



United Way
for Southeastern Michigan

AGENDA FOR CHANGE INVESTMENT GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES EDUCATIONAL PREPAREDNESS: EARLY CHILDHOOD

Vision

Building the foundation for successful adults by kindergarten.

Goal

Establish the skills that provide young children with the building blocks to succeed in a high performing educational system and 21st century workforce. These skills include both cognitive and soft skills such as adaptability, achievement, motivation, self-esteem, persistence, reliability, consistency, self-control, dependability, literacy, language, math and science.

Background

Tony Wagner, the Harvard-based education expert and author of *The Global Achievement Gap*, explains it this way: "There are three basic skills that students need if they want to thrive in a knowledge economy: the ability to do critical thinking and problem-solving; the ability to communicate effectively; and the ability to collaborate." Read more: <http://www.thestate.com/2010/11/28/1578326/friedman-teaching-for-america.html#ixzz16cv4ZpqB>

These "are not just the skills one needs for work, they are also the skills all of us need to be engaged and effective citizens in a 21st century democracy, as well as to be life-long learners." Read more: http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news_events/features/2008/08/20_wagner.php

"To solve later skill deficits, we need to invest in closing early skill deficits," says economist and Nobel laureate James Heckman. "Waiting to address these issues makes the remedy much more costly—or impossible. Countless studies show that increased spending on early childhood education would affect both cognition and character at its most malleable, lowering dropout and juvenile delinquency rates by building 'soft skills' such as discipline, self-esteem, motivation, collegiality and persistence."

"The deterministic factors of genetic, parental and environmental resources can be overcome through investments in quality early childhood education that provide children and their parents with the resources they need to properly develop the cognitive and character package that drives productivity."

"There's accumulating evidence that there are racial differences in what kids experience before the first day of kindergarten," said Ronald Ferguson, director of the [Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard](#). Those include "conversations about early childhood parenting practices," Dr. Ferguson said. "The activities that parents conduct with their 2-, 3- and 4-year-olds. How much we talk to them, the ways we talk to them, the ways we enforce discipline, the ways we encourage them to think and develop a sense of autonomy." Read more: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/11/09/education/09gap.html>

Metrics

By 2018, our region will be successful when:

- 100,000 children by kindergarten have the cognitive and character package for the 21st century, as measured by the Early Development Instrument, Ages & Stages, and other validated evaluation tools and process.
- 50,000 parents and caregivers are knowledgeable and practice positive language-rich relationships with the children in their lives, as measured by validated evaluation tools and process.
- 1.3 million residents understand that cognitive and character development is established in children, birth to age 5, and leads to academic and economic success. Measurements of success to be determined.
- Children in the region have 1.5 million books in their homes.

Investment Strategies:

United Way for Southeastern Michigan is interested in funding results-oriented projects, programs and supportive services that create and support environments enabling parents and caregivers to develop positive, language-rich relationships with the children in their lives.

Investment Opportunities

Strategy 1 – Early Learning Communities

United Way's Early Learning Communities partners will be invited to apply for funding in this category. ELCs foster positive, language-rich relationships by providing training, coaching, resources and support to all parents and caregivers delivered by community-based hubs (referred to as "Core Components"). There are nine hub partners in nearly 30 locations.

The nine hub partners will be invited to apply for funding to increase the number of new enrollees, active participants and coaching participants in ELC. Hub partners will be measured on their ability to:

- Support and improve the ELC program model;
- Increase caregiver knowledge and practice; and
- Improve child development outcomes

In addition, they are invited to apply for supporting strategies and partnerships, broadening the hub model of early childhood activities and engagement (referred to as "Enhanced Components").

Enhanced components could include, but are not limited to:

- Implementing a community engagement strategy designed to strengthen the early childhood movement in local communities and impact public policy on early childhood issues.
- Implementing a data system using the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and/or Ages & Stages assessment.
- Providing early childhood programming that enhances the ELC model.
- Executing a public awareness campaign to increase overall awareness about the importance of early childhood.

Eligibility: Proposals in this category will be considered from the hub partners. The hub partners are:

- Development Centers, Inc.
- Oakland Family Services
- Macomb Family Services
- Southwest Counseling Solutions
- Starfish Family Services
- The Guidance Center
- Oakland County Child Care Council
- Leaps & Bounds Family Services
- Wayne Metro Community Action Agency

Providers of early childhood services and supportive activities are encouraged to build partnerships with existing hub partners to become a part of their ELC core and/or enhanced component plan.

Both core and enhanced component plans should demonstrate how the organization will leverage other funding. In addition, priority will be given to projects that demonstrate how they leverage other programs and partners to achieve the vision, goal and metrics of the Early Childhood Investment Plan.

Funding Term and Range: Investments to hub partners will range from \$50,000 to \$250,000. Funding term is from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2014. Funding is contingent on the achievement of metrics, goals and outcomes and will be reviewed and renewed each year. Funds will be reevaluated and contingent upon Educational Preparedness alignment and available United Way campaign dollars.

Timeline and Process: Each existing hub partner will be invited to submit a narrative and budget plan for delivering core ELC components. Each existing hub partner will be invited to submit a Request to Partner letter for ELC enhanced components. If approved for consideration, hub partners will incorporate

proposed ELC enhanced components in the written narrative and budget plan. All plans will be developed in partnership with United Way staff.

Request to Partner letters are due by February 15, 2011. ELC core and enhanced component plans are due March 31, 2011. United Way staff will present recommended written plans to appropriate United Way leadership for approval with notification to partners by June 15, 2011.

Strategy 2 - Best Practices/Regional Approach

United Way will seek requests for partnership from organizations providing best practice models that help address early childhood on a regional level. Great Start Collaboratives of Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties (“GSCs”) will be invited to submit proposals that focus on ways to meet the vision, goals and metrics of the Early Childhood Investment Plan. GSCs would serve as the sole partner or the lead partner on behalf of a group of GSC members.

The geographical scope for proposals can be several neighborhoods, countywide or regional. We are looking to fund a strategy that addresses one or more of the following:

- Implementing a data system with the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and/or Ages & Stages assessment.
- Implementing a community engagement strategy designed to strengthen the early childhood movement in local communities and impact public policy on early childhood issues.
- Executing a public awareness campaign to increase overall awareness about the importance of early childhood.
- Implementing professional development supports or services that improve child care quality.

Eligibility: Proposals in this category will be accepted from only Great Start Collaboratives in Wayne, Oakland or Macomb. United Way must be a partner in the approved best practices/regional approach plan in order to support implementation.

Providers of early childhood services and supportive activities must be active members of their GSC to become a part of the best practices/regional approach plan.

Proposals should demonstrate how the GSCs will leverage other funding. In addition, priority will be given to projects that demonstrate how they leverage other programs to achieve the vision, goal and metrics of the Early Childhood Investment Plan.

Funding Cycle and Range: Investments of up to \$150,000 for each GSC. Funding term is from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2014. Funding is contingent on the achievement of metrics, goals and outcomes and will be reviewed each year. Funds will be reevaluated and contingent upon Educational Preparedness alignment and available United Way campaign dollars.

Timeline and Process: Each Great Start Collaborative will submit an Request to Partner letter describing its best practices/regional approach strategy. If approved for consideration, GSCs will submit a written narrative and budget plan for the proposed strategy. Plans will be developed in partnership with United Way.

Request to Partner letters are due by February 28, 2011. Best practice/regional approach strategy plans are due March 31, 2011. United Way staff will present recommended written plans to appropriate United Way leadership for approval with notification to partners by June 15, 2011.

Strategy Three – Innovation/New Ideas (Breakthrough System Change Work)

Innovative practices and policies must be developed to effectively address early childhood in our region. Partners will be invited to submit proposals that focus on innovative ways to meet the vision, goals and metrics of this investment plan. One example of an innovative concept that is currently being tested is a DPTV pilot project. DPTV is creating a single source that will deliver a multi-media approach focused on educating parents and caregivers on how to help prepare their children for success. A limited number of grants will be awarded to partners that provide innovative ways that help enhance kindergarten

readiness. These concepts might have an upfront cost but they will require minimal ongoing cost and management. These ideas could expand early childhood to unlikely suspects such as individuals, institutions, etc.

Eligibility: Proposals in this category can be submitted by:

- ELC Hub Partners
- Great Start Collaboratives of Wayne, Oakland or Macomb Counties
- Other businesses or organizations

Criteria: In order for proposals to be considered for funding, they must outline a project that:

- Brings a new product or service to market
- Can be scalable
- Demonstrates cost effectiveness
- Demonstrates measureable results

Funding Range: Amounts will be determined based on need of project and available dollars. Funding term will be determined based on need of project.

Timelines and Process: Potential partners will be invited to submit an online profile describing the innovation/new idea. Letters will be accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis. If approved for consideration, the potential partner will submit a written narrative and budget plan for the proposed strategy. Plans will be developed in partnership with United Way.

Invited plans will be reviewed on an ongoing basis by United Way staff with recommendations for approval made to appropriate United Way leadership.

Other Considerations: Organizations with initial inquiries on investments should contact UWSEM by phone at (313) 226-9361 or by email at investment.information@liveunitedsem.org.

Timeline

Month	Activity
November/December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Release of investment plan to Community Investment Cabinet ○ Release of investment plan and timeline to Board ○ Release of investment plan to potential partners
January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Invitations made to hub partners and GSCs to submit Request to Partner letters. ○ Ongoing communication (face to face, email, phone call) with United Way staff and hub partners and GSCs
February – March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Request to Partner letters due February 15, 2011 ○ Review of submitted Request to Partner letters ○ Invitations made to selected hub partners and/or GSCs to submit Request to Partner online profiles. ○ Profiles due March 31, 2011
April - June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of submitted profiles ○ Staff recommendations prepared ○ Recommendations submitted to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ appropriate leadership for approval○ Selected and declined partners are notified by June 15, 2011
July 1 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Partnership begins