

Technical Proposal

Environmental Community Scan:

Describe your organization's ability to conduct environmental scans across multiple domains of the community to identify resources already in place that would facilitate the QRIS implementation as well as identify community resources needed. In your description, please address available resources and your organization's ability to assess each of the below aspects:

a. Parents:

1. Describe what is in place in your community to provide information to parents about early learning opportunities.

Virtually all parents whose children are born in hospitals and birthing centers receive developmental charts and other useful parenting information at "just in time" intervals through the state's Child Profile mailings. Additionally, parents can access Parent Help 123 for program eligibility information as well as other online information from Within Reach, child care resource and referral organizations and other early learning organizations.

In January 2008 Thrive by Five will launch a Parent and Community Awareness Campaign, which will be field tested in White Center and East Yakima. Components of this campaign, including methods of communications, will promote the effort to improve the quality of child care as well as increase parental understanding of what to look for in regards to quality. The campaign will include enhanced web content and interactive features on the www.thrivebyfivewa.org website as



well as placement of messages and information in community publications. For example, messages regarding the importance of early learning environments will be distributed through Child Profile in the targeted communities as well as in local newspapers, and community center and faith based newsletters. Dissemination of parenting kits is also planned as part of this effort.

The Yakima and Kittitas Resource and Referral agency operated by Catholic Family and Child Services provides parents with information about childcare via the web and through telephone contact (<http://www.ccyakima.org/family/yakima/referral.html>). The East Yakima Early Learning Initiative has a Parent Ombudsperson that works in the East Yakima neighborhood working directly with parents and connecting them to information and resources. Yakima has a strong home visitation network of seven agencies that reach parents providing them with information and resources.

Almost all of the births to mothers living in the East Yakima target area occur at Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital (YVMH). YVMH and the area's community health centers have WIC, First Steps pre- and post-natally, as well as Maternal Child Health (MCH) nursing visits for new mothers. There are outreach efforts to families with young children on the part of a number of community agencies, including KidScreen (a multi-agency collaboration that provides developmental and health screening services to children aged birth to 6 years at no cost to families), La Casa Hogar, Enterprise for Progress in the Community (EPIC), Circle of Success, and the Yakima School District. In addition, there are ongoing efforts to provide developmental information through the Born Learning campaign.

Catholic Family and Child Service Child Care Resource & Referral provides information on child care availability to parents as well as resources and education on choosing quality child care. The Child Care Nutrition program with CF&CS provides nutritional education and monitoring to family members receiving low-income subsidy for children to insure USDA eligible meals. CF&CS also offers early intervention mental health services to families with a preschool child who exhibits behavior problems through the Valley Intervention Program. Medical providers and WIC offices distribute information to parents about available programs.

2. Describe other information that parents want and need.

Recently, Thrive by Five has conducted statewide polling and focus groups drawing from the communities of White Center and East Yakima. A report of those findings is included in the "Additional Information" Section. In those groups, parents say that they want high-quality early learning opportunities for their kids. They have a basic understanding of what young children need to be ready to succeed in school. Nearly half of the 600 respondents of a statewide poll believe that the time a child spends in preschool or care outside the home plays a significant role in their school preparedness. However, their responses highlight that many parents in our state do not yet know how vitally important high-quality early learning is to that success.

Parents seek providers and programs that, at a minimum, offer a warm and safe environment for their children. They place a high value on the education/training and experience of providers. Parents also speak about the importance of a provider that demonstrates a love for children and offers affordable and convenient care.

Child care resource and referral organizations consistently receive questions from parents wanting some indication of the quality and value of child care providers that they are considering. Parents also frequently seek locations of child care services that have flexible hours, non-standard hour care and care provided by teachers with similar cultural and/or linguistic characteristics. Of the parents participating in our research, 80 percent think a quality rating and improvement system would be a great idea. Forty-four percent of respondents believe that the state is doing too little to ensure that all families have access to high-quality affordable early learning opportunities. This shows that we have much work to do in educating parents about the important work the state is currently doing as well as to help parents to recognize and value quality.

Regarding satisfaction with current care, one in four of the respondents would prefer different situations for their children if they were available and affordable. In addition, 44 percent of respondents would

be willing to pay more for high-quality child care programs, which again proves that quality matters to parents. Interestingly, most parents, regardless of socio-economic level, find it inherently difficult to trust child care providers, even those that are licensed as they believe licensing does not ensure high quality care.

In Yakima, previous work to gather information about parent attitudes and needs through door-to-door surveying provided useful data for early conceptualization of early learning opportunities. A copy of that report is included in the "Additional Information" section. Parents expressed an overwhelming desire for information that will support their efforts to prepare their children for entry into kindergarten. Parents want to know what they can do and what programs/activities exist in their community to assist them with preparing their children for kindergarten. The experience gathering and analyzing this data several months ago will be beneficial in preparing any follow-up research and will also provide familiarity of the issue upon which we can build.

Our management information system, which will support service deployment and integration within the community, will be a repository of useful information about service utilization of a variety of types. Because actual use of services can provide the best evidence of the "market" for them, this will provide a valuable opportunity to test parent needs. Our MIS system will give us the ability to track service/program request and stated needs so that we will better understand the type of information parents want and the needs that parents have regarding early learning.

3. Describe how parents prefer to get information about early learning opportunities in their community.

As in most communities, parents in this community use a variety of resources to search for child care, including such informal means as the website www.craigslist.org, but prefer to receive information through trusted sources such as family, friends and peers. In focus groups, parents unanimously asked for a website that would allow them to rate and comment on their experience with different providers, much like Amazon.com or a travel site. As noted in section 2 above, parents in these communities have much of their social, spiritual and personal lives connected to community institutions. The use of trusted messengers at social and other events for awareness and education efforts stand the best chance of spreading information rapidly.

Because the effort in this community will include family activities and events in a variety of venues and programs, we will be in a good position to establish continuous feedback loops and test methods of disseminating information and engagement. This strength, in addition to the fact that parents are already engaged in current planning efforts will allow us to ensure that our approach and services are responsive.

Parents in this community prefer to receive their information through informal avenues including local neighborhood organizations. Parents prefer to gather together in "Parent Clubs" or other less formal structures to discuss needs and receive information. Since this is the method that parents prefer for receiving information, the East Yakima Early Learning Initiative is developing a Promotora program that will train community residents to provide outreach, information and linkage to services for parents. For information provided by parents during a recent survey, see the "Parent Survey Part 2" in the "Additional Information" section.

4. Describe how you will ensure parent leadership in planning activities (e.g. Parent Advisory Group)

From early on, the planning in this community effort has engaged families who will be served by enhanced services.

This community has built their plan on extensive door-to-door outreach efforts in the East Yakima community. During this effort, parents were interviewed to gain their insights in shaping the type of programming and features that would best meet their child's needs for school readiness. Parents have been involved in each of the workgroups in the East Yakima Early Learning Initiative including the Professional Development workgroup. Parents are an integral part of the on-going planning and development of the early learning initiative.

In addition to Teresa Mendoza-Casby, the identified involved parent on the QRIS team, Yakima will recruit a second parent QRIS team member. If needed, a parent focus group will be organized to obtain specific information from parents in the community. Yakima will also conduct a community survey every other year as part of the larger learning initiative. The survey can include appropriate questions concerning QRIS efforts and outcomes.

b. Educators and Early Learning Programs:

1. List all Early learning programs (and educators within these programs) in your community within the following categories: licensed (e.g., child care centers and family child care homes), state regulated (e.g., Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program, ECEAP), federally regulated (e.g., Head Start, Early Head Start), Exempt (e.g., offer 3 ½ hours or less of care per day)

Local staff from state agencies have participated in a variety of planning sessions about the community initiative and will be welcome to continue to provide useful information and support to this effort. Our partner, the CCRRN and the local resource and referral organization have extensive data detailing current child care provider in this area which can be enhanced as services are planned. The CCRRN and CCR also have data concerning the educational level of teachers who participate in the Washington Scholarships program. While this data is far from complete, experience working with teachers to assess transferability and articulation of credits will be beneficial. Because we will need to support effective workforce development for any of the service expansions and integration to happen, we are ready to find ways to gather more detailed information. The Management Information System that will be configured and launched shortly will also provide a repository for this type of information as we collect it.

The local child care resource and referral agency also has strong relationships with many providers in the community due to years of work providing technical assistance and support to local providers.

Outreach efforts have been taking place during the early learning initiative planning process. Both child care centers and homes were involved in a survey effort that focused on developing relationships with providers and gathering baseline information about providers. In this community a large percentage of children are cared for in their home by a parent or relative. These families have been involved with the door-to-door survey that was conducted last year. Many child care providers have already participated

in the I-BEST program through Yakima Community College. Additionally, there is a strong core of providers already engaged in this effort and over 80% of the providers participating in the survey indicated an interest in furthering their education and training in early childhood education. As we field test elements of the quality improvement system, we expect to attract additional providers that are interested in being involved in quality improvement efforts.

Because current providers of Head Start and ECEAP services have been engaged in this community effort and each program gathers the requested information, we will be able to obtain this detailed information concerning those programs. Because it is unregulated and not always visibly advertised, information about exempt preschool and child care has been notoriously difficult to obtain, even when physically canvassing the community. However, other services planned in this community will be designed to create an "attracting force" which can contribute to obtaining this information.

2. How many children can these programs serve if their enrollment is at 100%?

As part of surveying programs to obtain the information above, it is anticipated that we will also be able to obtain enrollment capacity about those early learning programs that participate in our voluntary efforts.

3. Samples of evaluations that have been conducted on the quality and availability of child care and early learning programs in your community.

The CCRRN maintains data concerning supply at the county level. In King County, Child Care Resources periodically conducts surveys of child care availability. In Yakima County, the resource and referral organization periodically conducts surveys of child care availability.

Under contract to our partner, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Mathematica and the University of Washington have recently completed administration of a childcare quality baseline measurement for licensed providers. This baseline measurement was done through provider interviews and childcare quality observations using validated tools. The instruments used to gather the baseline were the revised Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale and the Family Child Care Rating Scale. 10 professionals were trained on the Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale by Thelma Harms in Spring 07. Ratings were conducted in licensed child care homes to establish inter-rater reliability with the instrument. While the rating scales will not be administered during the period of this grant, additional data will be captured when they are again administered in the Fall of 2008.

Additionally, we anticipate beginning our field tests with a low threshold for participation to encourage the maximum number of providers to participate. One assumed component of the lowest threshold is administration of a self-assessment. Data available from these participating providers will be valuable in developing an additional baseline of current quality. Information available as part of the previously completed QRIS readiness to benefit work is included in the "Additional Information" section.

4. List of educators' levels of education and professional development in your community.

Note response to item 1 above. The initiative in White Center is designed to "attract" interested early learning programs to participate in voluntary expansion and improvement of services. As those providers participate, a rich set of data concerning the levels of professional development and education will be available through reports from the Management Information System which will support this community effort.

5. Show what educators' need in their early learning environments, including:

- Curriculum
- Materials
- Learning environments
- Developmentally appropriate play areas
- Technical assistance

The model being developed for quality improvement assumes assessment of the classroom environment, review of teacher education, experience and competence and appraisal of management capacity. It is presumed that consideration of this data will inform the assignment of a "rating" of current care quality. As a result, once a coach/mentor begins working with each provider, a quality improvement plan can be co-created which will identify these needs. This data will be entered into the Management Information System and summative reports can be generated regarding these common areas of improvement.

However, early adopters of the quality improvement effort in the community will be asked to complete a self-assessment which will address at least these areas and from which a "sample" of what is needed can be developed.

Our experience to date suggests that professionals need:

Curriculum: Providers could use a curriculum that is adaptable to individual needs and that is developmentally appropriate, such as the Creative Curriculum. It will also be necessary to train additional professionals in the use of the Creative Curriculum in child care centers and licensed homes.

Materials: Providers need additional learning materials, with an emphasis on literacy development.

Learning environments & developmentally appropriate play areas: Providers can use equipment for gross and fine motor development, appropriately-sized furniture, and resources for enhanced learning features of their facilities (including the outdoor areas).

Technical assistance: Providers would benefit from coaching and mentors to provide additional on-site training and support to meet their individualized needs. They need on-site support from consultants in the areas of special needs, behavioral problems, developmental assessments, and parent communication and support. This consultation is currently being provided by Child Care Resource & Referral, but they cannot meet demand. The highest demand for consultation is for children with behavioral problems.

In addition, providers would benefit from technical assistance on how to improve businesses operations (e.g., accounting, playground design, etc.).

c. K-12:

1. Describe your community kindergarten program and future goals, including existing or planned full-day kindergarten programs.

Through SB5841, this community will receive funds for Full Day Kindergarten and K-3 Demonstration programs. The Full Day Kindergarten will support the top 10% of schools with the highest poverty level. In order to be eligible for funding, these schools must have demonstrated strong connections and communications with early learning community providers. They must also participate in Kindergarten program readiness activities with early learning providers and parents. Clearly, seamless transitions between early learning environments and Kindergarten are already in motion in this community.

Yakima School District (YSD) currently provides full-day kindergarten throughout the district. The goal is to maintain this. YSD also has a limited Pre-kindergarten Academy during the summer prior to kindergarten entry. The Academy is taught by kindergarten teachers, and over three weeks, it orients the children and their parents to the routine and expectations of kindergarten. YSD hopes to continue, and perhaps expand, the Academy. Twenty-six percent of children in the target area were served in 2007.

2. Describe your community relationship with K-12 as it pertains to early learning.

Again, through SB5841 funding, this community will house a K-3 demonstration program. In order to be eligible for funding through SB5841, this community had to demonstrate successful linkages with early learning providers in their community. Ongoing communication and collaboration between early learning providers and K-12 educators through meetings, seminars, round robins, etc. are underway, increasing and improving.

YSD is a major partner in the East Yakima Early Learning Initiative, with the Superintendent serving on the Executive Committee of the EYELI Board of Directors and an Associate Superintendent serving on the Board. The YSD Director of Early Learning has been intricately involved in the planning process for EYELI. YSD has 70 sub-contracted ECEAP slots as well as 35 district-funded pre-kindergarten and 40 special education pre-kindergarten slots.

3. In your community relationship with K-12 described above, explain how this relationship includes ongoing communication and support for early learning educators and families.

Already, videoconferencing and collaborative meetings between early learning educators and K-12 educators have taken place. This will continue throughout the QRIS planning and implementation phases.

YSD is developing a program to better prepare preschool children for kindergarten by partnering with licensed early childhood providers through STARS credits provided by YSD teachers. The model will include a resource library for providers.

d. Professional Development and Education Organizations/ Institutions:

1. Indicate professional development and educational opportunities now available to early learning providers in your community.

There are a number of statewide professional development components that can be built upon to help prepare for and implement the QRIS. These supports include the Building Bridges modules that have been funded through the Department of Early Learning at area community colleges, the Career and Wage Ladder, STARS scholarships for community-based training, Washington Scholarships for Child Care Professionals for higher education and the nurse consultant-partnerships through the Department of Public Health. A few area colleges have established Integrated Basic Education and Skills (IBEST) models for early childhood professionals that target limited English Language Learners. There are a number of online degree options such as Washington State University's Human Development program that are also emerging as necessary infrastructure to help increase accessibility for providers.

The CCRRN has a wealth of information and has offered in-kind support to share successful local models across the state and match up their statewide partners with the staff working in the demonstration community. Some models that might be helpful are the SELF (Support for Early Learning and Families) initiative in Clark County and the Pierce County linkages project that both have worked to create a systemic approach to professional development in their respective communities along with establishing better connection and partnerships with the K-12 system.

STARS credited course work is available in this community through a variety of venues. Some course work is college credit-bearing. Other efforts such as Washington Online, have attempted to create greater access to college coursework at times that are more convenient for early learning teachers. The Child Care Resource and Referral Network administers the Washington Scholarships program (formerly Washington TEACH) which is designed to promote access to traditional course offerings towards attainment of an Associate of Arts degree or CDA for early childhood professionals at community colleges (and soon at a University). The Training Resource and Interactive Network (TRAIN) administered by the Washington Association for the Education of Young Children (WAEYC) serves as a repository for training sessions.

Agencies offering STARS include Catholic Family and Child Service / Child Care Resource and Referral, Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital, Yakima Health District, and Yakima Valley Community College. ESD 105 and YSD are in the processing of applying to offer STARS. EPIC offers STARS credits for its employees. Several licensed centers are approved as STARS trainers. STARS agencies all have Spanish language capacity. Other early learning opportunities include college course credit at YVCC and Heritage University. YVCC offers I-BEST and CDA courses, as well as an AA degree in Early Childhood. In November 2007, ESD 105 will offer an on-line early childhood professional development courses towards clock-hours or college credit.

Building Bridges classes are being offered through a partnership between YVCC, Catholic Family & Child Service, and DEL. These classes are available to any child care provider to obtain college and STARS credit for college classes in Early Childhood. Currently, they are being offered through a

Department of Early Learning grant for Fall and Winter quarter in English/Spanish in Yakima and Lower Valley for 180 students. Follow-up on-site consultation is provided to each student through the CCR&R network to facilitate application of information learned in the classes. Given that a large percentage of the providers are Spanish speaking, the school district has provided CONEVyT which is an approach focused on Spanish Literacy. The local ESD has hired a staff position that is focused on Early Learning Professional Development.

2. Submit data you have, if any, that show whether the current professional development and educational opportunities accessible in your community are making a difference in the quality of early learning opportunities children receive.

Washington State is known as the home of some of the most innovative, successful companies in the world. Yet in spite of this innovation, we are woefully behind when it comes to investing in the educators of our youngest residents. This is having a dramatic impact on school readiness. A 2004 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction study found that more than half of the children entering kindergarten in Washington State lacked the basic skills they needed to succeed: recognizing letters of the alphabet, being able to understand teachers' instructions, standing in line, etc. The study brought to light another troubling trend – in kindergarten classrooms with high percentages of students from low-income families, on average, only 25% of the children were prepared for school. Teacher training, education and continuous professional development all have a direct impact on quality, which directly impacts children's preparedness for school.

Research indicates that one key element of early learning services that delivers improved outcomes for young children is the competence of the teachers in the classroom. One indicators of competence is education and another is experience. As part of our effort, we are committed to finding a way to assess teacher competence and learn more about the interaction of education and experience in this regard. The data system being created by Thrive by Five and parents in this community is designed to identify those opportunities for early childhood educators that are having the greatest impact on increasing the quality of early learning opportunities children receive. Findings from Thrive by Five's recent research indicate that parents also place a high value on provider education and training and would pay more for providers with more experience and education, as they see these as directly linked to quality.

3. Describe how professional development and education are linked to early learning and K-12 in your community.

Because the Head Start and ECEAP providers in the community are not school districts, the teaching staff do not have access to the career and wage progression opportunities and support of school districts as is the case in some Washington communities.

However, there are partnerships between K-12 and early learning in the community. The partnerships collaborate to provide childcare training, transition to kindergarten, and early intervention services (Children's Village). ESD105 has been conducting periodic planning meetings during the past few years regarding a "School Readiness Partnership." K-12 and early learning agency professionals discuss kindergarten transition and parent support activities.

Catholic Family & Child Service has two full-day preschool behavioral classrooms through the Valley Intervention Program. Many children are served jointly with special education services through the school district. Transition plans are made as the students are ready to transition to kindergarten. Catholic Family & Child Service and the Yakima School District also provide a Collaborative Therapeutic Kindergarten program at Whitney for 8 seriously behaviorally-disturbed kindergarten children. In addition to the self-contained classroom, these children received on-site mental health services and family support services. Frequently, these children are identified in preschool and child care settings.

In addition to our demonstration community investments which we hope will be able to address some of these challenges, a School Readiness Connections initiative is being designed which may contribute to the solution. Following successful models like that those in Bremerton and Bellevue, we will be investing in models to create connections among early learning and K-12 teachers and parents to ensure that we are all supporting consistent success for young children. One positive aspect of this initiative is that it will create an opportunity to have ongoing exploration of ways to increasingly strengthen connections among the staff in early learning and K-12. Substantive change to the infrastructure that undergirds these workforces may be explored through our infrastructure investments, but the major change necessary to labor agreements, eligibility for workforce development systems and the resources necessary to bring early learning professional development opportunities up to those available to K-12 teachers, will require legislative support and action. We and our partners stand ready to engage in exploration and field testing of promising approaches.

e. Community and Potential Partnerships:

1. Describe the relationship you have with your community.

Over two years ago, professionals in the community interested in developing a collaborative approach to early learning in Yakima County began meeting every other week to discuss strategies for parents and early learning providers. This group became known as the Investing in Children Committee (IIC). The door was open to business members and parents as well. Out of this process grew support for a comprehensive, integrated, collaborative approach to early learning and school readiness. When the Thrive by Five East Yakima Early Learning Initiative was formed and began planning for the demonstration project, the IIC provided a sounding board and has continued to meet for ongoing ideas. IIC is discussing early learning needs in other areas of the County beyond the target area. This context is the basis of our community and potential partnerships.

2. Explain ongoing communication and support for early learning educators and families in your community

ESD105, the lead EYELI agency, will be the lead agency in QRIS. The QRIS team will be composed of representatives from the following:

- At least one parent (two are planned)
- Catholic Family and Child Service (CFCS)
- Yakima Valley Community College (YVCC)
- Yakima Health District (YHD)

- Yakima School District (YSD)
- Country Kids
- Enterprise for Progress in the Community (EPIC)

The QRIS team and ESD105 QRIS staff will meet regularly to carry out the work plan. Minutes will be taken, distributed, and archived. Public meetings will be conducted and information distributed through public means as needed to maintain communication with licensed providers and parents in the community.

3. Describe potential partnerships to support a QRIS pilot and system planning effort in your community.

Partnerships for a QRIS pilot and system planning need to engage various stakeholders in the community including trainers, higher education, providers, business and parents. There will be a need to engage technical experts who can offer the proposed training and professional development opportunities, both informal and formal, to those working directly with children included in the discussion. For informal community-based training, it will be important to engage training organizations and trainers for their assessment of what they view the community needs are. For formal education, it will be important to engage the nine area community colleges where the workforce can obtain two-year degree and a number of emerging colleges and universities where a four-year option is available.

The other major partners include the director, teachers, and staff that work on a daily basis with children. Engaging practitioners in the community may include the Center Directors groups, family child care associations, the provider group in Burien, and others. This will be critical to assess the viability for participation of staff and help to insure significant “volunteerism” to participate in QRIS.

Additionally, parents are the primary audience for QRIS. Parents will need to be engaged in the process to comment on the simplicity and understanding of what the rating means. Vehicles such as Born Learning can be used to assist parents in their understanding.

To develop and deliver services, we anticipate working with a variety of partners such as the Child Care Resource and Referral Network, community colleges, universities and state agencies to develop components of the professional development system which will be necessary to support broad-scale improvement in the quality of care.

Organizations like the Center on Infant Mental Health and Development will be integral to development of effective coaching and mentoring processes. Partnerships with Shorebank and the University of Washington Business School can augment business practice coaching and financial stability and child care businesses increase their quality and business sophistication.

Support from local United Ways and other business, civic and philanthropic organizations can offer financial support, engender local understanding and championing as well as promote visibility of the effort.

f. Project Approach/Methodology

1. Describe the methodological approach your organization will use to conduct this project. Please address the below questions and include a draft work plan and project schedule.

We anticipate that considerable testing and learning will be necessary to design the ultimate Quality Rating & Improvement System that the state adopts. As such, we see it as valuable to gather information, try approaches and gather data about success. We believe the following principles are important to consider as the development of a system proceeds:

Important Principles for an Effective QRIS:

1. Establish design and development capacity to learn from initial sites and integrate lessons into further expansion.
2. Separate licensing from rating and technical assistance.
3. Use existing resources such as local resource and referral agencies, faith-based and other community organizations and child care businesses to deliver child care services efficiently and effectively.
4. Focus on saturating contiguous geographic areas to sufficient depth to allow the above-mentioned market forces to work as well as to realize efficiencies in program assessment and mentoring functions.
5. Provide adequate funds to create dramatic improvement in areas funded, rather than hobbling the existing system with under-funded mandates.
6. Approach child care centers/homes with a business development mentality as opposed to a "regulatory plus" approach.
7. Use quality enhancement grants (in addition to tiered reimbursements and/or other subsidies at least initially) allowing child care businesses flexibility in determining the best use of quality enhancement funding.
8. Over time, transition solely to providing enhancement grants to child care businesses rather than subsidies to children to increase program continuous improvement and stability.
9. Use mechanisms to encourage lowering tuition in appropriate instances and increasing compensation to retain highly-qualified staff.
10. Create a seamless program to join existing systems and services statewide, including provisions for a system for workforce training.
11. Establish regional centers of excellence (virtual or physical), establishing a clear model for parents and providers alike.
12. Use the law of attraction to connect families with high-quality centers/homes.
13. Focus on serving virtually all families without means testing, but providing sliding scale and tuition scholarship options for appropriate families above 100% subsidy.

Since the QRIS is intended to be voluntary and since it is our belief that the most successful way to gather accurate and meaningful information and to test approaches is to create a system of attraction rather than to require participation, our approach and the activities listed reflect that. A draft work plan with associated project deadlines follows.

DRAFT WORK PLAN East Yakima

Because the DRAFT Statement of work provided in the RFP suggests some additional/different tasks than are specifically enumerated in the Technical Proposal section of the RFP, the following draft Work Plan attempts to display the Area of Work, as well as the Technical Proposal area as they relate to identified activities.

DRAFT WORK PLAN					
Work Area	Technical Proposal Area	Activity	Milestone/Document	Goal/Objective	Deadline
State QRIS Learning Community	Project Methodology	Oversee project and provide strategic direction	QRIS implementation plan	Ensure project success	06/30/08
State QRIS Learning Community	Project Methodology	Participate in Department of Early Learning 5-community planning meetings	Attendance	Support and engage in development of a common approach	Monthly
State QRIS Learning Community	Project Methodology	Develop interim progress reports	Progress reports submitted	Keep partners informed -Sharing of Information	Bimonthly
State QRIS Learning Community	Project Methodology	Respond to Department of Early Learning QRIS planning questions	Responses Completed	Assist in design deliberations	As needed
State QRIS Learning Community	Project Methodology	Develop summary of lessons learned	<i>"Lessons Learned"</i>	Provide documentation for policy deliberations	06/30/08
Community Engagement	Project Methodology	Identify community stakeholders with an interest in QRIS design and field testing	<i>Community QRIS Stakeholder List</i>	Promote community engagement Ensure relevance of design	12/31/07
Community Engagement	Project Methodology	Conduct community planning meetings regarding design, implementation and evaluation	Minutes and products from meetings	Promote community engagement Ensure relevance of design	Ongoing

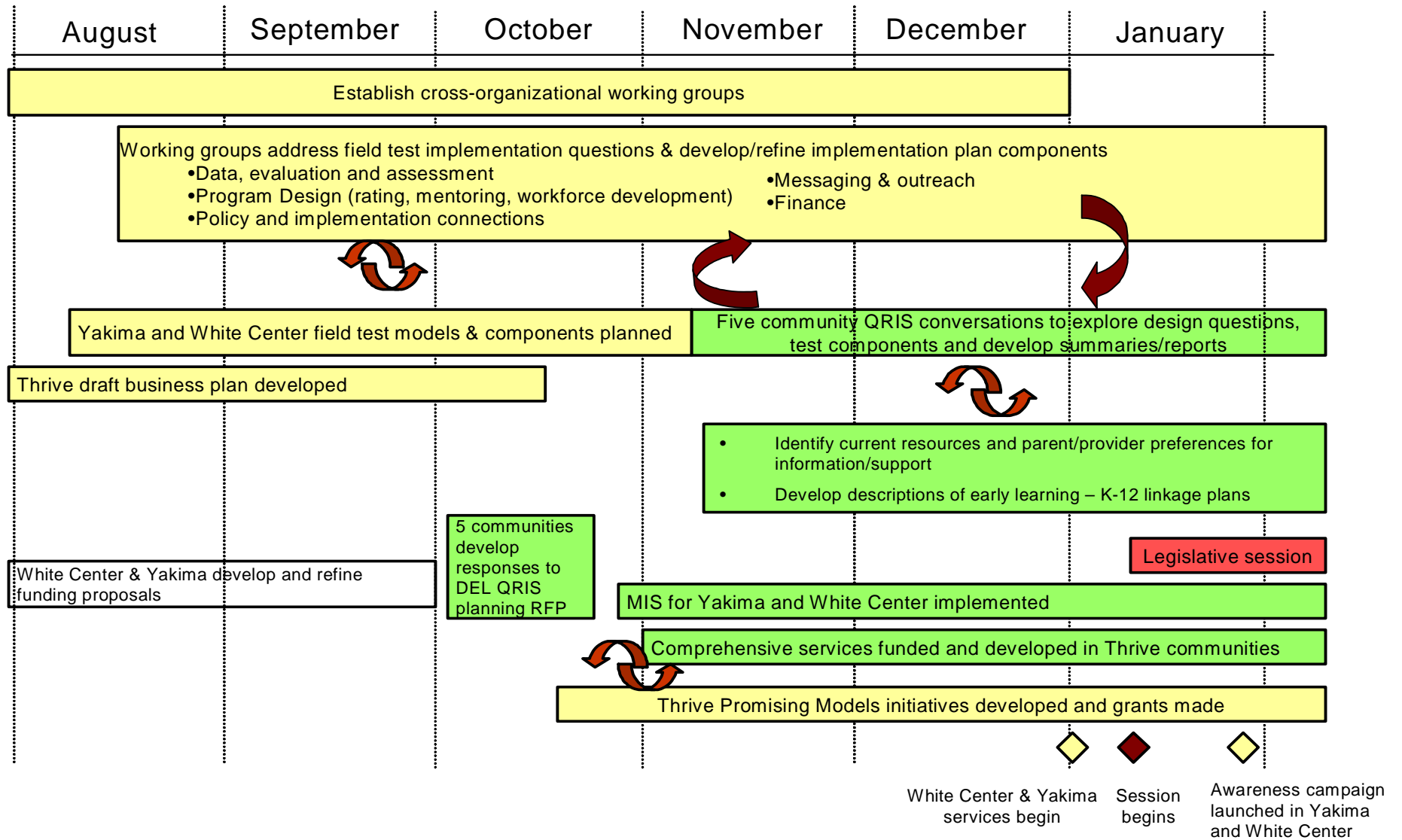
DRAFT WORK PLAN					
Work Area	Technical Proposal Area	Activity	Milestone/Document	Goal/Objective	Deadline
Community Engagement	Project Methodology	Develop and disseminate messages about QRIS through Born Learning partners	Messages	Leverage existing relationships Prepare community for QRIS	06/30/08
Development of Work Plan	Project Methodology	Identify resources in place to support QRIS	Detailed list of resources	Discovery Build upon existing resources	1/31/08
Development of Work Plan	Project Methodology	Develop a QRIS Approach and Work Plan built upon Washington Learns, Kids Matter and other work	QRIS Work Plan	Outline Plans	03/15/08
Development of Work Plan	Parents	Inventory parent information resources	<i>Parent Information Resource List</i>	Discovery	1/31/08
Development of Work Plan	Parents	Identify opportunities for parent engagement, leadership and support in planning	<i>Chart of Parent Engagement Points</i>	Promote parent engagement	1/31/08
Development of Work Plan	Community Partnerships	Identify desired and secured key partnerships in support of QRIS	<i>List of Desired and Secured Partnerships</i>	Foster collaboration at community level	1/31/08
Development of Work Plan	Community Partnerships	Develop strategy and plan for communicating approach, opportunities and timelines for local QRIS field testing	<i>Local QRIS Communication Plan</i>	Ensure accurate information about QRIS development is readily available	1/31/08
Environmental Scan	Parents	Identify parent preferences for receiving information about child care identified through focus groups	<i>Parent Attitudes Regarding Child Care</i>	Parent engagement Ensure relevance of design	1/31/08
Environmental Scan	Parents	Identify provider preferences for receiving support for quality improvement from focus group findings	<i>Provider Attitudes Regarding Support for Quality</i>	Provider engagement Ensure relevance of design	1/31/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Develop list of EL programs in service area (licensed, state/fed regulated)	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Discovery	06/30/08

DRAFT WORK PLAN					
Work Area	Technical Proposal Area	Activity	Milestone/Document	Goal/Objective	Deadline
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Start building list of exempt providers attracted into the system	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Discovery Creating a System of Attraction	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Develop list of educators in participating EL programs in service area	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Discovery Creating a System of Attraction	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Assess licensed capacity of licensed or regulated EL programs in service area	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Discovery	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Gather any samples of evaluation reports concerning local child care quality	Copies of reports	Link existing data to design	03/15/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Develop list of educators' current education and experience level among participating providers	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Identify workforce development needs in each community	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Develop summary of curriculum needs among participating providers	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Establish areas of need within learning environments Improved quality of learning environment	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Develop summary of material needs among participating providers	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Establish areas of need within learning environments Improved quality of learning environment	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Develop summary of improved environment needs among participating providers	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Establish areas of need within learning environments Improved quality of learning environment	06/30/08

DRAFT WORK PLAN					
Work Area	Technical Proposal Area	Activity	Milestone/Document	Goal/Objective	Deadline
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Develop summary of need for developmentally- appropriate play areas among participating providers	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Establish areas of need within learning environments Improved quality of learning environment	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	Educators and EL Programs	Develop summary of need for coaching and mentoring among participating providers	Report generated from data captured in community MIS	Continued capability building Improved quality of learning environment	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	K-12	Describe current kindergarten programs and plans/timelines for program expansion	<i>Local Kindergarten Program Vision</i> document	Foster a seamless transition for children, families and teachers	01/31/08
Environmental Scan	K-12	Develop narrative description of early learning and K-12 connections in service area	<i>Early Learning and K-12 Connections</i> document	Foster a seamless transition for children, families and teachers	01/31/08
Environmental Scan	K-12	Develop narrative and/or graphic of communication and support loops among families, EL educators and K-12 educators	<i>Early Learning & K-12 Communication and Support Loops</i> document	Community engagement Sharing of information	06/30/08
Environmental Scan	Professional Development	Inventory and create graphic of available professional development opportunities	<i>Available Professional Development Opportunities</i> document	Build upon existing community resources	01/31/08
Environmental Scan	Professional Development	Create narrative and graphic of EL and K-12 professional development ladder	<i>Early Learning - K-12 Professional Development Ladder</i> document	Continued capability building Improved quality of learning environment	06/30/08

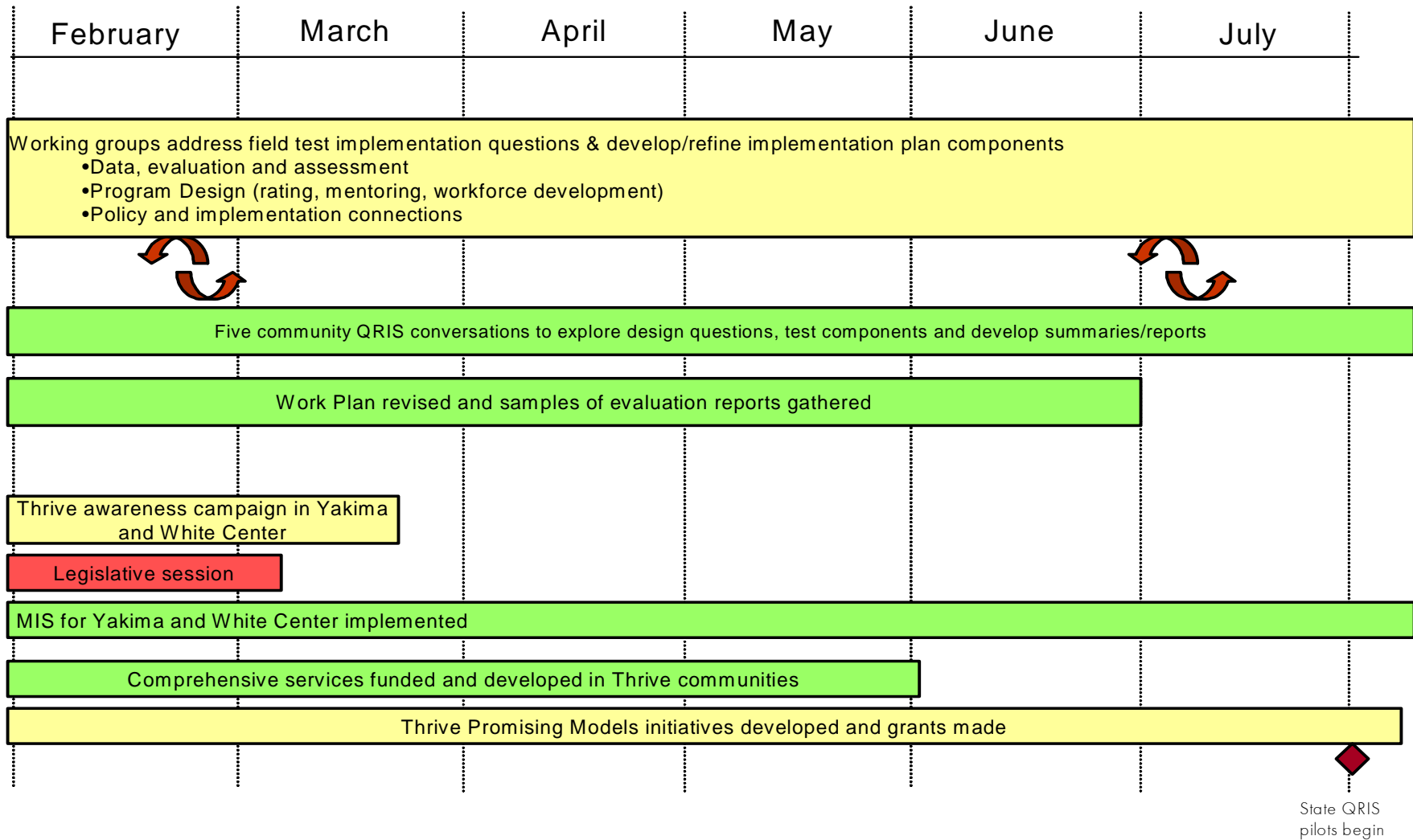
- Joint effort
- Thrive effort
- Local partner effort

Quality Improvement Field Test Timeline



- Joint effort
- Thrive effort
- Local partner effort

Quality Improvement Field Test Timeline



2. What resources are available in your community that will allow you to bring together parents, early educators, administrators, school systems, business interests, and broader community representatives to collaborate on the design and implementation of the QRIS?

East Yakima and ESD105 have a variety of resources in the community that will allow us to bring together the necessary participants to conduct this project. The extensive collaboration that is taking place to launch the early learning demonstration project provides the foundation for the QRIS, which is part of the bigger picture. The agencies that have stakeholder interest in QRIS will participate. One parent has provided a letter of commitment and support; a second parent will be sought to provide well-rounded input. Early educators include a representative from Enterprise for Progress in the Community (EPIC), the Head Start provider in the target area; Yakima School District; Yakima Valley Community College and its early learning staff; Catholic Family and Child Service and its Resource and Referral staff; and the Yakima Health District. ESD105 intends to recruit direct participation from licensed child care providers (a center provider as well as a home provider). The broader community, including business interests, upper-level administrators from the Yakima School District, and the local medical community, is well-represented in the East Yakima Early Learning Initiative Board structure and planning/advisory committee structure.

3. What additional resources (if any) are needed to create a system for successfully implementing the QRIS in your community?

At this point, the grant will provide the necessary foreseen resources to create a system for successfully implementing the QRIS in our community.

4. What infrastructure components are currently in place in your community that could be used to most effectively prepare for and implement the QRIS?

The infrastructure components currently in place in our community that can be used to most effectively prepare for and implement the QRIS are the East Yakima Early Learning Initiative and extensive multiple-agency collaboration it encompasses.

5. Based on your knowledge of and experience with working with stakeholders in your community, what strategies will be most effective for preparing for, implementing, and evaluating the QRIS in your community?

Based on our knowledge of and experience working with stakeholders in East Yakima, the strategies most effective for preparing for, implementing, and evaluating the QRIS in our community are frequent work meetings, open communication, focus groups as needed, accurate documentation, and thoughtful organization.