

**Burlington Beginnings: A White Paper on a Comprehensive, Coordinated
Sustainable Early Learning Initiative**

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Introduction

Are all of Burlington's children on the path to a healthy and prosperous future? Compelling scientific research into the brain development of infants and young children shows that the early years of a child's life are critical to developing the skills necessary to become a thriving adult. A lack of household economic resources is the single largest indicator for a host of poor childhood educational and health outcomes. Historic approaches to the fight against poverty are not working; in the United States, we haven't succeeded in reducing multi-generational poverty or truly meeting the shifting needs of working families in a changing marketplace. Furthermore, reduced government funding has put an added strain on our social service sector to support low and moderate-income children and their families.

There are compelling economic arguments for communities to re-examine how they allocate resources to fight poverty, educate a workforce and create a strong and healthy citizenry. James J. Heckman, Professor of Economics at University of Chicago and Nobel Laureate, notes "what's missing in the current debate over economic inequality is enough serious discussion about investing in effective early childhood development from birth to

Improving the early environments of disadvantaged children is a promising way to reduce inequality."
-Prof. James J. Heckman

age 5. This is not a big government boondoggle policy that would require a huge redistribution of wealth. Acting on it would, however, require us to rethink long-held notions of how we develop productive people and promote shared prosperity."¹

Through a **scholarship approach to early education**, we can strengthen Burlington's future by providing our youngest with a healthy start:

- focusing on brain development;
- building the skills and capacity of adult caregivers (both family members and care providers) to help reduce adversity in the lives of children;
- supporting high quality early education and care programs; and
- continuing to support families as their children grow.

In other communities around the country, access to high quality early care and education has proven to be an effective means not only of educating children, but of counteracting some of the toxic stresses that children and families experience when living in strained financial circumstances. The research is longitudinal and compelling. Heckman cites the Perry Preschool Project (1962-67) and the Carolina Abecedarian (ABC) Project (1972-77) as two studies that focused on parent education and teaching cognitive and non-cognitive skills to very young children as well as providing health care (ABC Project). Outcomes were measured and analyzed for 4 decades after the children left the programs.

¹ James J. Heckman, "Lifelines for Poor Children", *New York Times*, Sept 14, 2013.
http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/09/14/lifelines-for-poor-children/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_php=true&_type=blogs&hp&r=3

While Perry participants did not see lasting I.Q. gains, “it did boost character skills that produced better education, economic and life outcomes.”² The ABC Project had a greater impact on I.Q.; this with improved parenting practices and child attachment helped participants achieve higher levels of education and more skilled employment. “Most dramatic were ABC’s effects on lifelong health. Now, over 30 years later, those treated in ABC have lower blood pressure, lower abdominal obesity, less hypertension and less likelihood of metabolic syndrome and cardiovascular conditions as adults. This evidence clearly shows the power of quality early childhood programs for producing flourishing people with healthier lives, which increases productivity and lowers health care costs.”³

A comprehensive, coordinated approach to Burlington’s early education and care system will lead to a more prosperous, healthier and sustainable community. The City of Burlington can play an important role in ensuring every child has a healthy start.

The Problem

Despite a robust network of service organizations and supportive programming in Burlington, we have not been able to break the cycle of poverty that so many families live in for generations.

Burlington Children Living with Insufficient Resources, 2008-2012

Poverty Measure	% or # of Children	Notes
Federal Poverty Level Estimate	35%	Conservative estimates are that greater than 35% of the young children in the city live in poverty. ⁴
Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility (FRL)	55%	Families in the Burlington School District (BSD) qualify based on income, meaning they are living at or below 180% of the federal poverty line. ⁵
Children in households with limited economic resources	2000-2500	Children between the ages of 0 and 18 make up 12% of Burlington’s population.

Research-based test cases have shown that supporting quality care and early experience gives children the strong foundation they need for learning when they enter Kindergarten.

² Heckman, “Lifelines for Poor Children”, *New York Times*, Sept 14, 2013.

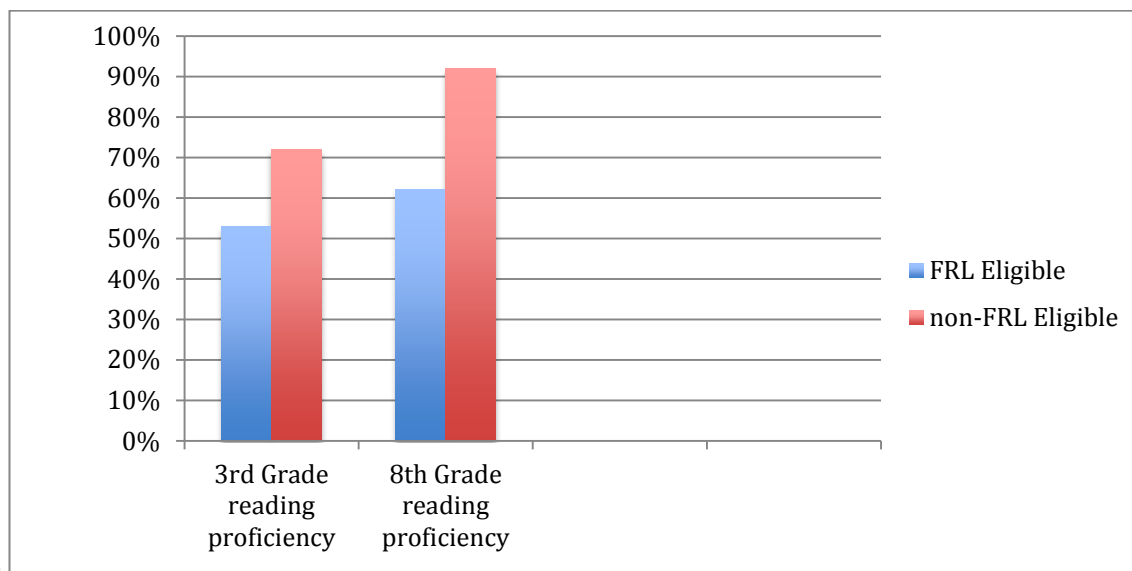
³ Heckman, “Lifelines”.

⁴ According to the American Community Survey Data from the US Census Bureau (2008-12), 26% of Burlington residents live below the federal poverty line. When those numbers are adjusted to account for university students living in off-campus housing, the community-wide poverty rate drops to 16%. However, the percentage of children ages 0-18 living in poverty is much higher: “*The Role of College Students in Burlington’s Poverty Rate*”, L. Black-Plumeau, Research and Communications Coordinator, Vermont Housing Finance Authority, July 14, 2014.

⁵ A family of 4 qualified for reduced-price lunch in 2013-14 if their annual income was below \$43,580. A very small number of children receive reduced-price lunch—the vast majority qualifies for free lunch.
http://education.vermont.gov/documents/EDU-Child_Nutrition_Eligibility_Report.pdf

With continued support, this healthy start prepares them to meet important learning benchmarks including 3rd grade reading proficiency. Unfortunately, across the US, socio-economic status plays a prominent role in a child’s school readiness and her subsequent academic proficiencies as measured by math and literacy achievement tests in 3rd and 8th grade. Vermont and Burlington are not exceptions to that trend. While the data are incomplete for the 2013 VT Kindergarten Readiness Survey, initial interpretation shows that fewer than 50% of Burlington Kindergartners surveyed were deemed ready to learn across all 5 domains surveyed.⁶ Our NECAP scores are even starker, with the disparity between those who qualify for FRL and those who do not growing wider at 8th grade.

Percentage of BSD Students Demonstrating Grade-level Reading Proficiency based on 2013-14 NECAP scores



Importantly, of the 320 Burlington children who are eligible for state subsidy through the Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP), **only 142—or 44%—attend a high quality program.**⁷ (See Appendix I for a breakdown by program type and town). Burlington’s childhood poverty data indicates there is a population of very low income children not receiving subsidy who are even less likely to be receiving high quality early childhood education because they are not connected with an intentional program that helps refer them to resources, child care providers or family service agencies.

⁶ “Kindergarten teachers around the state were asked to complete a Kindergarten Readiness Survey (KRS) for each of their students during the fall of 2013. The KRS consists of 30 items across the domains of “Social and Emotional Development,” “Approaches to Learning,” “Communication,” “Cognitive Development and General Knowledge,” and “Physical Development and Wellness.” The teacher rates each child’s skills as either “beginning”, “practicing” or “performing independently” on the first 27 items and judges if hunger, illness, or fatigue inhibit the child’s learning on the last three items. The KRS is not a direct assessment of children; rather it relies on the accumulated observational knowledge the teacher has developed about the child during the first few weeks of kindergarten.” http://education.vermont.gov/documents/EDU-Kindergarten_Readiness_Report_2013_2014_Burlington.pdf (p.1)

⁷ Source is Elizabeth Meyer at Child Care Resource, August 6, 2014.

Key Findings: Burlington

From February through July of 2014, we researched the early childhood system in Burlington by conducting a data review and extensive interviews with policy makers and providers. We also convened and facilitated 3 stakeholder meetings on behalf of the Mayor and with support from the United Way of Chittenden County to initiate a collective impact conversation with those working in and funding ECE in Burlington. Over 60 stakeholders participated in the 3 meetings that encouraged a Results Based Accountability approach, solicited feedback about a St. Paul Scholarship model and heard from former Mayor David Pope about the efforts in Oak Park, IL to create a coordinated early education system. (For a full list of stakeholders invited to and participating in this process, see Appendix X.) While this investigation was not able to engage as many parents or informal care providers as we would have liked in order to understand fully the capacity and needs in our community, the historical perspective and asset/gap analysis the stakeholders brought to the table was critical to our findings.

While we have many excellent early education and care providers in and around Burlington, we found that high quality childcare and education isn't accessible to our families who struggle economically because of:

- a shortage of spots, especially for infants and toddlers;
- inability to cover the cost of tuition;
- insufficient transportation; and
- a state subsidy program that is a complex system, doesn't meet the scope of need, and is not always a consistent or easily accessible form of assistance.

Furthermore, not all eligible families are accessing VT Education Fund money (formerly through Act 62; soon to be Act 166) that pays for 10 hours of early education and care in a qualified BSD preschool or community partner program. We believe this is due both to insufficient recruitment of and a lack of awareness by families.

Early childhood providers report frustrations with being able to retain children in their programs (either because families move or lose their childcare subsidy), the lack of space and money to expand their programs, and the inability to cover their costs—or in some cases to charge a true cost tuition, even to families with means. As one childcare provider says, “it’s a bad business plan.”

Our delivery system needs better coordination during the early years and beyond, we should be using consistent measurements to support improvements to our system, and we need to raise awareness about child development and the importance of high quality early care and education.

The Solution: Burlington Early Learning Initiative

Early brain development lays the groundwork for strong academic, workforce and community life later. By investing in the early years, we should see indicative positive outcomes as early as entrance to Kindergarten and in 3rd grade. Our near-term goal, then,

should be to ensure that all 5 year-olds enter Kindergarten with the skills, knowledge and support they need to capitalize on Kindergarten learning opportunities and that all 3rd graders in Burlington are reading at (or above) a 3rd grade level in 3rd grade. In order to reach this goal, we need to:

- provide support for parents through mentoring and education;
- make high quality early care and education more accessible and affordable;
- increase capacity in our early childhood system, especially for ages 0-3;
- provide increased support for providers and programs; and
- create continuity in our system that allows us to follow and support children and their families as they grow.

National, State and Local Efforts Support Recommendations

National models are yielding promising results by providing comprehensive educational approaches to economic and community development. The Harlem Children's Zone, created by Geoffrey Canada, has become the model for President Obama's Promise Neighborhood grant program to support local cradle to career initiatives. Current research suggests that providing youth a healthy start to prepare for the future requires a community-wide, coordinated constellation of services and supports beginning before a child is born and continuing until he is grown. Burlington's Early Learning Initiative (the Initiative) will be most successful if considered in this context, both in terms of garnering resources and long term, sustained success.

Early education and care is the right place to start. Brain research in the early years is informing policy and funding decisions at federal, state and local levels. In 2013, Governor Shumlin unveiled his Early Childhood Framework and Action Plan. This year, the state was awarded a \$37 million federal Early Learning Race to the Top Challenge Grant that supports systems-level change with a small portion of sub-grants set aside for innovative pilot programs. Building Bright Futures (BBF) has been designated as the Governor's partner agency in managing the grant and coordinating the Action Plan work around the state through regional councils. Additionally, three of Vermont's major philanthropic entities have launched Let's Grow Kids, a public awareness campaign designed to address brain development and the importance of high quality learning in the early years.

Vermont moved ahead of many states in establishing an early childhood education (ECE) rating system to indicate quality. Providers may apply to The Step Ahead Recognition System (VT STARS) program and are assessed in 5 areas:

- Compliance with state regulations;
- Staff qualifications and training;
- Support of children, families and communities;
- Provider assessment and plan for improvements; and
- Strength of operating policies and business practices.

A 4 or 5-STAR rating denotes a high quality program. Coordinated by the Child Development Division of the Agency of Human Services, a program's STAR rating can

determine whether families qualify for state education funding for tuition and child care tax credits. Incentives exist for providers to apply for STARS.⁸

Mayors and municipalities are also looking for ways to support high quality early learning opportunities. San Antonio, Indianapolis and Memphis County mayors have been recognized for their efforts to create community-wide approaches despite diverse political affiliation and regional contexts. Community leaders have played a role in shifting the dialogue about quality early education from moral imperative to economic necessity. Economists like James Heckman and Art Rolnick have reframed the conversation to consider a long-term return on investment that has influenced thinking in both the public and private sectors. Rolnick, a professor at University of Minnesota who formerly served at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minnesota championed early education as an economic development tool.

Low income children living in St Paul, MN benefited from Rolnick's work with the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation (MELF) in a pilot program that supported low-income parents of young children to advocate for high quality care and education settings. From 2008-2011, the St Paul program focused on a cohort of approximately 650 children in 3 high-poverty neighborhoods and resulted in impressive improvement in Kindergarten readiness as well as both increased capacity and quality of St Paul's ECE system. Parents and providers alike were pleased with the ease and efficacy of the pilot. The program included a combination of parent mentoring, early learning scholarships, and a quality rating system for programs and providers. (A summary of the St Paul program is detailed in Appendix II).

The return on investment in high quality early education and care, Heckman and Rolnick argue, is at least \$7:1—maybe as high as \$16:1. Therefore early learning is one of the best public investments that communities can make.

The St Paul market-driven scholarship program has become an important example of public-private partnerships in evidence-based community development work. St Paul can provide valuable information and data in our analysis; there are elements of the program that could meet Burlington's unique needs and bolster our strengths. Key elements recommended for the Burlington Early Learning Initiative include:

- Parent mentoring through home visiting;
- Scholarships for high quality early care and preschool; and
- Research and evaluation.

The City of Saint Paul included the Scholarship Program as part of its larger education initiative and provided leadership and coordination. Following the success of the MELF scholarship program the Minnesota legislature approved \$40 million in funding for early learning scholarships across the state. Mayor Betsy Hodges of Minneapolis established a Youth Cabinet with a pre-natal to age 3 focus and has adapted the St Paul program to

⁸ <http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/stars/>

connect home visiting nurses with school nurses in order to provide continuity to families once their children reach school age.

Burlington: Early Learning Landscape

The St Paul Early Childhood Scholarship Program offers insight into both the strengths and the shortcomings of our own current ECE system. If we overlay St Paul’s program on Burlington, we see the following pieces are currently in place:

Home Visiting—Several agencies provide some type of home visitation based upon specific criteria and need. The following chart describes the major home visiting programs currently available in Burlington.

Home Visiting Offered to Families Who Demonstrate Certain Level of Need

Agency	# Children (7/1/13-6/30/14)	Services
Visiting Nurse Association of Chittenden County (VNA)	310 (Burlington)	Maternal and child health home visits by nurses to mothers beginning during pregnancy and extending through age 6 (into the child’s Kindergarten year; if there is a medical need, home visits can continue into adulthood). Eligible families are considered high risk by Chittenden Children’s Integrated Services (CIS) and are living with multiple stressors. The VNA’s multidisciplinary team approach strives to offer parents information and support to help maximize each child’s physical and social/emotional development. The VNA serves both Chittenden and Grand Isle Counties, but the majority of their home visits are delivered in Burlington and Winooski.
Lund Center	54 (Chittenden County)	Social Worker home visit, if unable to travel to center. Referred by physicians, schools, social service agencies, faith community or self. Screened by CIS.
Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Child Health)	38 (Chittenden County)	Designed to promote child wellness through a the 5-year grant (currently in its second year) Project LAUNCH ⁹ uses the Parents as Teachers curriculum for evidence-based home visiting as one of its strategies. ¹⁰ Visits are provided for families with children ages 0-age 8 in Chittenden County. Project LAUNCH funds 1 FTE home visitor each at Lund . The VNA provides its LAUNCH-funded services at the VNA Family Room.
Howard Center & Vermont Family Network		Services may be provided for children with special needs—research into this area was beyond the scope of this investigation.

Early Education and Care: Capacity—There are a number of different kinds of care and education options for families in Burlington: center-based, home-based, school-based and informal (unregistered) care. However, the total number of spots does not meet the

⁹ http://cdn.buildingbrightfutures.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/BBF_VERMONT_LAUNCH-copy.pdf. Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Child Health) is a grant-funded initiative with authority shared jointly by Building Bright Futures Council, the Department of Health Division of Maternal and Child Health and the Department of Mental Health’s Division of Child, Adolescent and Family Services. It is designed to promote child wellness in all domains; the grant also funds social workers at the Community Health Center and University Pediatrics Immigrant and Refugee Clinic.

¹⁰ <http://www.parentsasteachers.org/>. This home visiting curriculum was used in the St Paul Scholarship Program.

demand—nor are all the options considered high quality. The following chart illustrates capacity in registered programs in the city of Burlington

Ages, Schedule, and Daily Capacity by Type of Program¹¹

Type of Program	Number of programs	Ages served	Schedule offered	Daily child capacity
Center-based	9	Infant to age 5; sometimes to age 12	Full day/Full week; other options may be offered.	473
Family Child Care (home-based)	41	Infant to age 5; sometimes to age 12	Full day/Full week; other options may be offered	289
Private Preschool	5	3-5	Full day/full week	238
Private Preschool	2	3-5	School day/full week	45
Private Preschool	3	3-5	Half day or less/full or part week	78
Public Preschool (BSD)	5	3-5	Half day or less/full or part week	*102 ¹² (51 per half day)
Total	65			1,225

Registration of a childcare program does not denote a high quality STARS rating. Of the 41 registered family child care programs (also referred to as home-based child care programs), only 2 have high quality recognition status and only 1 is able to offer Act 62 Pre-K funding to families (see *Early Education and Care: Cost*, below).

It is also important to note that while the chart indicates 1,225 childcare spots in the city, those are not all full-time or year-round spots. The 2010 Census counted 1,739 children under age 5 living in Burlington. In addition, ECE programs and providers serve the greater Burlington area, not exclusively Burlington children. Even accounting for families who choose not to send their children to childcare or preschool, our capacity does not meet our demand. Families report being on multiple waiting lists for spots and sometimes waiting years for one to open up.

Hardest to quantify is the capacity in informal care settings that many families are compelled to seek for their children. Anecdotally, patching together a network of care is a common experience for Burlington’s working parents, especially those with infants and toddlers—and it is a continual, stressful and expensive prospect.

¹¹ Data and graphics provided by Elizabeth Meyer, Child Care Resource, April 2014. emeyer@childcareresource.org

¹² Burlington School District reports 120 children enrolled in their preschool programs in the 2013-14 school year. Source: Diana Langston, Director of Early Education at BSD.

Early Education and Care: Cost—Multiple sources help fund our current ECE system. However, even when they are layered, they do not meet the need for subsidy for families, cover the true cost of existing programs, nor provide critical funding for necessary expansion and quality improvements. Several of these funding sources do not apply to families with more than the most limited means. More details about each of the following sources can be found in Appendix III.

Current Funding Mechanisms for ECE

Federal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head Start: serves 114 children ages 3-4. • Early Head Start: serves 10 children ages 0-3. • Agency: Champlain Valley Head Start (CVHS) <p>Eligible children receive a comprehensive package of services including health supports and family service supports as well as early education and care in both school-based (no tuition charged) and center-based (tuition) programs.</p>
State Agency of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act 62/166—Universal pre-K • Agency: BSD <p>State Education Fund money pays for preschool tuition up to 10 hours/week (for 35 weeks/year) for all 3 & 4 year-olds in BSD preschools or one of 31 community partner programs (must have 4-5 STAR rating).¹³</p>
State Agency of Human Services, Dept of Children & Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) • Agency: Child Care Resource <p>Also known as childcare subsidy. Children are eligible from 6 weeks to 13 years old. Of the 323 Burlington children receiving CCFAP in 2014, 157 (almost half) are enrolled in programs in other towns. Note: if a Head Start eligible child is enrolled in a tuition-charging program, she may also be able to receive CCFAP subsidy.</p>
Local Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gifts & Grants <p>In the shortage of federal, state or tuition-based funds to support our already limited capacity, the philanthropic community, including the United Way of Chittenden County, foundations, banks, businesses and private donors are increasingly stepping up to try to fill the gap.</p>
Local Public (City)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Development Block Grants (CDBG—federal) • Mayor’s Regional Program Funds (local)
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuition • Family Contribution • Informal care

Research and Evaluation—VT STARS is widely accepted as an option (or in addition) to national accreditation through National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Subsidy amounts, tax credits and Act 166 reimbursement for families are linked to how many STARS their child’s program has. 20 out of 24 center-based programs in

¹³ The State of Vermont has recently applied for a federal pre-K Expansion Grant that would fund the expansion of preschool spots to full-time for 4 yo’s living below 200% of poverty level. BSD has partnered with the State in the competitive grant application; awards to be announced in mid-December, 2014.

Burlington are highly rated and/or accredited. One question that should be explored is how our STAR system criteria compare to St Paul's Parent Aware ratings, and how well they are understood by the community.

Current data collection takes on many forms, including: federal funding accountability reports with health and wellness indicators; Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework reports including “what are we doing; how well are we doing it; and are we better off” metrics; CIS at-risk screenings; Teaching Strategies Gold assessments; State of Vermont Kindergarten Readiness Survey; BBF statewide database to include Race to the Top outcomes; UVM's Vermont Center for Children, Youth & Families indicators; and K-12 standardized tests such as the New England Common Assessment Practice soon to be replaced by the Smarter Balanced Test. A more thorough treatment of indicators, assessments and accountability measurements can be found in Appendix IV.

Burlington Early Learning Initiative: The Pilot

How will we improve outcomes for Burlingtonians? Mentoring for all parents and a market-driven scholarship program for children in low-income families is a critical piece of the answer. While we do many things well to serve young children in Burlington, we have

The tension remains, however: how do we make sure those most in need are getting the appropriate support?

yet to take a comprehensive approach—nor have we attempted to provide universal services beyond public education and partial pre-K subsidy. The argument that a universal program is the way to ensure that you have everyone invested in the process is a compelling one. And while socio-economic status is clearly a factor, there are many families, no matter their income level, who struggle with parenting and educating their young children.

A geographic pilot program (the Pilot) can resolve this tension. By focusing on all children living in a certain neighborhood or zone within the city, we can ensure that we provide universal coverage for home visiting and meet the needs of a significant number of struggling families. By choosing 3 mixed-income neighborhood zones in the city where families with young children live and where programs and services may exist currently, we can create a beta test for what a city-wide initiative might look like across geographical and economic sectors.

The Pilot should include:

Home visiting: prenatal to age 8—The home visiting part of the program should be offered to every pregnant mother and new parent or guardian living in the Pilot zones. The Initiative could contract with existing home visiting agencies but should add a module that incorporates information about brain development and parent mentoring about what is high quality early education and care—and how to advocate for it—as well as a list of enrichment opportunities (playgroups, parenting resources, museums, libraries, early education programs, etc.). Self-advocacy has been shown to be an important component of the success in the Minnesota model. Universal home visiting will allow the Initiative to

make contact with the greatest number of parents and babies, assess their needs, make referrals where necessary and determine the “dosage” of home visiting that each family needs. It will serve as an effective recruiting tool for families eligible for the scholarship portion of the program, and should continue for all families (at the determined appropriate dosage) after the child enters Kindergarten—until age 8 if feasible. Potential home visiting partners are listed in Appendix V.

Scholarships for high quality early education and care: infancy through preschool—

Participating families who have an annual income less than or equal to 185% of the federal poverty level¹⁴ should have the opportunity to enroll their children (starting in infancy, if the need exists and the parents choose) in a high quality program for at least 12 and up to 35 hours/week, year-round. The Initiative scholarship fund will cover the gap in cost between any CCFAP subsidy the family may receive and the full cost of the program or tuition set by the program, with a guarantee that the scholarship amount will be adjusted so the full tuition will be paid if subsidy is lost or reduced during the year. As in the St Paul Scholarship program, the formula should allow for additional funds to go to the programs in the form of a quality improvement grant. Any type of registered program (home-based, center-based, school-based, Early Head Start or Head Start) with a 4 or 5 STAR rating should be eligible to accept scholarship students. School-based and Head Start programs, which do not charge tuition to families, will not receive scholarship money but should receive quality improvement grants or other grants to support high quality work (e.g. ELL teachers for preschool). Scholarships should follow the child, should guarantee placement of that child for the full year no matter their subsidy eligibility status and should be administered by the Initiative. Programs outside of pilot zones and/or the City of Burlington should be eligible as long as the enrolled child lives in one of the Pilot zones.¹⁵ Potential scholarship partners are detailed in Appendix VI.

*Measurement—*It will be important to make sure that the Pilot and other phases of the Initiative are having the impact that we expect and creating the outcomes we have selected as our goals. Kindergarten readiness is a nationally accepted benchmark, as is 3rd grade reading proficiency, but we must ensure that the tools we are using are measuring the right things. Ease of use for children, parents and programs is also important. The Initiative should examine current assessments and standards and decide if they meet needs and criteria. Important measurement partners are included in Appendix VI.

*Cradle to Career Framework as second phase—*The Pilot program focuses on the early years, but a larger, longitudinal framework and approach will allow us to follow and support children beyond the start of Kindergarten, through the important 3rd grade year, into middle and high school, and beyond. Without an initial focus on the long-term outcomes we

¹⁴ This income qualification level was chosen because it is in line with BSD’s Free and Reduced-price lunch eligibility criteria, making for ease of data gathering. If funding and need both exist, the Initiative should consider raising the eligibility level to 200% of federal poverty line.

¹⁵ For purposes of the Pilot, it may be most effective to partner with several active and comprehensive programs initially, expanding the scope of eligible programs as the Initiative grows.

want, we will lack the coordinated effort to achieve our goals. The Initiative should examine StriveTogether¹⁶ as an excellent national model for a cradle-to-career framework.

Burlington Early Learning Initiative Pilot Implementation—Structures

Several critical steps have been taken toward implementation already. With the creation of a Mayor’s Task Force on Early Learning (the Task Force), we have a structure that can continue the investigation, set goals for the Initiative and the Pilot, create a sustainable governance structure and timeline, generate political will, design and oversee the implementation of the Pilot, and steer efforts to fund the Pilot program and the transition into meeting the long-term goals of the Initiative. The Task Force should be broadly representative and include providers, parents, educators, community partners, funders, policy makers, advocates and City staff. The Task Force could continue to serve in an advisory role well after the launch of the Pilot.

Fundraising will be an important role of the Task Force—important enough to warrant forming a subcommittee; members should be tapped from the business community, the philanthropic community and leadership of United Way of Chittenden County or other prominent partner organizations. This group needs to understand the market-driven nature of the scholarship program and be able to act as the bridge between policy-makers, funders and providers.

The Task Force should be free-standing but act as a point of connection between the City, Burlington Schools and the community—and should work closely with all entities and partners. One of the roles of the Task Force should be to consider what kind of backbone organization will be needed to move the Pilot into the next phase of implementation by:

- administering scholarships;
- ensuring eligible programs maintain their quality ratings;
- centralizing a city-wide waiting list for early education programs;
- acting as a resource for families moving into the city;
- collecting Burlington-specific data and tracking outcomes;
- maintaining Burlington’s connection with the State and national early education community; and
- exploring the potential for a cradle-to-career framework.

Some of these functions and roles might be performed by the existing organization Child Care Resource. Others might more appropriately fall within the City or other entity.

Burlington Early Learning Pilot Implementation—Funding

Funding a comprehensive early learning initiative with a home visiting component as well as a scholarship program will take a collaborative, collective and creative approach to the financial plan. We will need to muster our resources and create the political will to take

¹⁶ <http://www.strivetogether.org/>

reasonable risks. For too long, the business of early childhood education has operated on a bad business model. We have an opportunity to change that.

The authors of the *Hartford Blueprint for Young Children* (2005) dispelled the myth that services for children necessarily live in a moral imperative universe.¹⁷ By focusing on a market-driven approach, we shift the conversation about fighting poverty from a service-provision orientation to one that empowers and educates children

and their families *and* is set in an accepted economic framework. The RBA approach allows us to determine that funds are going to programs and activities proven to work and achieve desired outcomes. It will be crucial that we use our existing funds wisely, that any new funds brought to the initiative layer rather than supplant others, and that we frame our financial thinking in the language of investment.

“The loose and informal network of services affecting young children [in Hartford] is a \$106 million business; it is not a cottage industry. *This kind of investment demands a more unified way to set public policy, to assure expenditures are effective, and lead to positive outcomes for children*”

-Hartford Blueprint for Young Children

Initial funding for the Pilot phase should be primarily private money, although a commitment of federal and local resources allocated by the City will provide seed money as well as demonstrate the high priority of this Initiative. It may prove necessary to create a parallel funding structure through the Pilot years in order to assure that existing funding is not compromised and no services are disrupted. The Task Force should investigate setting up a collaborative funding structure as the Pilot transitions into a city-wide approach. A funding collaborative seems the most promising method to ensure a coordinated approach and collective impact, both. Funding could also be secured through public education dollars or health returns.

The Task Force will be charged with creating the Burlington-specific formula for the scholarship program that takes into account local market costs. The St Paul Program estimated their total cost to be close to \$10,000/child/year (with home visiting 0-6; scholarships ages 3-4 and quality improvement grants for programs). Using that figure as a benchmark, we calculate that we would need roughly \$1 million/year to serve all the children in Burlington ages 0-5 who would qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (below 180-200% of poverty level). Once the boundaries of the Pilot zones are determined and an accurate estimate of children living in those zones is made, the amount needed to fund the Pilot will be lower, even adjusted for universal home visiting and 0-5 scholarships.

Scholarship funding will be layered over:

- CCFAP subsidy if the family qualifies;
- Act 166 funds (likely \$3000/child/35 weeks) for all 3 or 4 year-olds; and
- pre-K Expansion Grant funds for eligible 4 year-olds.

¹⁷ <http://www.hartfordinfo.org/issues/documents/education/projectreportBlueprint.pdf>

A comprehensive list of promising, time-sensitive, and future funding sources to explore are provided in Appendix VII.

Burlington Early Learning Pilot Implementation—Timeline

<i>December 2014</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Name Task Force members and Announce Initiative</i>
<i>Dec 2014-Aug 2015</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Task Force meets to design details of implementation using RBA</i>
<i>Fall-Winter 2014</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Create Task Force sub-committee to drive the funding of the Pilot</i> • <i>Fundraising: private matching funds, startup funding</i> • <i>Public comment on pre-K expansion grant (State)?</i>
<i>Nov/Dec 2014</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Early Head Start expansion grant decision likely (would create 26 additional 0-3 spots in BTV)</i>
<i>Jan 2015</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CDBG grant application due</i> • <i>Mayor’s Regional Programs applications due</i>
<i>Jan-June 2015</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Design backbone organization that can sustain the work and drive future collaborations with the goal of a cradle-to-career framework.</i>
<i>Sept 2015</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pilot launches in 3 neighborhood zones: NNE; ONE; SE.</i>

Summary

The time is now for Burlington to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive, coordinated, early childhood initiative to ensure our children overcome the obstacles posed by insufficient economic resources and put our community on the path to prosperity. The early years of a child’s life are critical to developing the skills necessary to become a productive adult. In Burlington, being born to a family that lacks adequate economic resources should not pre-destine a youth to poor educational and health outcomes and limited opportunities.

Ensuring a prosperous future for all of Burlington’s residents is my top priority – this work must be rooted in providing all of our children with a healthy start.
 -Mayor Weinberger,
 Burlington, VT

A comprehensive Early Learning Initiative will provide value to Burlington in a number of ways. It provides both near term- and long-term economic development opportunities:

- increases quality and expands capacity of child care services;
- enhances professional development and improves skills in teaching work force;
- enables parents to enter the work force;
- attracts existing businesses looking for family-friendly environments;
- supports entrepreneurship and business start-ups;
- creates a better educated, more stable and productive workforce; and
- creates a healthier and more prosperous community.

Successful models throughout the U.S. point to a critical role for local leadership. As such, the Office of the Mayor can engage residents in the development of a Burlington Early Learning Initiative, share the brain research, outline the economic imperative, provide

support and make an impact critical to the success of the Pilot. (Further suggestions detailed in Appendix VIII).

James Heckman reminds us that “high-quality early childhood programs are great economic and social equalizers — they supplement the family lives of disadvantaged children by teaching consistent parenting and by giving children the mentoring,

encouragement and support available to functioning middle-class families.”¹⁸ By focusing on **parent mentoring** in combination with a **market-driven scholarship approach to early education**, we can we can strengthen Burlington’s future by providing our youngest with a healthy start.

“Education is my crime prevention strategy, my neighborhood development strategy, my workforce development strategy and my economic development strategy.”

-Mayor Coleman,
St Paul, MN

¹⁸ Heckman, “Lifelines for Poor Children”, *New York Times*, Sept 14, 2013.

Appendices

Appendix I: Number of Burlington Children Eligible for CCFAP: by Town and STAR Rating of Program

Provider Town	Type Of Care	Number of STARS	Number of Burlington Children
Burlington	Family Child Care	1	6
Colchester	Child Care Center	1	15
Essex	Child Care Center	1	9
Burlington	Family Child Care	2	8
Burlington	Preschool Program	2	1
Essex	Child Care Center	2	6
Milton	Family Child Care	2	1
South Burlington	Family Child Care	2	2
Colchester	Child Care Center	3	3
Essex Junction	Family Child Care	3	2
Shelburne	Child Care Center	3	2
Shelburne	Preschool Program	3	1
South Burlington	Child Care Center	3	4
South Burlington	Family Child Care	3	1
South Burlington	Preschool Program	3	1
Burlington	Child Care Center	4	12
Burlington	Child Care Center	5	45
Burlington	Preschool Program	5	39
Shelburne	Child Care Center	4	22
Shelburne	Child Care Center	5	1
South Burlington	Child Care Center	5	13
Williston	Child Care Center	4	6
Winooski	Child Care Center	5	4
Burlington	Child Care Center		4
Burlington	Family Child Care		34
Burlington	Preschool Program		17
Colchester	Child Care Center		13
Colchester	Family Child Care		2
Essex	Child Care Center		3
Milton	Child Care Center		3
South Burlington	Child Care Center		7
Williston	Child Care Center		3
Winooski	Family Child Care		6
Winooski	Preschool Program		1
Various places	Legally Exempt Provider		23

Total =320

Appendix II: The St Paul Early Childhood Scholarship Program

Piloted from 2008-2011 with a cohort of 650 children, the program consisted of the following elements:

Parent mentoring through home visiting. Enrolled families received visits starting before the birth of the child if possible and continuing until the child entered Kindergarten. The primary goal of home visiting was to build parent advocacy skills in lower income families in order to help them identify and access high quality education and care settings once their children were ready for preschool. Secondly, home visiting helped build parents' skills and knowledge to promote school readiness and provide access to community resources to support their family's education and health needs. MELF partnered with various agencies that were already delivering home visiting services, but provided a "what is high quality early education" module and the necessary support materials. MELF did extensive recruitment of families for the program.

Scholarships for high quality preschool. Once enrolled children turned 3, they received scholarships to attend high quality ECE programs for 12-35 hours/week. Eligible programs included community programs (both for- and not-for-profit), school-based programs, Head Start, and family childcare settings. Family eligibility was based on geography and income (185% of poverty level to qualify). The scholarships were financed through \$20M of private funds raised by MELF, and the formula allowed for the scholarships to finance the gap between MN state subsidy and the full cost of tuition. While scholarships were assigned to the child, the formula also allowed for quality improvement grants to be given to programs once tuition was met.

Research and evaluation. MELF spent 20% of the \$20M in funds raised on a research and evaluation system. The development of Parent Aware for School Readiness (PASR) provided a quality rating system, similar to Vermont's STARS, which helped families determine which preschools or in-home care providers met quality criteria.¹⁹ PASR appears to play a public engagement and awareness role in the Twin Cities still, continues to invest in research, and makes the MELF research available on its website.²⁰

MELF reported encouraging results from the St Paul Scholarship Program pilot:²¹

- Kindergarten readiness showed significant improvement based on incoming Kindergarten assessments; the most progress was found in early literacy and early math skills. Assessments also showed improvements in social skills and attention.
- Developmental trajectories improved significantly from age 3 to Kindergarten entry. St Paul conducted assessments each year the child was enrolled in the program.

¹⁹https://s3.amazonaws.com/Omnera/VerV/s3finder/38/pdf/Parent_Aware_Year_4_Final_Fact_Sheet_Dec_1_1.pdf

²⁰ <http://www.pasrmn.org/MELF/index>

²¹ https://s3.amazonaws.com/Omnera/VerV/s3finder/38/pdf/Scholarship_2008-2011Final_Summary.pdf

- By the end of 2011, MELF had collected data on 1100 children who had participated in MELF-supported programs. Through extensive partnerships with organizations in Minnesota, MELF intends to track the progress of children in their programs through 12th grade. Data on 3rd grade reading proficiency, a common early benchmark, will be available in 2016.²² Positive outcomes have translated into school improvement and reform efforts in three Midwestern states.²³
- MELF reports that the Scholarship Program not only increased ECE program capacity in the targeted St Paul neighborhoods, but also improved the quality of programs.
- Parents of children enrolled in the program reported:
 - the program was easy to use;
 - quality was the driving factor in their choice of an ECE setting for their child;
 - their children started school with the cognitive and social skills to take advantage of learning opportunities in Kindergarten; and
 - they wanted a Parent Aware stars rating to continue in grades K-3.²⁴

Appendix III: Funding Mechanisms

Head Start

Champlain Valley Head Start (CVHS) estimates its costs²⁵ on an annual per family basis at an average of: \$8,500 for Head Start and \$14,400 for Early Head Start²⁶. If a HS or EHS-eligible child is enrolled in a community (tuition-charging) program, Head Start pays the program a stipend to help cover the cost of educating that child. Stipends provide insufficient coverage related to costs, however Head Start provides in-kind support such as salary and benefits for a Family Care Advocate who works in the classroom alongside the teacher to help provide needed services and referrals to children and families.²⁷

Currently in Burlington, due to the limited funding available, there is insufficient school district and private pre-school capacity to enroll all Head Start and Early Head Start eligible families. Of the 124 families that CVHS serves, 30 of those children attend BSD preschools (an additional 10 potential spots will be opening at Flynn Elementary School next year). CVHS is in a competitive Early Head Start grant application process that—if awarded—

²² A feasibility report of a longitudinal progress study can be found at: <https://s3.amazonaws.com/Omnera/VerV/s3finder/38/pdf/MinnLinkSummaryFINAL.pdf>

²³ <http://humancapitalrc.org/midwestcpc/>

²⁴ Phone conversation with Art Rolnick, June 27th, 2014.

²⁵ Phone conversation with Paul Behrman, Executive Director Champlain Valley Head Start, July 24, 2014.

²⁶ Despite costs that are nearly twice as expensive, the federal government funds Early Head Start at a significantly lower level than Head Start.

²⁷ According to one partner program that provides preschool services to Early Head Start eligible children, the program receives a stipend of \$2,000/child/year for Early Head Start and less than \$1,000/child/year for Head Start spots.

would add 26 infant and toddler spots in Burlington, 16 of those are planned for King Street Center. Grant awards should be made by November or December of 2014.

Act 62/Act 166

In 2013-14, 286 preschoolers received Act 62 funds of \$2600/child/35 weeks. Set to start in September of 2016, Act 166 will replace Act 62, still providing 10 hours/week/35weeks. Under 166, the rate paid to community partner programs will now be set by the state and will be approximately \$3000/year/student. Under Act 62, families were selected by lottery if there was more demand than funding available for our district (this has not been the case in recent years). Because the pre-K funding applies universally, parents of preschoolers are not asked to report their family economic information.

Act 166 is a step in the right direction toward supporting pre-K costs, but it falls short of covering tuition and providing adequate hours, particularly for families with limited economic means. Nor does it cover the “true cost” of provider expenses for high quality early care and education. One criticism of the legislation is that Act 166 rules define “full time” pre-K as “at least 10 hours/week”, thus reducing incentive for school districts to offer more hours as it would impact local budgets significantly.

With only 286 preschoolers receiving 62/166 funds, we know we have not reached universal saturation (estimates are that there are 640 3 and 4 year-olds living in Burlington). This could be due to insufficient awareness of and recruitment to the program, insufficient capacity and high price of high quality settings, or parents choosing not to send their children to preschool.

Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP)

Low household income is one of the criteria to qualify for CCFAP. A family of 4 with a household income of \$47,700 receives the lowest percentage of subsidy (10%). To receive 100% subsidy, annual income for a family of 4 cannot exceed \$23,856. Full subsidy rates are for 2013-14 are:

- \$9,700/year for preschool;
- \$10,000 for toddlers; and
- \$10,700 for infants.

There are other restrictions on CCFAP eligibility as noted in the following chart showing the number of children eligible for subsidy and where they are enrolled:

CCFAP Eligible Burlington Children pre-K age (as of 2/11/2014) by Type of Program

A child’s eligibility depends upon a family’s service need. Parents must be employed, in an education or training program including Reach-up, have special health needs or other circumstances that indicate a risk of child abuse or neglect. The program must charge tuition to the general population.

Type of Program	Number enrolled	As Percent of Capacity	Percent of Eligible Children
Center-based	61	12.9%	18.8%
Family Child Care	48	16.6%	14.9%
Private Preschool – Full Day	44	18.5%	13.6%
Private Preschool – School Day	2	4.4%	.6%

Private Preschool – Half day or less	11	14.1%	3.4%
Public Preschool – Half day or less	0	N/A	0.0%
Total Enrolled in Burlington Program	166		51.4%
Enrolled in a program in another town	157		48.6%
Total	323 ²⁸		100.0%

Parents and providers alike report that CCFAP is difficult to use and easy to lose. Excessive paperwork, a change in income or job status, a child’s low attendance record or the end of a parent’s vocational training program can all threaten a family’s eligibility status. Often children leave a childcare setting when they lose subsidy, creating a revenue disruption for programs and a far greater social and educational disruption for children, families and employers. It is notable for our purposes that such a large percentage of Burlington children who qualify for CCFAP are enrolled in programs in other towns. This could be due to limited capacity in Burlington, the high cost of care, or need to have children close to a workplace or school.

Pre-K Expansion Grant

A competitive federal grant recently awarded to the State of Vermont could provide short-term support for the expansion of pre-K spots serving low-income 4 year-olds. Expansion is defined as either creating more full-time spots or increasing the hours of part-time spots to full-time. Burlington School District partnered with the State in its application. At the time of this writing, the scope of the grant awarded and its impact on the children of Burlington is unavailable. However, a grant of this nature is seen as a positive step toward increasing the number of children served, lessening the amount of scholarship money needed, and building a culture of support for early learning.

Appendix IV: Current Indicators, Assessments and Accountability Metrics

Funders ask for accountability reports that cover different outcomes and ask for measurement in varying degrees of depth. Federal grants for evidence-based outcomes like Project LAUNCH require extensive reporting and include intensive health and wellness indicators. CDBG grants also require annual reporting. United Way asks its grantees to adhere to a Results Based Accountability (RBA) model and report on: “what are we doing; how well are we doing it; and are we better off.” (The State of VT is also moving toward an RBA framework.)

Burlington School District collects economic data about families when children enter school in order to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price lunch. Because the State

²⁸ This number excludes children in informal care settings. It includes Head Start and Early Head Start enrollees if they are in a tuition-charging program. Source: Elizabeth Meyer, Child Care Resource.

does not require it to access Act 62 and Act 166 funds, they do not collect economic information on preschool students. The Early Education Division of BSD partners with CIS to screen children who might be identified as at-risk or need educational support services and BSD asks community partner programs to use Teaching Strategies Gold (TS Gold) as the assessment system for those children.

The Vermont Agency of Education developed a Kindergarten Readiness Survey that they ask Kindergarten teachers to complete within the first 10 weeks of the school year. Data are incomplete for Fall 2013 for BSD; only half the elementary school recorded results of the survey. Until this year, Vermont has measured 3rd grade reading proficiency (another important early benchmark) using the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP). In the next school year, Vermont will be switching to the Smarter Balanced Test. It is unclear what carryover will exist for the purpose of comparing data.

Building Bright Futures is developing a statewide early childhood database that can provide easily accessible information at the county level. The database will expand as Race to the Top outcomes are collected and BBF welcomes any data inputs from the local level. BBF can potentially provide support to a Burlington initiative in measuring outcomes.

The Vermont Center for Children, Youth and Families at UVM, led by Dr. James Hudziak, is also a potential resource for health and wellness indicators in our community.

Appendix V: Potential Burlington Early Learning Initiative Home Visiting Partners

- Project LAUNCH
- Vermont Department of Health
- Agencies that already provide home visiting services (Lund, VNA, Howard)
- ECHO and Fletcher Free Library in the creation of a “lifelong learning” program that encourages science education, early literacy, preschool programming, health and wellness, and parent advocacy
- Let’s Grow Kids (support of the parent mentoring module)²⁹
- Burlington School District (information about school-based preschool programs, family opportunities at local schools, “welcome to the Class of ...” letter from the Superintendent, opportunities to develop home-visiting policies for K-3 teachers)
- Fletcher Allen Community Health Benefits Team
- Vermont Center for Children Youth and Families (wellness coaches could be home visitors and could assess families need for deeper services)
- Local businesses who could provide material support or in-kind contributions (diapers for a “baby bundle”, information about breastfeeding-friendly employers) and gain employee recruitment opportunities
- BBF (data collection; RTT grant home visiting coordination)

²⁹ http://www.letsgrowkids.org/sites/www.letsgrowkids.org/files/Brain_Science_%26Take_Action_Handout.pdf

Appendix VI: Potential Scholarship and Measurement Partners

Scholarship Partners List:

- Child Care Resource, the organization that is charged with overseeing CCFAP subsidy and the registration of childcare programs. They are also currently training a cohort of New American women to be registered home-care providers.
- ECE programs
- Agency of Human Services, Division of Children and Families (administer the STARS program)
- Burlington School Department, Early Education Dept.
- Champlain Valley Head Start (new EHS programs may be opening in Franklin Square and King St Center)

Measurement Partners List:

- Building Bright Futures: explore promised assistance with the data collection and analysis during Pilot, and potentially beyond
- Burlington School District
- State Agency of Education
- StriveTogether and Oak Park Collaborative: eliminating level benchmarks and creating non-cognitive indicators
- National studies, like those conducted by MELF and Parent Aware, as well as ongoing data collection and research by Arthur Reynolds³⁰ and Art Rolnick.³¹
- UVM College of Education
- UVM Center for Children Youth and Families
- Project LAUNCH
- ECHO

Appendix VII: Potential Funding Sources

- Federal
 - CDBG funds: the next cycle of the public services portion of the allotment (July 1, 2015-June 30, 2017) is focused on education, childcare and youth services. If we are successful in our collective impact approach, and the Task Force applies as a funder of direct service scholarships, CDBG public service grants could amount to as much as \$100,000/year. CDBG applications are due on January 15, 2015.
 - Pre-K expansion grant
 - Champlain Valley Head Start is involved in an Early Head Start competitive grant application that would provide 26 additional 0-3 spots in Burlington (16 of those at King Street Center). That grant will be awarded in November or December of 2014. While the funds will not be accessible for scholarship

³⁰ Chicago Longitudinal Study <http://www.cehd.umn.edu/icd/people/faculty/cpsy/reynolds.html>

³¹ Human Capital Research Collaborative <http://humancapitalrc.org/midwestcpc/>

money, the widespread support that Head Start offers, as well as the increase in capacity will certainly impact the Pilot.

- The Institute of Museum and Library Sciences (IMLS) offers National Leadership Grants. The ECHO Center and Fletcher Free Library are discussing applying jointly, in partnership with the YMCA and a home-visiting agency to fund a lifelong learning initiative that would focus on Science education and early learning (ECHO), early literacy (FFL) and welcome baby/parent mentoring modules that could help fund a portion the Pilot's home visiting program. \$500,000 is available through this 2-3 year grant program and it is a 1:1 matching grant (with non-federal funds).
- State
 - Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, Promise Communities funds are sub-grants designated for communities in need piloting innovative pre-K to grade 3 approaches showing sustained early learning effects
 - In-kind support from RTT-ELC Grant funded home-visiting coordinator
 - Building Bright Futures: data and measurement
 - Agency of Education support: Kindergarten readiness; English Language Learning
- Local
 - City Support
 - Mayor's Regional Program money currently going to early education or other youth-serving programming should be allocated to scholarships and to support the Initiative
 - PLoT funds?
 - In-kind (staffing, materials and interpretation)
 - Marketing/recruitment (enrollment letter from Mayor)
 - Burlington School Department
 - In-kind (staffing)
 - Allocation of school resources
 - Coordination of data
 - Marketing/recruitment ("welcome baby" letter from Superintendent)
- Private
 - Philanthropy
 - UWCC
 - Youth-focused foundations and donors
 - Let's Grow Kids
 - Develop module/materials for home visiting
 - City Department Head presentation/Speaker's Bureau/pledge
 - Business community-local
 - Banks—local investment requirement
 - On-site child care programs
 - Grants/subsidy as employee benefit
 - Corporate gifts
 - VT Business Roundtable
 - Business community—state or federal
 - Corporate giving and corporate foundation grants

- Ready Nation³²
- Hybrid
 - Pay for Success/Grant model: ask grantors to make an investment in a program that either pays a dividend (if benchmarks are met) or is converted to a grant (if they are not)
 - GMCB/SIM (ACEs) in partnership with FAHC and Blueprint for Health

Possible future sources to explore are:

- Federal
 - Promise Neighborhoods Grant
 - Social Innovation Fund sub-grants (through UWCC and VT Community Foundation)
- Private/non-profit
 - League of Cities and Towns membership
 - National philanthropy (Gates; Besos)
- Local
 - City
 - Allocation of City resources (local budget)
 - Taxation/revenue adjustments
 - Economic development approaches and standards that support family-friendly workplace policies in local businesses.
 - BSD
 - Reallocation of school resources to capture return on investment (e.g.: capture savings from reduced special education needs and reinvest in early learning)
 - Create educational policies that support lifelong learning, out of school learning and early learning as essential supports for Burlington’s children in a cradle to career framework.

Appendix VIII: Recommendations for the Office of the Mayor:

As the only elected official in the City, the Office of the Mayor can make an impact critical to the success of the Initiative. The Mayor can use the podium to engage residents in the process, inform parents of the importance of early learning, and convince the business community that it is in their economic interest to support a market-driven scholarship program. The Mayor could provide support to the Initiative in the following areas:

- US Conference of Mayor’s Early Learning Nation Resolution
- Recruitment of families/awareness of Act 166 funds
 - Letter from Mayor inviting participation in Pilot

³² 500 CEOs from around country looking at how to support early learning—Lisa Ventriss involved, profiled as business champion: <http://www.readynation.org/>

- Nurture and build partnerships with providers, agencies, funders, business community
- Empower and encourage City Departments to engage in the Initiative
 - Coordinate with Strategic planning at FFL/Master Plan at Parks & Rec
 - Include long-term early learning funding in resource allocation conversations during City budget process (e.g. what budgetary impacts do BPD and CJC interactions with youth have on the community? Can costs be shared between FFL and BSD to staff youth-serving positions? Can Parks & Rec support an Extended Learning Coordinator as a way of capturing additional grant-sourced revenue?)
 - In the future, it may prove impactful to consider:
 - departmental reorganizations to accommodate staffing needs
 - creating/revitalizing a City Office of Youth and/or Mayor’s Cabinet on Youth
 - funding a City staff position

Appendix IX: Task Force Considerations & Challenges

For Task Force Consideration:

1. Can we use scholarships to extend care through summer for families who need year-round care?
2. Can we use the scholarship model to finance more infant and toddler care spots as well as fund the parent mentoring through home visiting?
3. Does our STARS rating system capture the information we want and need to determine high quality?
4. Can the scholarship system be designed to provide enough flexibility to create sliding scales so that families who are caught in the middle get some benefit? And families who can afford it pay true cost? Consider intersection of Burlington Early Learning Initiative home visiting program with Children’s Integrative Services and Project LAUNCH. [How many children in BTV will LAUNCH serve? “2840 unduplicated in CCity” over 5 years, “approx. 660/yr after startup”] Can ELI home visiting help identify children with special needs before they reach school?
5. What assessment tools serve children and families best, are easy for providers to use and offer us consistent, reliable and valuable data?
6. How does this program serve in-home care providers?
7. How can this program support culturally specific and competent care settings?
8. Can the City create a centralized waiting list to assist parents with locating programs and help the City keep track of need?
9. To support school readiness, can we include transition planning and support for families as children move into Kindergarten
10. How can a market-driven model be best used by non-tuition programs like Head Start and BSD? And what are the strategies to make sure we have high participation by family-based programs?

Challenges to Address:

1. We currently don't collect socio-economic information about children until they enter Kindergarten (magnet school application carries those questions—are all K registration forms the same?). We believe we need this data to determine if parent mentoring and high quality ECE work equally well for lower-income children and upper-income children.
2. BSD currently does not fund ELL instruction or support before Kindergarten
3. Existing high-quality programs do not have the physical space to support more capacity.
4. Family transportation in and around the city and to other towns (care near jobs, e.g)

Appendix X: Mayor's ELI Stakeholder List with Affiliations (attached)

Name	Position, Organization	Email
CITY		
Miro Weinberger	Mayor, City of Burlington	miro@burlingtonvt.gov
Marcy Krumbine	Asst Dir for Comm'y Development, CEDO	mkrumbine@burlingtonvt.gov
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Peter Owen	Director, CEDO	peter@burlingtonvt.gov
Jesse Bridges	Director, Parks & Rec	jbridges@burlingtonvt.gov
Rubi Simon	Director, FFL	rsimon@burlingtonvt.gov
Beth Truzansky	We All Belong, CEDO	btruzansky@burlingtonvt.gov
Mike Kanarick	Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office	mike@burlingtonvt.gov
COMMUNITY PARTNERS		
Martha Maksym	ED, UWCC	martha@unitedwaycc.org
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AFTER SCHOOL/PRESCHOOL		
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BSD		
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Julie Cadwallader - Staub	Grants Director, BSD	JCStaub@bsdvt.org
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Brian Williams and SA Team	Principal, SA	bewillia@bsdvt.org
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