



Report to the Quality Improvement Workgroup of the NYS Early Childhood Advisory Council

QUALITYstarsNY: Opportunities for alignment of current resources

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With Anne Mitchell

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this short-term project was to identify current resources (state and federal) to support early care and education, through outreach to parents, technical assistance to programs and professional development for staff. The intent was to paint a picture at a point in time of resources that might be aligned with QUALITYstarsNY (QSNY).

To gather basic information, appropriate websites for state agencies and programs were reviewed. But as financial data are generally not available on websites, contact people were identified for each of the funding sources or suppliers of the services. In-person or phone interviews were completed with 30 individuals. (See the appendix for a list of interviewees.)

The majority of information came from these interviews. The interviewees typically conveyed the budget numbers verbally and on rare occasions shared printed budget documents. This meant that in most cases it was difficult to parse out precisely what resources were allocated for which function/activity. This was especially so in those instances where the organization provided/funded direct services to children in addition to support and infrastructure items, and in those instances where funding is shared among federal, state and local sources. Further, the agencies and organizations differed in the degree to which their mission and the services they offer are directly relevant to QUALITYstarsNY. For example, for the network of Child Care Resource and Referral agencies training, technical assistance and outreach to parents about ECE are central to their mission. For others, ECE is only one among many audiences, e.g., public television.

The interviews provided an opportunity to learn about activities in agencies that are not focused on early care and education e.g., Boards of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES); Educational TV and Public Broadcasting. These and other networks of organizations, which may not have ECE as central to

their mission, could be important in the future engagement of parents, allied programs, and professional development. Thus, the report documents not only financial resources, but potential relationships that may be resources for engagement for QSNY going forward.

Because of the fluidity of the State's financial status, some of the dollar amounts changed over the 3 months during which this research was conducted, so the dollar figures should be considered a snapshot in time. More precise accounting will need deeper research. While the financial information is less rigorous than had been hoped for, the interviews provided much valuable information.¹

FINDINGS

In addition to providing information about resources, the interviews were an opportunity to increase visibility of QUALITYstarsNY among a key constituency, state agency leaders and their contractors, and a chance to further engage them in the larger initiative of the ECAC and specifically its quality improvement work.

Engagement

The overall responsiveness of those contacted was very high. Respondents were eager to talk about their programs and in some cases quickly saw QUALITYstarsNY as a way to give visibility and value to their work. They are excited about QSNY and see alignment with it as an opportunity for their programs. Alignment can provide better information for parents, and guide professional development for the staff of their programs. They see QSNY as a way to recognize and market the quality of the programs they fund, e.g., the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER) work site child care centers, the Office of Court Administration's Children's Centers, PBS's initiative Raising Readers. For programs that offer referrals, e.g. Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs), Early Childhood Direction Centers, QSNY is welcomed as valuable new information on quality for families.

Programs such as Early Intervention (EI) see QSNY as offering a future opportunity.

"QSNY has the potential to assist State and local administrators, providers, and families involved in the EI program to identify high quality early education programs that can provide inclusive opportunities for infants and toddlers with disabilities."

The discovery that a large number of Boards of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) districts provide a variety of ECE services is an example of an unexpected finding that signals an opportunity for alignment. The ECE community is more or less aware that individual BOCES provide early care and

¹ Another caveat about the dollar amounts in this report is the influence of stimulus dollars (ARRA) which made possible a number of important initiatives, which may not be able to be sustained in future years.

learning education as part of their Career and Technical Education program for district high school students.² Our brief survey of BOCES revealed much more. Of the 21 that responded, five provided child care services for staff and students' children (two of these offer services to the community at large). BOCES provide professional development to their own ECE staff (13), to staff of their component districts (8) and to community programs (7). Four BOCES reported being part of local community collaborations/coalitions focused on children 0-5. (See appendix for a more detailed summary of the BOCES survey results.)

We learned that engagement is already underway; several agencies are creating readiness for QSNY in their programs. E.g., the GOER Work Site child care program already promotes and incentivizes national (NAEYC) accreditation as do the SUNY/CUNY campus child care centers. Both are beginning to introduce QSNY, its assessment tools and standards to staff in their programs.

Finally, networks of organizations offer opportunities for alignment. For example, the New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP) is made up of 65 agencies, organizations and individuals. Its purpose is to enhance parenting education, skills, knowledge and behavior. QSNY can offer valuable resource information on early childhood programs for this network and perhaps for other networks.

Resources

More than \$3 billion currently supports direct services for children and families across NYS from federal, state and local sources such as early intervention, preschool special education, child care, Head Start and UPK. All of these many sources of funding for direct services could use QSNY as a measure of quality and accountability. Close to \$40 million, across many funding sources, supports programs and practitioners to improve. Some, if not all of this, can be aligned to support programs entering and progressing in QSNY. See the appendix for a chart that shows approximate annual resources and a rough gauge of the potential for realignment of various programs.

There are numerous opportunities in state and federally funded programs for outreach. Child care inspectors clearly have potential for outreach to programs. Similarly, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) reaches many child care programs and conducts monitoring visits a minimum of 3 times a year in each one. These staff can be ambassadors for QSNY. Both CCR&Rs and the special education Early Childhood Direction Centers can reach out to families with new information provided by QSNY.

Challenges

The research underscored complexities as well. Much of current funding for early care and education comes via multiple state and federal agencies that operate on different timelines and with more or less

² The 21 BOCES that responded are currently serving 771 high school students.

stringent regulations. These may closely specify how money is allocated, who is eligible, among other parameters, while encouraging collaboration with other programs.

For example, Head Start has a large infrastructure for providing training and technical assistance including national, state and local components: several national centers with different content focuses, state-based Early Learning Mentor Coaches (there are 7 for NYS) and direct funding for professional development to each grantee. In the next federal funding cycle, each Head Start grantee will have an EC specialist, and a TA provider focused on core competences for transition to school. Training will include state, national and regional conferences, on-line discussion boards & conference calls. While the state Head Start Collaboration Office does not provide any direct technical assistance to Head Start/ Early Head Start grantees, it can be influential in connecting these resources within and across systems. In using their training funds, Head Start/Early Head Start grantees are encouraged to collaborate with other local community providers. Head Start's resources have potential for joint professional development with other ECE providers. However, it was not possible to learn the full extent of how much money is allocated or how flexible it is, within the time constraints of this study.

Further, some initiatives are time limited, while others are ongoing. Some may depend on private resources that are hard to sustain. Funding sources, particularly public ones, use different funding cycles; the federal fiscal year begins in October, the state's begins in April and contracts can be on calendar year, school-year, multi-year or other cycles. Achieving alignment is a long-term project that will require carefully crafted timelines.

Other factors affect the data contained in the report. As noted, agency budget categories do not match exactly the elements that are the focus of this report. The fact of local control of much funding in New York State means that it is difficult to learn the full extent of county and school district contributions to the system, without conducting a unit-by-unit/district-by-district analysis, which is well beyond the scope of this project. This especially affects Pre-K funding, BOCES child care initiatives and special education dollars.

In many ways, New York City is a model of aligning resources for quality. EarlyLearnNYC brings together the resources of ACS, NYC DOE and Head Start to create one program with one quality assessment and support system, using QUALITYstarsNY as the foundation.

A final caveat: while it is possible in a short time period to assess whether services are being offered or not, and whether they have the potential for alignment with QSNY, it is not possible to collect information on frequency and intensity. In future, for QSNY and indeed the entire ECE system, it will be important to have some sense of the quality and impact of professional development for practitioners, technical assistance for programs and outreach to families. A measure of quality control to T&TA will

result from the registry of training and technical assistance consultants being developed by the NYC Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (ECPDI) and NYS Association for the Education of Young Children (AEYC) with support from the Head Start Collaboration Office. A new study just commissioned by the federal Administration for Children and Families will look at the extent to which families' needs and preferences coordinate well with providers' offering and constraints—information that can inform the development of resources for New York families and providers going forward.³

CONCLUSION

While aligning and incorporating QUALITYstarsNY into early care and education in New York State will be challenging, there is every reason to believe that it is possible – and very likely to succeed. The excitement evident in the interviews and the strong alignment between the goals of current programs and those of QUALITYstarsNY give us hope.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE) will gather data on the current utilization and availability of early child care and education, including school-age care, and provide unique information to understand the extent to which families' needs and preferences coordinate well with providers' offering and constraints.

APPENDIXES.

1. List of Interviewees
2. BOCES Survey Summary
3. Description of Programs
4. Resources and Future Alignment

Appendix 1. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

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1. Please enter the name of your BOCES:

	Response Count
	21
answered question	21
skipped question	0



2. Please enter your name:

	Response Count
	21
answered question	21
skipped question	0

3. Does your BOCES provide provide child care services for staff of the BOCES?

		Response Percent	Response Count
No		76.2%	16
Yes		23.8%	5
If yes, do you extend these services to anyone other than BOCES staff? And to what groups?			8
answered question			21
skipped question			0



4. Does your BOCES provide Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) services for any of your component districts?

		Response Percent	Response Count
No		81.0%	17
Yes		19.0%	4
answered question			21
skipped question			0



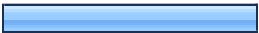

5. If you answered yes,

	Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
To how many of your component districts do you provide UPK?	1.67	5	3
And about how many UPK classrooms is that?	2.00	6	3
answered question			3
skipped question			18




6. Does your BOCES provide Career and Technical Education (CTE) in early care and education for students?

		Response Percent	Response Count
No		23.8%	5
Yes		76.2%	16
If yes, about how many students are enrolled this school year?			15
answered question			21
skipped question			0

7. Does your BOCES provide professional development on early childhood education topics to any of the following?

		Response Percent	Response Count
No, we do not provide this		23.8%	5
Yes, to our BOCES staff		61.9%	13
yes, to staff of Component Districts		38.1%	8
Yes, to early care and education professionals in the community		33.3%	7
Other (please specify)			1
answered question			21
skipped question			0

8. Does your BOCES participate in any community collaborations/coalitions focused on children 0-5 years old?

		Response Percent	Response Count
No		19.0%	4
Yes		19.0%	4
If yes, please describe		61.9%	13
answered question			21
skipped question			0

9. If you would like to receive a report of the results of this survey, please enter your email address:

		Response Count
		16
answered question		16
skipped question		5

Appendix 3.

PUBLICALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS PROVIDING EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION, OUTREACH TO FAMILIES, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO PROGRAMS

State Agency	Program	Purpose
NEW YORK STATE		
Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS)	Child Care Subsidies	Families are eligible for financial assistance for paying child care fees if they meet the county's low-income guidelines and need child care to work, look for work, attend employment training, or engage in other approved activities.
	Licensing and Registration	OCFS develops, monitors, and enforces regulatory requirements for all child care in New York State, except child care centers in New York City. Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (and the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene in NYC) register family child care providers and school-age child care.
	Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (CCR&Rs)	CCR&Rs provide information to parents on finding and paying for child care, training and technical assistance to new and established providers, and assistance to employers to find care for employees.
	NYS Early Care and Learning Council (ECLC)	ECLC provides training for child care directors, technical assistance, data management and advocacy to the network of local CCR&Rs.
	Infant Toddler Resource Centers	The Infant Toddler Resource Centers provide training and technical assistance on best practices for infants and toddlers and assist in expanding services in the community.
	The Professional Development Program (PDP)	The Early Childhood Training Project of the PDP provides training to child care providers, family child care, group family child care, school-age child care, and child care centers, and subsidy training and regulatory training for local social services districts, through classroom training, computer-based training and videoconference training.
	Education Incentive Program (EIP) Scholarships	Provides scholarships and rebates to child care providers to attend professional development programs through EIP for both credit and non-credit bearing courses/workshops/conferences.

State University of New York (SUNY)	SUNY Campus-based Child Care	SUNY provides child care to students, staff and the community at two- and four-year public colleges outside of NYC. Also provides work experience for students studying ECE at colleges where there are programs. There are 55 Centers (20 at SUNY, 33 at Community Colleges).
Office of Court Administration (OCA)	Children’s Centers in the Courts	Children’s Centers in the Courts provide drop-in child care for children 0-12 of litigants who have business in Family and other courts. Caregivers /parents are provided with information and linkages to needed services, e.g., Head Start, child care, WIC, etc. The program serves 57,000 children a year.
State Education Department	Universal Prekindergarten (UPK)	UPK provides early learning programming for 4 year olds in schools and community-based programs. Currently, 450 school districts (out to 677) receive funding for this service.
	Race to the Top—(Early Learning Priority only)	The Race to the Top initiative includes several activities directed at early learning including the development of benchmarked early learning standards for prekindergarten and kindergarten, a "quantitative and qualitative analysis of the feeder system used by families prior to entering prekindergarten or kindergarten" and the development of a public report card for each district and school that includes an early childhood component.
	Preschool Special Education: Early Childhood Direction Centers (ECDCs) And Parent Centers	Preschool special education provides educational and therapeutic services to children with disabilities 3-5 years of age. The 14 ECDCs provide information about programs and services for young children, ages birth through five, including preschool programs, transportation, medical, educational, and social services, evaluation and assessment services, funding, parent education programs and resources, and the state's early intervention system. There are 13 Special Education Parent Centers which provide parents of children with disabilities with information, resources, and strategies to promote their meaningful involvement in their children’s education programs.
	Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES)	There are 36 BOCES across the state. Services vary by the BOCES: over half provide child care, vocational education for high school students in ECE, and some offer professional development for staff and other programs in the community.
	Even Start Family Literacy	Even Start Family Literacy promotes family literacy in low-income families with children 7 years old or younger by encouraging families to participate in adult education, early childhood education, parent education and parent and child interactive literacy activities to improve the academic achievement of the children and parents.

	Educational Television and Public Broadcasting Ready to Learn	Public broadcasting provides television and web-based programming aimed at building reading skills at home, at school, in child care, and in the community.
Department of Health	Early Intervention Program	The Early Intervention program provides services to infants and toddlers (0-2) with disabilities and their families, including: family education and counseling, home visits, and parent support groups , special instruction , speech pathology and audiology ,occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological services ,service coordination, nursing services , nutrition services, social work services, vision services, and assistive technology devices and services.
	Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings	Eat Well Play Hard provides information and activities in child care settings to food stamp eligible pre-school children and families about nutrition and physical activities.
	Maternal and Child Health--Home Visiting	Maternal and Child Health--Home Visiting provides Pre-natal and Post partum home visiting delivered by local health departments and other community organizations.
	Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	CACFP provides reimbursement for food costs, as well as, training and technical assistance in menu planning for participating centers, family child care providers and group child
	NAP SACC--Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care	NAP SACC provides information and activities to support obesity prevention in child care settings by improving nutrition and physical activity environments, policies and practices.
Council on Children & Families (CCF)	Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)	The ECAC provides support for the implementation of QUALITYstarsNY, among other priorities and activities.
	Head Start Collaboration Project	The Head Start Collaboration Project supports efforts to build partnerships among Head Start and other ECE programs through a range of activities designed to build high quality comprehensive supports and services for young children and their families.
	Early Childhood Comprehensive System Initiative (ECCS)	ECCS provides multiple strategies for establishing a comprehensive system of services for young children and their families including improving access to health care, meeting mental health needs, expanding parent education programs, and establishing a system of early identification and home visiting services for vulnerable families.
	Project LAUNCH	Project LAUNCH provides education on mental health services and linkages for children 0-5 for Primary Care health practitioners.

NYS Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER)	NYS Worksite Child Care	NYS Worksite Child Care provides information to state employees about availability of child care and Dependent Care Assistance and training and technical assistance to a network of 37 early care and education centers which give enrollment priority to children of state employees.
	Dependent Care Advantage Accounts	Dependent Care Advantage Accounts provide NYS employees with a contribution of \$300-800 and a pre-tax deduction to pay for dependent care, including child care and after-school care. Awards are based on income.
Multi-Agency Collaborations	Healthy Families New York (HFNY)	HFNY provides home visiting support and brings services to first time high risk mothers of children 0-2 through the collaboration of state, local, private, and publicly funded primary prevention home visiting programs affiliated with each other and with Healthy Families America (HFA).
	NYS Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP)	NYSPEP enhances the provision of parenting education, skills, knowledge and behavior through a network of 65 agencies, organizations and individuals.
NYC Administration for Children's Services	EarlyLearnNYC	EarlyLearnNYC provides subsidies, technical assistance and monitoring for centers and family child care and Head Start. Provides training and TA to contracted Head Start and Child Care Programs.
NYC Department of Education	Office of Early Childhood Education	The Office of Early Childhood Education provides pre-kindergarten programs for 4 year olds in public schools and community based programs within the 5 Boroughs of NY. Includes NYC Early Literacy Learning (NYCELL) for 1-3 yr. olds.
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene	Bureau of Child Care	The Bureau of Child Care provides licensing and registration for centers, group family childcare, family child care and school age care in New York City. Provides referral information for parents and information for child care providers on regulations and basic health and safety training.
City University of New York (CUNY)	Campus-based Child Care Centers at CUNY campuses	CUNY provides child care to students at 19 two- and four-year public colleges in New York City. Also provides work experience for students studying ECE at colleges where there are programs.
	NYC Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (NYCEPDI)	NYCEPDI provides education and training, career development services, and early childhood education resources and engages in research and public policy including the development of a workforce development registry, a trainer's credential and the revision of the core body of knowledge. Administers the QUALITYstarsNY Field Test.

Office of Head Start	Head Start/Early Head Start	Head Start and Early Head Start programs provide early child development and parent education services to 48,013 children low-income infants and toddlers and their families in NYS through a mix of home- and center-based care. Services include quality early education; home visits; parent education, including parent-child activities; comprehensive health services, including services to women before, during, and after pregnancy; nutrition; and case management and peer support groups for parents.
NYS Department of Agriculture & Markets	Agri-Business Child Development Program	Agri-Business Child Development program provides comprehensive child care for 17,000 children of migrant workers under Head Start guidelines through 13 directly owned and operated child care centers and centers owned by other entities. Program does site visits for health, nutrition, education, disability/mental health & family/parent partnerships.

Appendix 4.

RESOURCES AND GUIDE TO FUTURE ALIGNMENT OF PROGRAMS TO QUALITYstarsNY

Each program has been subjectively rated on a scale of 1-5—with one ✓ designating potential for minor/modest alignment and ✓✓✓✓✓ designating potential for highly active/significant alignment. The rating is based on the tenor of the interviews and the structure/characteristics of each program in relation to the structure and elements of QUALITYstarsNY.

<i>Name of Program</i>	<i>Major Agency</i>	<i>Approx. Annual Funding (if known)</i>	<i>Training and TA</i>	<i>Outreach to Parents</i>	<i>Outreach to Practitioners</i>	<i>Outreach to Programs</i>	<i>Direct Services to Children and Families</i>
Child Care subsidy	OCFS	\$800 M		✓✓✓✓✓			✓✓✓✓✓
Licensing & Registration		\$50 M	✓✓✓✓✓			✓✓✓✓✓	
CCR&R agencies		\$18 M	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	
NYS Early Care & Learning Council		\$1 M	✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	
Infant Toddler Resource Centers		\$1 M	✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	
Professional Development Program		\$5 M	✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	
Education Incentive Program (scholarships)		\$9 M			✓✓✓✓✓		
SUNY Campus-based Child Care	SUNY		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Children’s Centers in the Courts	OCA	\$3 M	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓			✓✓✓✓✓
Universal Prekindergarten	SED	\$395 M	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Race to the Top (Early Learning Priority)		\$<1 M				✓✓✓✓✓	
Preschool Special Education: EC Direction Centers & Parent Centers		\$5 M		✓✓✓✓✓		✓✓✓	

Name of Program	Major Agency	Approx. Annual Funding (if known)	Training and TA	Outreach to Parents	Outreach to Practitioners	Outreach to Programs	Direct Services to Children and Families
Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES)			✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Even Start		\$5 M	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Educational TV and Public Broadcasting			✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Early Intervention Program	DOH	\$700 M	✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings		\$3 M	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Maternal and Child Health Home Visiting		\$4 M		✓✓✓✓			✓✓✓✓
Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP)		\$180 M	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	
NAP SACC		\$87,000	✓✓		✓✓	✓✓✓✓	
Early Childhood Advisory Council	CCF	\$1.8 M			✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	
Head Start Collaboration Project		\$225,000	✓✓		✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	
Early Childhood Comprehensive System Initiative		\$140,000			✓✓	✓✓	
Project LAUNCH		\$850,000		✓✓✓			
NYS Worksite Child Care	GOER		✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Dependent Care Advantage Accounts		\$4 M		✓✓✓			
Healthy Families New York	various	\$23 M		✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	
NYS Parenting Education Partnership	various	\$245,000		✓✓✓	✓✓✓		
EarlyLearnNYC	NYC	\$600 M	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
NYC DOE Early Education		\$300 M	✓✓✓		✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓

Name of Program	Major Agency	Approx. Annual Funding (if known)	Training and TA	Outreach to Parents	Outreach to Practitioners	Outreach to Programs	Direct Services to Children and Families
CUNY Campus-based Child Care			✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
NYC Early Childhood Professional Development Institute			✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	
Head Start /Early Head Start grantees	federal	\$440 M	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Agri-Business Child Development Program	federal and state	\$17 M	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓