long, long way. Then, having that person there to not only give you feedback and model, but to continually deepen your understanding by connecting it to the content of what you heard in [training] - really helping translate theory into practice.”

SPOTLIGHT: Head Start Practice-Based Coaching (PBC). PBC is a cyclical process for supporting teachers' use of effective teaching practices that lead to positive outcomes for children. The coaching cycle components are (1) planning

goals and action steps, (2) engaging in focused observation, and (3) reflecting on and sharing feedback about teaching practices. PBC occurs within the context of a collaborative partnership. Each component in the cycle is designed to inform the actions taken by a coach or teacher during the subsequent component (or throughout the coaching process). The cyclical nature of PBC emphasizes that expectations and desired outcomes of coaching are regularly reviewed and updated.

SPOTLIGHT: Ounce of Prevention/Educare Professional Learning Community. This professional learning community brought together educators from three Chicago elementary schools to work together to create aligned systems of teaching and learning across learning for levels from birth through grade three. The PLC was identified as the most effective professional learning approach to changing knowledge, beliefs, and practices related to classroom interactions and instruction and family support. Keys to success included setting clear expectations for leaders and members, including a mix of representatives across positions and ages served, providing members the opportunity to select from among six PLC content areas, providing an evidence-based format and beginning set of protocols and resources, and monitoring progress on an ongoing basis. PLC content areas included assessment, family engagement, foundational math, language and literacy, social-emotional learning, and transitions.

Use teacher observation tools to inform professional learning and coaching: Observation tools that provide teachers with a deeper understanding of their daily practices and how children are spending their days can be powerful tools for teachers to use alone or with a supervisor or coach to make adjustments that increase instructional time and provide children with the learning experiences they need most.

SPOTLIGHT: Edusnap. This time-sampling observation measure describes classroom practice in Pre-K and elementary-school classrooms. The observation provides educators with a minute-by-minute picture of children's experiences in the classroom by quantifying their school day using codes classified into four components: Activity Settings, Content Areas, Student Learning Approaches, and Teaching Approaches. EduSnap helps educators examine the decisions, both unintentional and unquestioned, that teachers make regarding aspects of the children's day and how these decisions translate to the experiences children

have in their educational settings. Results from the EduSnap observations can be used as a professional learning experience, encouraging teacher inquiry and self-reflection, and as a way to monitor quality improvement over time.

SPOTLIGHT: Rhode Island Early Childhood Education and Training Program. Offered through the Community College of Rhode Island, this program employs a cohort model and includes intensive mentoring and foundational courses on academic and life skills. To meet the needs of their immigrant population of adult learners, the program provides bilingual career counseling.

"There are wonderful training opportunities that serve the purpose [of meeting] required training hours. But there is a real advantage to following a pathway, to getting a credential or degree."

WHAT IS NEEDED: SYSTEMS

What are the identified gaps in the current professional learning landscape with regard to building professional learning systems?

- System-wide capacity building opportunities for program directors.
- Equitable access to professional learning opportunities across settings and programs.
- Targeted efforts to address teacher shortage and build a pipeline of ECE professionals entering the field.

- Teacher support for accessing degree programs and linking professional development to career advancement.
- Training supports alignment across early learning and the early grades.

What is happening in Detroit now that could inform broader efforts to fill gaps?

- **Building capacity of program leaders:** The Brightmoor Quality Initiative and the Woodward Corridor Consortium have implemented programs that provide program directors with a peer support

network as well as access to quality improvement information and resources.

- **Linking Professional Learning and Career Advancement:** The Michigan Professional Development Registry includes tools and resources to help teachers develop career plans that map onto the Michigan Career Pathway and teacher preparation requirements.
- **Teacher Shortage:** The Head Start programs included in the Head Start Innovations Grant program launched a collaborative teacher recruitment effort that utilized a number of strategies for outreach and recruitment.
- **Teacher Shortage:** To address the persistent shortage of qualified teachers in Detroit and to support quality improvement, a number of agencies have been offering “in-house” CDA programs.

At the systems level, a number of strategies can be implemented that build on state-level systems-building efforts and enhance overall cohesiveness of programs and practices across settings.

Support program leaders: Program leaders, especially in private, community-based centers, are often isolated within their programs and have little opportunity to access training or interact with other providers. As small business owners, they are often faced with a number of management and administrative challenges. As a result, their abilities to serve in the capacity of instructional leaders for staff are often limited. Finding ways to support ongoing professional learning for program directors could be an important mechanism for increasing overall program quality. The creation of professional learning communities among program directors has proven to be effective. Work currently taking place through the Brightmoor Quality Improvement Initiative and the Woodward Corridor Consortium provide important models for implementing similar peer networks more broadly across the city. Providing leadership development training, as well as ensuring program directors have access to resources and guidance they need to continuously develop new knowledge and skills, will

help program leaders to more effectively fulfill their role as instructional leaders.

SPOTLIGHT: Lead Learn Excel. To help early childhood leaders drive improvement through more effective teaching and learning in classrooms, the Ounce of Prevention Fund created Lead Learn Excel—an on-the-job approach that offers an intensive 9- to 16-month learning experience. Leaders learn how to use data for shared decision-making, and how to facilitate ongoing professional development with teachers through team lesson planning and peer learning groups. Leaders learn through a process that provides in-person training sessions, ongoing coaching, peer learning communities, and access to a suite of tools and resources.

Establish programs and policies designed to “upskill” the current ECE workforce: As noted earlier, early childhood educators in Detroit are faced with multiple barriers to accessing credit-bearing training, including fear and misgivings about degree attainment and what it requires. The Hope Starts Here report captured the issue and related findings from the research, stating: *“Although most individuals who pursue a degree in early childhood are ‘nontraditional students’ (e.g., working full-time, single parent, limited financial resources), few higher-education programs meet the needs of this population with adequate financial assistance, conveniently scheduled/located classes, and academic counseling. The mismatch between the conventional structure of degree programs and the needs of these learners weaken the positive effects of higher educational experiences on this population.”* The MI T.E.A.C.H CDA cohort model utilized in other parts of the state could provide an important opportunity for Detroit educators to enter a career pathway.

SPOTLIGHT: Rhode Island Early Childhood Education and Training Program. Offered through the Community College of Rhode Island, this program employs a cohort model and includes intensive mentoring and foundational courses on academic and life skills. To meet the needs of their immigrant population of adult learners, the program provides bilingual career counseling.

SPOTLIGHT: Mile High Early Learning, Denver CO. Mile High Early Learning in partnership with the University of Colorado Denver, offers a cohort-based online hybrid Master of Arts Program developed specifically for early learning professionals working in urban settings.

Build the ECE pipeline: In addition to supporting career advancement of educators currently working in the field, to address teacher shortages and build a workforce that is well trained and qualified, it will be important to establish strategies that support entry into the field. Career pathways that create multiple entry and exit points and offer a continuum of stackable and portable credentials will help build a sustainable pipeline of early educators. Detroit and the surrounding area are home to number of institutions of higher education—many with programs and systems in place that could serve as the foundation for building out the ECE career pipeline for the city. Strategies including micro-credentialing, apprenticeships, and articulation agreements help facilitate progress. In addition, given that programs will be serving nontraditional and working adult learners, support services such as career and course counseling, off campus training locations, and supports such as transportation and childcare can go a long way toward building a diverse early childhood workforce. Finally, efforts to ensure outreach and recruitment are equitable and include candidates representative of the children they will serve is critical consideration.

Contribution from Hope Starts Here:

To address these issues, as part of Hope Starts Here Imperative #3, focused on boosting ECE program and workforce quality, the following priorities were identified:

- **PRIORITY 3.1.** Adapt higher education degree programs to meet the needs of Detroit’s early childhood workforce. Michigan should improve access and remove barriers to degree programs for early childhood professionals by implementing degree programs that include mentoring, foundational courses, life skills, and bilingual career advisors like the community college cohort model offered in Rhode Island.
- **PRIORITY 3.2.** Increase access to and affordability of higher education through financial aid programs and scholarships. To help make higher education more affordable for older students and workers, Michigan should reinstate state funding for the Part Time Independent Student Grant, which has not been funded since the 2009–10 school year. In addition to promoting general access to higher education, Michigan can focus specifically on early childhood professionals by sustaining and expanding the T.E.A.C.H. program.

SPOTLIGHT: First Step. The First Step Child Development Associate (CDA) credential sponsored by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) in Washington, DC, enables students to earn a CDA while simultaneously completing high school. The First Step pilot was implemented in 2016 in response to the increased need for qualified early learning professionals in the District of Columbia. OSSE recognized the CDA credential as an attainable, stackable credential that serves as a gateway to higher education and employment in the field of early childhood

education. Specifically designed for high school students with an interest in education careers, First Step provides training in child growth and development, practicum experience, paid summer placement in a program, career and college counseling, and access to financial aid and support for expenses.

Leverage existing “hub” models to support cross-program professional learning and peer supports: These models can be used to support more equitable access to training and collaborative learning experiences. The City of Detroit is home to effective models of early learning centers serving as neighborhood-based education and resource centers for surrounding programs and providers. The Brightmoor Quality Initiative, the Woodward Corridor Consortium, the Early Learning Centers operated through the Wayne-Oakland-Macomb Great Start to

Quality Resource centers, and the United Way of Southeastern Michigan’s Early Learning Communities have demonstrated success in establishing peer support networks and other professional learning opportunities. By building on lessons learned and best practices, the creation of additional hubs—especially in areas not currently connected—could alleviate disparities that still exist across the city in terms of who is able to access training and other important quality improvement resources.

SPOTLIGHT: Early Learning Quality Improvement Network (QIN). The Early Learning Quality Improvement Network (QIN) is a neighborhood-based program designed to improve and expand the quality of infant and toddler care in the District of Columbia. The goal is to ensure more children and families are benefiting from early, continuous, intensive,



and comprehensive child development and family support services. Run by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) of the District of Columbia, QIN utilizes a series of neighborhood hubs to provide training and support to participating providers. Providers must meet quality requirements and standards and provide families and children with comprehensive services including educational, health, nutritional, behavioral, and family support. Providers receive higher reimbursement rates and full reimbursement based on enrollment as well as job-embedded professional learning and career advancement supports for staff.

Establish Policies and Procedures that support teacher professional development planning: Without guidance, either from supervisors or from written resources, teachers are often unable to develop professional development plans that move beyond fulfilling basic requirements to help them progress along a career pathway. In its current form, the Michigan Core Knowledge and Competencies Framework is difficult to navigate and does not provide

enough supports for educators to self-assess areas where they may need to improve.^{x1}

SPOTLIGHT: California Early Childhood Educator Competencies Self-Assessment Toolkit (ECE CompSat). The State of California has created a professional development resource for the early childhood workforce to use for self-reflection about their knowledge, skills, and dispositions and to assist with the development of professional growth plans by identifying the competencies needed for effective, high-quality early education practice. The ECE CompSat is the companion to the California Knowledge and Competencies Framework, which provides a set of multimedia tools and resources to assess current practice related to 12 competency areas and to increase knowledge and skills through a set of protocols that support self-directed learning. Protocols include the Keys to Reflection and Inquiry, which help examine practice related to each competency, and the Portfolio Guide, which provides guidance for assessing progress and documenting outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The Hope Starts Here Framework concluded with a call for all citizens of Detroit to become Early Childhood Champions. Ensuring that children have access to the early education teachers they need, and that early childhood educators have the opportunities and support they need to continuously improve their practice and make important career advances, must be a cornerstone of this work. Now is the time to take stock of what is available to ECE providers in the region, leverage what is working well, and fill gaps in the ECE professional learning landscape to create a coordinated system that can meet the needs of all educators.



ENDNOTES

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