

Family Child Care Inclusion in Pre-K Systems: State & Local Government Planning Tool

This planning tool is designed to support participating states and localities as they explore options and make decisions about the best way to proceed with creating and/or strengthening family child care inclusion in Pre-K Systems. A Home Grown navigator will support your team as you work through the planning tool to develop your action plan. The content of Home Grown's Learning Community meetings will also align with the topics in the planning tool.

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How to Use the Planning Tool

This planning tool is designed as a working document, available to inform your work as a fillable PDF that you can adapt as needed for your state or locality. The planning tool is organized as follows:

- I. Background Information About Your State or Locality
- II. Constituting the Planning Team and Including Provider Voice
- III. FCC Inclusion Starting Point
- IV. FCC Inclusion Principles
- V. Areas for Consideration and Analysis
- VI. Creating the Action Plan
- VII. Summary, Including Goals and Planned Accomplishments

Part I: Background Information About Your State or Locality

State/Territory/Tribe/County/City/Municipality:

Answer here

Contact Person Name and Contact Information:

Answer here

Part II: Constituting the Leadership for Planning and Including Provider Voice

As part of planning for inclusion of family child care in the Pre-K system, identify the leadership team that will guide the planning effort. Consider the following questions as you develop your approach.

- Who is the leadership team to guide this effort?
- What are their roles (e.g., Pre-K director; professional development manager; lead for TA; lead for QRIS) and responsibilities (e.g., in charge of family engagement, train assessors)
- How will you prioritize provider voice in the development of the plan for family child care inclusion in the Pre-K program?
- How frequently will this group meet?
- What time of day and day of the week will the leadership team meet?
- Are these in-person or virtual meetings?
- Who will chair the group?
- What decision-making responsibilities rest with this leadership team?
- How will this group be staffed?

- How will this group know that it has completed its work?

Answer here

Members of the Leadership Planning Team

Please provide a brief overview of the role and responsibilities of your leadership team. In addition to specifying the role and responsibility of the leadership team, please provide some indication of the frequency of their work as a leadership team, how they will be staffed and items identified for their consideration.

Please identify your leadership team. Please include the name, title, organization, email, phone, and their role on the project team.

Name	Title	Organization	Email	Phone	Role in this project	Approximate hours per week on this project

FCC Inclusion Starting Point

To start, analyze the current status of family child care inclusion in the Pre-K system. Use the column on the left to indicate the starting point and the column on the right to explain your assessment of your starting point for this work.

- ☐ FCC included: full participation
- ☐ FCC included: limited participation
- ☐ FCC included: no participation
- ☐ FCC excluded: not allowed by statute
- ☐ FCC excluded: not allowed by regulation
- ☐ FCC excluded: explain basis
- ☐ Other

Provide the data and information to explain the thinking behind your starting point designation.

IV. FCC Inclusion Principles

We recommend that the team articulates the core principles or values you have to shape inclusion of family child care homes in your Pre-K program. This will assist you in communicating with others. Bringing together the leadership team – including providers – for planning helps set the stage for the plan you are creating. Once you have principles, you will use them to ensure that the plan you develop is consistent and addresses them all. Principles encompass aspirations for the future and while they may be informed by today’s reality, they should not be constrained by it.

As you seek to develop the principles that you will use, consider these questions:

- What are the values that will anchor the plan for inclusion of family child care in the Pre-K system?
- Ask “we will” statements to help you develop your guiding principles.
- What are the values and beliefs that should guide our work?

To illustrate, we have provided a sample drawn from the principles that Home Grown has used to approach its work on this topic:

1. *High-quality public Pre-K can be successfully delivered in home-based child care settings.*
2. *Home-based child care providers excel in providing early learning experiences that are culturally and linguistically responsive, embedded in activities of daily living, routines and the natural environment, grounded in the community setting and responsive to the unique needs of each child and family. Inclusion of home-based child care providers in public Pre-K systems provides an opportunity for reciprocal learning between settings about best practices in early childhood pedagogy. Valuing and learning from providers in this setting is essential to creating a truly mixed-delivery system.*
3. *Home-based child care is the first choice for many families because it meets the particular needs of their family and it aligns with their values and preferences for culturally and linguistically aligned care. Inclusion of home-based child care in Pre-K systems honors family preference and provides access to the variety of settings that families seek when choosing child care for preschoolers.*
4. *Home-based child care providers have community connections to families who may not seek formal school for children prior to 5 years old or who may not seek out public services or may have been expelled from a formal program. The inclusion of home-based child care ensures equitable access for families that may not be enrolled by other early learning settings (center-based or school embedded Pre-K). Inclusion of home-based child care providers in public Pre-K systems is an issue of equity.*
5. *Public Pre-K policy and networks (providing accountability and support) should be designed to include and support the specific needs of home-based child care providers. To that end, home-based child care providers should also have a role in informing system decisions for public Pre-K.*
6. *When developing implementation plans or approaches to include home-based child care in Pre-K, we can learn from programs, research, evaluation and learnings in other systems such as QRIS and Head Start partnerships (including EHS-CCP). We must commit to building and expanding this evidence base.*
7. *Adequate resources will be needed to effectively and equitably include home-based child care in Pre-K systems. Resources will be needed to address decades of under-investment and lack of support to home-based providers.*
8. *Given how significantly families depend on home-based child care for services for infants and toddlers, implementation of Pre-K programs in home-based child care should not displace or undermine these services for infants and toddlers. Careful planning and thoughtful examination of intended and unintended outcomes of infants and toddlers should be prioritized in planning for inclusion of home-based child care in Pre-K systems.*
9. *We recognize many Pre-K administrators don't have prior experience with home-based child care and need support and tools to successfully plan, design and implement inclusive systems.*

What are your principles?

V. Issues for Consideration and Analysis

There are many issues that will impact the success of your work for FCC inclusion in Pre-K systems. The grid provides issues for consideration and analysis organized into four groups: 1) program design; 2) program supports; 3) equitable financing; and 4) state/local public sector oversight.

As you use the *Issue and Analysis Grid*, consider the **relevance** and the **feasibility** of the current policy and implementation approach, specifically asking these questions for family child care, and whether the current approach **aligns with the core principles** you created. If you do not have a policy or implementation approach in an area, respond N/A for the current approach, and indicate the policy or implementation approach in the “change” column. We also note that you could consider analyzing the current center-based policy and implementation approach and how you would change that for FCC. Whichever way you approach this, the change columns allow you to indicate what needs to be done to have a feasible, relevant approach for family child care that aligns with the core principles.

After you have determined the key areas to strengthen inclusion of family child care in Pre-K systems, it will be important to clarify your priorities, specific goals and timeframes. Guiding questions are provided after the grid to assist in selecting the focus for your work.

Program Design Issues and Analysis Grid

Area	Current Pre-K Policy in Relationship to Family Child Care			Implementation		
	What is the current policy?	Is it <i>feasible</i> for FCC? Is it <i>relevant</i> to FCC? Does it align with the <i>core principles</i> ?	What needs to be changed to ensure the policy is <i>feasible</i> for and <i>relevant</i> to FCC, and aligns with the <i>core principles</i> ? How will that happen?	What is the current implementation approach?	Is it <i>feasible</i> for FCC? Is it <i>relevant</i> to FCC? Does it align with the <i>core principles</i> ?	What needs to be changed to ensure the policy is <i>feasible</i> for and <i>relevant</i> to FCC, and aligns with the <i>core principles</i> ? How will that happen?
Staff qualifications: credential requirements						
Staff qualifications: specialized training requirements						
Quality standards alignment with licensing						

Quality standards alignment with Quality Improvement System (AKA QIS)						
Early learning & development standards (child level)						
Family engagement standards						
Curriculum standards						
Mixed age grouping/ratio requirements						
Other quality standards						
Screening and referral: developmental screening (all domains)						

Screening and referral: vision, hearing and health						
Language accessibility of Pre-K program standards for providers						
Other						

Program Support Issues and Analysis Grid

Area	Current Pre-K Policy in Relationship to Family Child Care			Implementation		
	What is the current policy?	Is it <i>feasible</i> for FCC? Is it <i>relevant</i> to FCC? Does it align with the <i>core principles</i> ?	What needs to be changed to ensure the policy is <i>feasible for</i> and <i>relevant to FCC</i> , and aligns with the <i>core principles</i> ? How will that happen?	What is the current implementation approach?	Is it <i>feasible</i> for FCC? Is it <i>relevant</i> to FCC? Does it align with the <i>core principles</i> ?	What needs to be changed to ensure the policy is <i>feasible for</i> and <i>relevant to FCC</i> , and aligns with the <i>core principles</i> ? How will that happen?
Quality improvement: Program quality assessment observations						
Quality improvement: Curriculum support						
Quality improvement: Family child care cohort/peer support						

Quality improvement: Coaching						
Quality improvement: Training and Professional Development Support						
Quality improvement: Training and PD Support alignment with licensing						
Training and PD Support alignment with Quality Improvement System						
Quality improvement: Pathways for credentials and degrees						

Quality improvement: Financing of credentials and degrees						
Quality improvement: Data, and support for its use, for program improvement						
Language accessibility of supports for implementation for providers						
Outreach for enrollment of FCC into Pre-K system						
Hub or network support structure to support quality improvement						

Outreach and enrollment options for families for FCC in Pre-K system						
Other						
Other						

Equitable Financing Issues and Analysis Grid

Area	Current Pre-K Policy in Relationship to Family Child Care			Implementation		
	What is the current policy?	Is it <i>feasible</i> for FCC? Is it <i>relevant</i> to FCC? Does it align with the <i>core principles</i> ?	What needs to be changed to ensure the policy is <i>feasible for</i> and <i>relevant to FCC</i> , and aligns with the <i>core principles</i> ? How will that happen?	What is the current implementation approach?	Is it <i>feasible</i> for FCC? Is it <i>relevant</i> to FCC? Does it align with the <i>core principles</i> ?	What needs to be changed to ensure the policy is <i>feasible for</i> and <i>relevant to FCC</i> , and aligns with the <i>core principles</i> ? How will that happen?
Rate setting: Rate setting approach and method						
Rate setting: Wages and Benefits / Compensation						
Payment method and timing						
Payment: Start-up costs						

Payment method: Advances						
Rate setting and payment method: Braiding/Blending and alignment with other Funding streams						
Start-up financing for programs						
Other						

State/Local Public Sector Oversight Issues and Analysis Grid

Area	Current Pre-K Policy in Relationship to Family Child Care			Implementation		
	What is the current policy?	Is it <i>feasible</i> for FCC? Is it <i>relevant</i> to FCC? Does it align with the <i>core principles</i> ?	What needs to be changed to ensure the policy is <i>feasible</i> for and <i>relevant</i> to FCC, and aligns with the <i>core principles</i> ? How will that happen?	What is the current implementation approach?	Is it <i>feasible</i> for FCC? Is it <i>relevant</i> to FCC? Does it align with the <i>core principles</i> ?	What needs to be changed to ensure the policy is <i>feasible</i> for and <i>relevant</i> to FCC, and aligns with the <i>core principles</i> ? How will that happen?
Program Monitoring of Pre-K implementation						
Audit requirements						
Insurance requirements						
Program Handbook/Policies and Procedures						

Assistance with provider application to Pre-K program						
Advisory Committee for policy, Pre-K design, implementation and improvement						
Evaluation						
Communications strategy						
Governance structure						

Guiding Questions

After you have completed the grid, it will be important to prioritize the work so that your plan and activities are focused and actionable. Looking at your responses about what needs to be changed, whether in policy, implementation, or both, consider the following as you decide what to prioritize.

- What is your **capacity** to make the change? Do you have the necessary staff to make the required changes? If not, how can you address staffing capacity? Do the staff have the skills, competencies and orientation needed to do the work? What support (training, change management, etc.) will the staff need to be effective at doing the work? Is there support for the work within the organization? Does the change fit the mission, culture and orientation of the organization?

- What **financial resources** will you need to make the change? Do you have existing financial resources to apply? Who will need to approve use of financial resources for this work? What is the timeline for approvals? Are those people or organizations supportive of the change? If new resources are needed, what is the process and timeline for acquisition?
- What **technological resources** will you need to make the change? What changes are needed? Are resources available to support changes? Who will need to approve these changes? Are those people or organizations supportive of the change? If new resources are needed, what is the process and timeline for improving technology or getting new technology?
- What does the **family child care** community consider to be the highest priorities for change? What will most effectively enable them to be included in the Pre-K program? What support (training, change management, grants etc.) will the providers need to partner with the Pre-K system around planned policy or implementation changes?
- Which changes will yield timely positive impacts for **families and children**? Are there a set of changes that should be prioritized to ensure equitable access to quality Pre-K for families and children who don't yet have access, who are underserved or who are underrepresented?
- **Who** has to endorse the changes? Who has to authorize the changes? What is their perspective on the value and importance of the change? If they are not on board, what will it take to gain their endorsement or authority to proceed?
- What is the **timeline** that you will need to make the change? Looking across all areas, which changes are short-term (as you define it) and which are longer-term (as you define it)? In your context, what is the best balance of short-term actions and longer-term actions, taking into account the people and organizations who need to support the effort for it to be successful?

VI. Creating an Action Plan

Once you have identified the priority areas that you will need to address for FCC inclusion in the Pre-K system, this tool can help you hone in on what you will need to get done to move forward as you move from the issues you identified, analyzed and prioritized in Part V to the action plan.

WHAT is the change/shift to be achieved?	
WHAT are the action steps?	
WHO will take that step?	
WHEN will that step be taken?	

WHEN will the step be completed?

HOW will you know if you're successful?

VI. Summary including Goals and Planned Accomplishments

Provide a short summary of the overall project, indicating your starting point, the key strengths you identified and are leveraging, the key areas for improvement, and the goals and outcomes you plan to achieve.