

ECEAP Contracting Work Group
03-30-17 Meeting Notes

C. Welcome & Confirmation of Our Charge – ECEAP Administrator Kelli Bohanon welcomed the work group and noted the work group’s important work in support of ECEAP Expansion. Garrison and Bea then re-capped the topical areas that the work group will discuss (see *Contracting Work Group Topical Areas*) and the purposes and relationship of the work group to other advisory bodies:

- Deeply explore specific issues such as contracting and eligibility processes.
- Provide insights and advice about changes to processes in their charge.
- Provide updates to the Think Tank, seeking its advice on major elements of their work.
- Serve as a venue to pilot potential changes to processes that can support expansion of high-quality ECEAP services
- Provide insight and advice regarding changes to ECEAP contracting and subcontracting processes, tools and documents.

We then reviewed the purposes for the day’s conversation:

- Review and confirm the work group’s charge.
- Understand influencing factors that are shaping various DEL contracting approaches.
- Clarify what success as a contractor and subcontractor looks like and identify supports/steps that can best close gaps in readiness.
- Discuss which planning and administration functions might be better performed at a regional level.
- Share desired improvements to ECEAP contracting processes.

B. Establishing Our Procedures – Garrison proposed group norms and voting method adopted by the Think Tank and the work group confirmed that these work for the work group:

1. Norms
 - i. Listen to understand
 - ii. Be open to new ideas
 - iii. Share openly and constructively
2. Voting Process
 - i. Thumbs Up – I agree
 - ii. Thumbs Sideways - I can live with it and support it publicly and privately
 - iii. Thumbs Down - I do not agree/cannot support it

C. Understanding the Current Context – To learn about efforts inside and outside DEL that are shaping our direction and options, Kelli Bohanon provided an *Expansion Context Presentation*. Work group members asked questions and made comments, noting:

1. 2020 Goal: I prefer that we not use the term “drop off” to describe what happens over the summer. It could be that the “loss” of preparedness is an artifact of lack of teacher interrater reliability or other things [Note: K-12 uses the term summer learning loss]. It also taps into the “fade out” argument leveled at preschool. Perhaps the presentation can be honest, but address this issue better. The slide would also be more effective if it were animated.
2. Program Expansion: We should explore the potential for “dual enrollment” in Head Start (each for part day). We (Spokane Tribe) have been told that we cannot do this, but it could help to address the need for full-day care at acceptable vendor rates.
3. ECEAP/ESIT Restructuring – it will be important to have any ECEAP restructuring consider the impact of regional boundaries, changes in flow of funds, and changes of accountability before we make them.

D. Strengthening Contractor and Subcontractor Pathways –Working in small groups we discussed capacities contractors and subcontractors need to succeed, we and began to name some tools and processes to help. We captured ideas on a *Desirable Capacities Worksheet*. Compiled responses are noted below. [Note: These comments are likely to be integrated with the *Regional Administrative Functions Worksheet* content and results of the recommended survey of contractors to understand how work is currently distributed.]

- The number of tables noting where capacity should exist is indicated.
- Instances where specific elements of the capacity might be assigned at a particular level are noted as described.

Capacity	Contractor Needs This Capacity	Shared	Subcontractor Needs This Capacity	Actions that can support diverse types of providers to succeed
1. <u>Basic Administrative Infrastructure</u> - Structures such as network and IT services, human resources, financial planning and management	(6) Capacity to recruit, prepare and manage subcontractors		5	✓ Support for expanding capacity ✓ Presence of some elements, but perhaps not all
2. <u>Early Learning Services</u> - Capacity to deliver early learning services	6		6	✓
3. <u>Family Support Services</u> - Capacity to deliver family support services	6		3	✓
4. <u>Health Coordination Services</u> - Capacity to deliver health coordination services	6		1	✓ Sources to contract/subcontract for nursing
5. <u>Planning</u> - Capacity to lead/partner in community need assessment and local/program service planning and slot allocation	6		3	✓ Dedicated internal capacity ✓ Ability to think ahead about growth
6. <u>Service Delivery Capacity</u> - Capacity to recruit, prepare, and manage additional sites/subcontractors	6			✓ Individual paths for family child care, child care centers, school districts, non-profits ✓ Clear expectations of what is needed (current quality and willingness to improve)
7. <u>Facilities</u> - Capacity to develop, renovate and manage facilities	(6) Develop, renovate and manage	(1) Develop, renovate and manage	(6) Manage and keep in compliance	✓
8. <u>Workforce</u> - Capacity to recruit, prepare, retain and advance professional development of staff who meet ECEAP staff qualifications	6		6	✓
9. <u>Community Partnership</u> – Experience building effective two-way working relationships among community partners	6		2	✓ Recruitment and enrollment ✓ Well-developed networks and supports (e.g., early learning regional coalitions)

Capacity	Contractor Needs This Capacity	Shared	Subcontractor Needs This Capacity	Actions that can support diverse types of providers to succeed
10. <u>Cultural Competence</u> - Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to cultural competence and the eligible population's needs	6		6	
11. <u>Recordkeeping & Reporting</u> - Systems for secure and confidential data entry, recordkeeping and reporting to DEL	6		6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Data systems ✓ Procedures to manage confidentiality ✓ Training in use of systems (MERIT, ELMS, WELS, TSG)
12. <u>Budget Development and Fiscal Management</u> - Systems to manage ECEAP funds according to contractual requirements	6		(3) Budget development, projections, profit and loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Uniform IRS guidance for subcontractors ✓ Additional staffing capacity ✓ Fiscal person providing training re: budgeting with ECEAP funds
13. <u>Compliance and CQI</u> - Experience monitoring program compliance, providing training, technical assistance and coaching to foster continuous improvement	6		1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Additional staffing capacity ✓ Mandatory training of administrative staff entering into a subcontract
14. <u>Governance</u> - Preparedness to engage families in program governance	6		2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expectations proportional to subcontractor's scale
15. <u>Marketing</u> - Capacity to conduct outreach and marketing to recruit and enroll families	(6) Develop customizable marketing tools and materials	(1) Develop customizable marketing tools and materials	(4) Customize and use marketing tools and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify whose role it is to recruit the contractors and subcontractors
16. <u>Curricula</u> - Capacity to implement curricula with fidelity	6		6	
17. <u>Screening and Assessment</u> - Capacity to conduct and use data from developmental screens and child development assessments to individualize services	(6) Use data, make referrals and follow up	(1) Use data, make referrals and follow up	(4) Use data, make referrals and follow up	
18. <u>Transportation Support</u> - Capacity to negotiate transportation options for participating children	6		2	
19. <u>Contract Management</u> - Processes for overseeing and supporting diverse types of subcontractors and program models	6			
20. <u>Risk Management</u> – Processes for managing liability and risk	6		5	
21. <u>Negotiation</u> - Processes for allocating appropriate funding and resources to subcontractors and avoiding/resolving disputes	6			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Licensed child care vs school district as a subcontractor
22. <u>Cost Allocation</u> - Experience with cost allocation	6		3	
23. <u>Business Planning</u> – Understanding of business environment, forecasting, fund braiding, and contingency planning	6		1	
24. <u>Data Systems</u> - Infrastructure and skills to implement, maintain and use required data systems	6		6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dedicated capacity ✓ Training in use

- E. Key Issues for Contractor and Subcontractor Capacity** – After working together, we identified some of the key issues people noticed in thinking about contractor and subcontractor capacities.
1. Training
 - a. We need training and support for contractors who are new to subcontracting. Training should be focused on each kind of subcontractor.
 - b. We should draw on the training modules in the [ECEAP Child Care Pathway Pilot](#).
 - c. We need staff to help subcontractors to understand more complex finance and business planning functions
 2. Technical Assistance and Support
 - a. Contractors need more business planning support to help forecast their market, plan sustainable business models, and adjust to changing business conditions.
 - b. Many contractors need more support in implementing and using data systems that support business operations and that are part of program management and reporting. This includes infrastructure, training, and staffing capacity/time.
 3. Survey
 - a. Different types of contractors need different types and intensities of support. We also need to be able to capture the different ways capacity is considered and built and how this influences distribution of responsibilities among different types of contractors in different situations (small/large, existence of capacity, years providing services, etc.)
 - b. We should conduct a survey about capacities and distribution of responsibilities before the next meeting to get a better understanding of the range of ways that different types of contractors do this.
 4. Contractor/Subcontractor Relationship
 - a. Right now, the contractor does not have any input about the people hired by the subcontractors, yet they are accountable for outcomes.
- F. Tools & Processes that Can Support Contractors and Subcontractors** - We then used an “Around the World” group process to name some of the tools and processes that might help contractors and subcontractors to succeed for three capacities named in the worksheet above.

1. BUSINESS PLANNING

- a. Tools
 - i. Checklist and template
 - ii. Help covering professional development expenses
- b. Processes
 - i. Hub of consultants/experts in each region
 - ii. Community needs assessment relevant to community (2)
 - iii. Support for staff recruitment and retention (credentialing, compensation)
 - iv. Help providers understand business context and planning (e.g., business model, salary relative to market rates, access to employee benefit options, margins and reserves)
 - v. Onboarding process for subcontractors (assessing their preparedness, and providing paid mentors – who might be working in programs, but this might provide a “premium” to help avoid their departure to higher paid positions in school districts by augmenting income) (2)
 - vi. Support to enhance human resources knowledge and support (confidentiality, workplace laws, building healthy teams, etc.) (2)
 - vii. Find ways to address unique circumstances/processes impacting hiring (etc.) for individual communities (i.e., expansion in tribal communities) (2)

2. DATA SYSTEMS & TECHNOLOGY

- a. Tools
 - i. Create a developmental continuum for contractors and subcontractors that includes things like sequence of onboarding training and support (months 1-3, 3-6, etc.)

- ii. Checklist
- iii. Tools to understand and communicate across all data systems (ELS, ELMS, MERIT) and how they interrelate – There are currently too many systems
- b. Processes
 - i. Help accessing IT equipment support and connectivity
 - ii. Initial and ongoing training regarding systems (ELMS, WELS, TSG, C+, MERIT) provided in different ways (i.e., like TSG webinar training) (Offered by DEL or provided by contractors, or both?)
 - iii. Training re: legal issues, data retention, administrator succession planning
 - iv. Training in use of monitoring systems for CQI –data coaching
 - v. Create a data committee to build a culture around the people providing technical support/administration of systems and those who use it

3. COST ALLOCATION, BUDGETING AND REPORTING

- a. Tools
 - i. Create new data systems to get information, tracking system with links to ELMS and MERIT
 - ii. Clear expectations (in contract and performance standards)
 - iii. More guidance (and a checklist) for subcontractors regarding cost allocation
 - iv. Provide methods for allocation “by time” for programs with braided funding
 - v. Consider and clarify for profit and non-profit models
 - vi. Provide recorded online modules that allow potential contractors to self-serve on their own timeline
- b. Processes
 - i. Training in equipment depreciation, maturation and replacement
 - ii. Mentors in specific areas of support (in-person, on-site, based on need and interest of individuals (3)
 - iii. Training manuals to refer to and templates to customize (2)
 - iv. Provide a fiscal orientation
 - v. Provide help writing organizational policies

G. Bolstering Administrative Capacity – To explore the types of administrative functions that might improve statewide access, quality and resource availability if regionally focused, we worked in teams to respond to three questions in a worksheet: *“Why would regional be better? How might it be done? What other considerations are there (e.g., alignment with regional boundaries of another specific program, etc.)?”* Compiled responses are noted below. [Note: Based on comments in the work group these comments are likely to be integrated with the *Desirable Contractor and Subcontractor Capacities Worksheet* content and the results of the recommended survey of contractors to understand how work is currently distributed.]

Key themes included:

- How will regional boundaries be selected? (e.g., Consider “subsets” within regions for urban/suburban vs. rural or small vs. large program). Explore intentionality and identity around regions (e.g. Tri-County, Northeast, Spokane-area, Pullman-Palouse area, etc.) Consider ways to adequately address the needs of rural communities so that people who know the dynamics and people are readily involved.
- DEL should consider tiers (state, regional, local/site) for functions or parts/levels of functions to address elements at the state, regional and local levels.
- The ESIT restructuring has highlighted some things that might benefit ECEAP. DEL is identifying some solutions (e.g., ways to address the loss of funds by some providers due to the new structure).
- Be clear about the purpose of the conversation and provide enough detail that people do not make up details that fit their fears.
- What involvement does DEL need in selecting subcontractors to ensure quality and scaling? What parameters should be given to contractors?

Potential Regionally-Performed Roles				
Function	How Distributed? (Numbers of tables suggesting this distribution)	Why? Describe why this is better performed at the regional level	How to Implement? Describe how this might be done	What Else? Describe other considerations, things to explore
Marketing outreach and referral	5 SHARED/ 1 LOCAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dedicated capacity is needed ✓ Local people have relationships that can ease engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ State and regional identify and remove systemic barriers for specific populations ✓ Cadre of staff trained in outreach, eligibility determination and enrollment ✓ Local staff build relationships with community partners and modify outreach materials for their community as part of local outreach plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More staff capacity. ✓ Coordination mechanisms for outreach, eligibility and enrollment
P-3 Alignment	1 STATE / 4 REGIONAL		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ State sets goals (like 90% ready by 2020) ✓ State aligns state agency actions ✓ Local partners align local agency actions ✓ Through coalitions 	
Tribal program development	1 STATE/ 1 REGIONAL		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Mechanism and time to move through tribal governance processes ✓ Regional tribal liaisons? 	
Facility identification	1 REGIONAL		✓	
Shared services	4 REGIONAL		✓	
Workforce development	5 SHARED		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ State secures policy change and funding ✓ State strengthen access to college credits ✓ Regional entity customizes recruitment and workforce pipeline 	
Forecasting of regional trends	2 STATE/2 REGIONAL/ 2 LOCAL	Regional and local partners are more aware of emerging trends and needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community-level assessment ✓ Harness and align local resources ✓ Through coalitions 	
Provider recruitment	4 SHARED/ 1 LOCAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dedicated capacity Region has insights about particular needs and challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Regional entity partners with contractors to identify potential providers and facilities ✓ Draw on local sources of knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ More staff capacity. Coordination mechanisms for outreach, readiness assessment and connection to DEL/contractors
Region-specific professional learning	5 SHARED		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ESD/CCA? ✓ Hold sessions in Eastern Washington regularly 	
Family support service access	2 SHARED/2 REGIONAL/3 LOCAL		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ State explore portable/mobile/distance services ✓ Regional entities work to expand and connect resources ✓ Locals work to facilitate relationships with providers and access for families 	

H. Improving ECEAP Contracting – In the interest of time, we moved the conversation about desirable improvements to the current award, contracting and amendment process to an email response. Between now and the May meeting, work group members are asked to email garrison@dovetailing.us in response to this question: *“What improvements to the current award, contract and amendment process are desirable?”*

I. Next Steps

- Garrison will draft a meeting summary, which will provide the materials as attachments as well as links to a few items mentioned today. The transmittal email will include the question we skipped today that we would like people to answer about potential improvements to the current ECEAP contracting, amendment process.
- Garrison will work with DEL staff to draft a survey to get a better sense of how work is currently distributed and how capacity influences this.
- Svenja from DEL will send a Doodle poll to schedule the next meetings.

J. Attachments

1. *Initial Plan for ECEAP Expansion Advisory Bodies*
2. *Contracting Work Group Topical Areas*
3. *Expansion Context Presentation*