Want to protect our future? Invest in early education.


Policy Exchange - June 18, 2015
Margie Wallen - Ounce of Prevention Fund
Session Learning Objectives

- To share policy content & advocacy strategies to leverage the EHS-CC Partnership opportunity & program leaders in states to secure better child care policies for vulnerable infants & toddlers

- To demonstrate the power of the Policy Exchange network & Educare Learning Network to influence policy reforms across states
Panelist Introductions

- Caren Calhoun, Executive Director, Educare Tulsa Inc., Oklahoma

- Melanie Bronfin, Director, The Policy Institute for Children, Louisiana

- Laura Klingelhoets, Director, Stepping Stones Children’s Center, Wisconsin
Session Plan

INTRODUCTION 15 minutes
Margie

PANEL PRESENTATIONS 40 minutes
OK – Caren
LA – Melanie
WI – Laura

OPEN DIALOGUE 35 minutes
Q & A and sharing from other states
Strengthen Quality, Improve High Quality Access

- Early Head Start grantees partner with Child Care providers to raise program quality to EHS standards
- Offer full workday, full year services

$500 M federal competitive grant opportunity
EHS-CC Partnership Strengths

Child Care
- High quality child care w/QRIS
- Full-day, full-year services
- CCDF subsidy payments
- State Quality and I/T Initiatives
- Statewide regs and monitoring
- Cost allocation experience

Early Head Start
- EHS Performance Standards
- Professional development
- Family engagement
- Health, developmental & behavioral screenings and services
- Higher expenditure per child
Potential for impact is immense

Additional children served with better quality through EHS – CC Partnerships

Potential for expanded quality reach
Top Ways CCDF Can Support EHS-CC Partnerships

Child care policies that support EHS-CC Partnerships linked to CCDBG reauthorization opportunities

- **Ensure & Align Eligibility**
- **Prioritize Vulnerable Populations**: children in foster care, children experiencing homelessness, children with disabilities
- **Waive Parent Fees**
- **Establish Grants or Contracts**
- **Pay Rates Supporting Quality**
- **Sustainable Payment Practices**: e.g. pay based on enrollment
- **Layer Funding** to support full day, full year services
Policy Exchange Impact

Secured **state-level child care policy changes** in LA and OK that will benefit children and families served in EHS-CC Partnerships

- Full day/full year rates
- 12 mo. authorization
- Contracts
- No co-pays for 100% FPL
- Pay for up to 5 absences per month

- Full day/full year rates
- 12 mo. authorization
- No co-pays
- Pay for summer months for children of teens
- Pay for child while mom on maternity leave
Policy Exchange Impact

Working to secure **state-level child care policy changes** in WI

- Full day/full year rates for special populations
- 12 mo. authorization
- Reduce co-pays
- Pay based on enrollment
- Maintain payment levels and for disbursement of QRIS bonuses
Policy Exchange State Advocates & Educare Leader Connections
OPEN DIALOGUE: Q & A and sharing from other states (35 minutes)

- Reflections? What ideas would you want to steal from this session?
- Would these approaches work in your state? Why or Why not?
- What policy reforms would you push in your state to benefit children and families served in EHS-CC Partnerships?
- How have policy “asks” that would benefit EHS-CC Partnerships and the messaging changed since CCDBG reauthorization? [e.g. 12 mo authorization required]
- What can be done to incent families and providers to maintain participants’ subsidies? To ensure families reapply if their child’s subsidy is discontinued?
- Continued challenges for EHS-CC Partnerships
  - Differences in family income eligibility between EHS and CCAP
  - Co-Pays: No co-pays for EHS, required co-pays in CCAP
  - Collecting fees: No fees allowed in EHS, impose fees in CC programs
  - Reducing child: teacher ratios and group sizes to meet EHS standards
Caren Calhoun
Educare Tulsa Inc., Oklahoma
Oklahoma Child Care Subsidy Contract
Mandate states:

• Providers in collaborations or agreements with Early Head Start, Head Start, Pre-Kindergarten, public schools and/or any other programs receiving state or federal funding are not eligible to receive child care subsidy payment from OKDHS and payments from other state or federal funding sources for the same hours of the program day.

• A child care provider’s contract may be cancelled if the provider establishes or renews a contract or agreement with HS, EHS, PreK, local school system or any other entity using state or federal funds to support its EC programming.
Obstacles for parent participation in the subsidy system:

- **Eligibility and Authorization:**
  - Everyone in the household must be working, going to school or training. There cannot be a caregiver in the home.
  - No child care subsidy for job search time, during maternity leave, during the summer for teen parents, between semesters for students, between jobs, etc.
  - The mother is mandated to give the father’s contact information so that the state can file for and begin collecting child support.

- **Re-certification:**
  - Families must report change of circumstances within 10 days.
  - Co-payment amounts, # of paid days, and full or part-time status changes all the time for our families. OKDHS uses an EBT system to authorize payments.
  - The average length a child stays on subsidy is 6.5 months.
History of previous work

- OK advocates & program leaders have been working to advance child care policy reforms for many years.

- Significant policy analysis was conducted to inform the many attempts to remove the barriers to blend and braid funding.

- State officials maintained that public funds needed to be distributed widely to maximize the number of children served (i.e. access over quality).

- It was considered “double dipping” to blend EHS funds with other public funding (child care, PreK) to support a full workday, full year program.

- EHS funds supported a 6 hour EHS day. Part-time CC subsidy funds supported hours of service before and after the EHS portion of the day.
OK Advocacy Efforts

The goal of our proposed policy recommendations over the years is to improve access to, and the length of participation in, high quality early care & education programs for Oklahoma’s low income children whose parents are working or in approved education and training activities.
EHS-CC Partnerships provided a new opportunity to advance change

- The EHS-CC Partnership FOA incentivized CC policy change by awarding extra points to applicants whose states made reforms that benefitted Partnerships
- I am not a policy person, purely programmatic
- Began revisiting the obstacles to OK’s child care policies
- Contacting advocates to find out where OK was on these issues
- Contacted Margie at the OUNCE for help to move this agenda forward given Partnership opportunity
Without CC policy changes.....

- Continuity of care for the children would be interrupted (moving children based on number of children, more transitions, increase in child turnover, etc.)

- Seamless service delivery for the parents would be interrupted (swiping in/out 4 times a day, confusion of hours/funding)

- Staffing, monitoring burden and strain on the system (additional paperwork, DHS police, empty space, etc.)

My motivation to secure targeted CC policy changes was informed by the EHS-CC Partnership grant program implications.
Deciding what to “push” first

• Worked on the continuity of care philosophy

• What would be best for the child

• Prioritized reforms to request by what seemed “doable” in increments.
Developed a “draft” support letter

- Key Messages
  - Without CC policy changes, OK might not get all $ allocated
  - Opportunity for higher quality group care
  - Continuity of care, minimal transitions
  - Seamless service delivery
  - Don’t change what is working, support it with resources
Submitted support letter with our grant application that stated:

- Approve any CCDF eligible child attending an EHS program for full time subsidy rate that includes absent day payments as long as the parent meets a need factor for at least part of the time EHS is in session each week.

- Waive family co-payments if at least one CCDF eligible child in the household attends an EHS program.

- If approved, these changes could come effective June 1, 2015.
Signature for the support letter

- Called advocates that had been working on these issues
- Called others applying for the EHS-CCP grant
- Called and left messages at DHS to set up meetings
- Seized the opportunity at the State EC Advisory meeting
- We drafted the letter; DHS signed it and others used it in their EHS-CCP grant application
New proposed changes for EHS-CCP as a pilot

- Truly blended funding-no assigned hours for certain program hours of the day.

- Approve any CCDF eligible child attending an EHS program for full time subsidy rate that includes absent day payments as long as the parent meets a need factor for at least part of the time EHS is in session each week, (Each child will be FT, 5 days a week if they meet the minimum # of days).

- Waives family co-payments for families attending an EHS-CCP program (Effective September 1st).

- Retain eligibility for a year.

- Children remain in care if mom is on maternity leave.

- Teen parents can keep children in care during summer.
Advice for others

• Know what you want and prioritize
• Understand the cost modeling implication
• Hone your message well
• Talk about implications to children, families, programs
• Seize opportunities and timing
• Questions?
  – Caren Calhoun, Tulsa Educare
  – carenc@tulsaeducare.org
Louisiana

- State of the State—Background on Louisiana
  - Child Care Assistance Policies
    - Payment rate ceiling rate—set at the 10th percentile of the cost of child care tuition statewide
      - Then the state only pays 40-60-80% of THAT amount
      - Average amount: $1850/year with parent paying the difference
    - 12 month “eligibility” vs. “authorization”
    - Payment based on attendance vs. enrollment
    - Vouchers system vs. contracts
    - Work hours vs. program attendance hours
Louisiana

- State of the State-Background on Louisiana
  - Other Factors
    - Louisiana’s Licensing Adult-Child Ratio Standards
      - 1:5 infants, 1:7 for 1 year olds, 1:11 for 2 year olds
      - No maximum group sizes
    - Move of the Child Care and Development Block Grant from the Department of Children and Family Services to the Department of Education (DOE)
    - DOE’s previous work with cost modeling
      - Louise Stoney
    - Critical role of Ounce of Prevention and Oklahoma
Louisiana

- Framing and Strategies
  - Development of Memorandum
    - Worked closely with Ounce of Prevention
    -Outlined the Opportunity ($7.9 million in federal funds)
    -Outlined the challenges given Louisiana’s polices
  - Use of cost models
    - Able to show the cost/child of a slot in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships
    - Able to show how current CCAP would not fill the gap needed between the EHS funds and the cost
Louisiana

- Framing and Strategies
  - Strategized about most effective “messengers”
  - Convened Conference Call
    - Secretary of DCFS and Assistant Superintendent of DOE
    - Policy Institute for Children
    - Three Applicants for the EHS-CC Partnership Grants from around the state
  - Explained the Grant Opportunity, the CCAP Challenges
  - Offered the Memorandum
  - Showed the Draft Letter of Support from Oklahoma Department of Human Services
    - Able to show the cost/child of a slot in the Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships
    - Able to show how current CCAP would not fill the gap needed between the EHS funds and the cost
• Further Strategies and Results
  
  – Strategies
    • Monitoring progress—i.e. pushing!
    • Additional calls and emails to ensure progress
    • Finalized letter of support from Oklahoma
  
  – Results
    • Letter of Support for Louisiana Grant Applications
      – Co-Signed by DCFS and LDOE
    • Provided a Pilot for the EHS-CC Partnership slots
      – Payment of Entire Maximum Rate ($4,625 vs. $1,850)
      – Extend absences from 2 to 5 per month
      – Full year authorization
Louisiana

- Ultimate Results
  - Louisiana received its entire EHS-CC Partnerships allocation and more
    - 8.2 million vs. $7.9 million
  - Precedent for CCAP policy changes
    - Proposal for new CCAP polices will go before State Board of Education in August
Contract Request for an EHS-CC Partner Pilot

Laura Klingelhoets, Belgium, WI
POLICY EXCHANGE - JUNE 18, 2015
Advocacy Journey

- Efforts in OK and LA instrumental. Educare Learning Network connections sparked advocacy efforts in WI
- Identified and brought together a team
  - Strategic in our selection
  - Gathered information from other states-Q&A doc
  - Gathered data from WI’s EHS grantees and CC partners
- Identified an “ask” based on successes from other states
- 2 months to create final ask: 1-pager, FAQ, Comparison of current vs requested policies and rationales for reforms
- Presented to DCF Secretary, legislators, others
- Integrated the feedback / new initiative WELC
Overview

4 EHS grantees in WI with 27 child care partners were awarded $42 million for five years to create comprehensive child care meeting EHS standards for infants & toddlers whose parents are working or in school.

Federal EHS funding will expand and enhance educational and care programming for 584 low-income infants and toddlers of working families, in 10 counties (Dane, Milwaukee, Racine, Burnett, Clark, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, and Washburn and northern Ozaukee).

Grants to WI partners will create sustainable quality 4-5 star rated child care for working families and provide continuity of care for up to the 4,500 children currently served in these Partner programs.
This Pilot Contract will ensure concurrently meeting new CCDBG authorization and TANF funding requirements

• **Provide data** for implementing federal CCDBG eligibility (subsidy) requirements and job retention through the measurement of: quality and continuity of care; employment support success; and the impact of resources for partners.

• **Provide streamlined access to subsidy** by supporting stable, continuous full-time care through coordinated efforts with State / County Agencies.

• **Provide coordination and partner with local employment and training centers** and the Department of Workforce Development to ensure sustainable employment for families enrolled in the programs.
Contract Request to Begin in Fall 2015 or as soon as feasible

• Provide 12-month childcare subsidy authorization for parents who maintain jobs or participate in back-to-work programs.

• Ensure or obtain full-day subsidy rates for special populations of vulnerable children cared for by foster parents, kinship care relatives, interim caretakers, teen parents, children with disabilities, and children affected by trauma (as determined by mental health professionals).

• Provide enrollment based subsidy payments and align eligibility approvals with school year programming.

• Significantly reduce copayments for parents with incomes at or below 130% of poverty based on individual assessments.
Impact

• Zero to minimal impact on DCF Budget as job stability will be monitored and supported through the use of social workers in rural/urban areas.

• Provides data for future implementation of CCDBG (federal subsidy) funding, impact on parent employment and quality care on child outcomes.

• Increases quality care for infants and toddlers; including child care networks and mentorships, professional development, technical assistance, and family support directly related to 3% of the funds set aside by CCDBG.
Recommendations

1. Implement the 12-month eligibility policy asap
2. Subsidy eligibility for children at risk
3. Retain full tiered reimbursement bonuses for 4-5-Star programs

Foundation

- State is dropped to only 13,000 children served with annual subsidy payments reduced by $113 million since 2009.
- Promising QRIS with non-friendly child care policies.
- Seven-year rate freeze, 5% penalty to 2-Star programs
- Most subsidy provided on attendance-based eligibility
Next Steps

• Continue to coordinate efforts with EHS CC Partnerships partners and with advocates

• Work with advocacy partners, consultant, state agencies, business leaders, and legislators

• Look at the impact the pilot has economically on child care providers, the business community and families regarding job retention and stability.

• Design and finalize policies and tools to begin data collection