

Memorandum of Understanding XXX Alliance

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets forth the terms and understanding between AAA, which will be referred to as AAA Hub, and BBB, which will be referred to as BBB Member, to work collaboratively on implementing a Shared Services Alliance.

Background:

Shared Services Alliance is a network of early care and education providers who work together to share information and costs. The goal of the XXX Alliance is to improve quality in all participating centers by strengthening business and pedagogical leadership.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Owners, Director and AAA Hub provide support to improve quality. This MOU establishes a collaborative partnership between AAA Hub and BBB Member.

The roles and responsibilities listed below are the agreements and actions developed by two consenting entities to share resources, knowledge and people to fulfill the goal of improving quality by strengthening business and pedagogical leadership and fully participating in a Shared Services Alliance to serve the children and families of XXX. BBB Member will lead the work to improve quality by strengthening business and pedagogical leadership in their centers, with the support and technical assistance from AAA Hub and Opportunities Exchange (OppEx).

Responsibilities of AAA Hub:

Strengthen business operations in each center. The business leader/project coordinator for AAA Hub will work to strengthen business operations, provide business leadership and coordinate the Shared Services Alliance. The business leader/project coordinator will lead the business leadership group for the centers, which will focus on sharing business services, shared purchasing, developing and implementing business metrics (such as weekly tracking of enrollment as a % of staff capacity by classroom). Tasks include, but are not limited to, the following:

Enrollment:

- AAA Hub supports centers to increase enrollment, so that all four centers are just about fully enrolled at all times (including summer and fall)
- AAA Hub supports centers to maintain accreditation status

Funding/in kind:

- AAA Hub assists the centers to access new sources of funding and to maintain existing sources of funding, such as subsidy and PreK
- AAA Hub and OppEx assist centers to advocate for increased reimbursement
- AAA Hub also assists centers to find in-kind resources that can provide benefits without additional expenditures

Better information about revenues and expenses; ability to forecast cash flow

- AAA Hub will provide in-person support to all centers to migrate accounting to QuickBooks, and to use QuickBooks and Pro Care to manage their business. Key information and reports to be reviewed on a monthly basis
- Improved information on revenues and expenses will be used by AAA Hub to provide strong evidence in making the case for increased subsidy

QuickBooks

AAA Hub will assist the centers in using QuickBooks to produce the following reports:

- Annual budget; profit and loss statement with variance against budget
- Accounts receivable aging report
- Cash flow and income forecasts
- Cost-per-child (calculated with AAA Hub assistance), and analysis of whether reimbursements cover costs

Pro Care

- Classroom Attendance Analysis
- Enrollment by Classroom

Improvement in collections from families and government

AAA Hub will assist centers to improve collections, including but not limited to the following tasks:

- Review and analyze factors creating collections challenges
- Gather data on child care subsidy, PreK or Head Start/Early Head Start funding that was not paid on behalf of families due to gaps in eligibility determination/authorization or paperwork/reporting errors
- Weekly review of accounts receivable aging to spot problems, ensure bad debt does not accumulate and family continues to be eligible for child care subsidy.
- Monthly reconciliation of payment request submitted to government vs. dollars received
- Advocating for policy changes needed to speed up eligibility determination, streamline paperwork, and narrow gaps in public funding, as well as to identify and implement any additional changes in policy and practice to address fiscal challenges

Reduce operating costs

AAA Hub will assist centers to explore strategies to reduce costs, including but not limited to the following:

- Facilitating access to www.ecesharedresources.org
- Potential savings through joint purchasing
 - Fingerprinting company
 - Technology provider
 - Classroom and program supplies
 - Maintenance, janitorial and other property management expenses
- Relationship with colleges and technical vocational schools to secure interns

Increased confidence in the business case for improving quality

AAA Hub will help benchmark data against industry leaders and peers with the goal of providing efficient and excellent quality to families similar to those served by XXX center, including the following tasks:

- Identify appropriate business metrics and benchmarks, based on research and practice among peers
- Collect and analyze data from participating sites to track the cost of quality, including:
 - Enrollment: Increased ability to attract and retain families
 - Staffing: Higher morale and lower turnover
 - Revenue: Better ability to manage, maintain and increase funding from all sources, including tuition, fees, grants and contracts.

Owner and Directors responsibilities

- Provide AAA Hub with the data needed to track trends, estimate costs and effectively advocate for improved resources for centers that participate in the XXX Alliance. This includes, but is not limited to, reporting business and quality metrics no later than the last working day of each month and completing all required quarterly reports
- Attend monthly leadership meeting; at least one meeting quarterly with director and/or owner from each center
- Fully implement Pro Care and QuickBooks in each center
- Ensure that fiscal staff are available to participate in meetings with the business leader/project coordinator and share data needed for business analytics

Build capacity of a pedagogical leader at each site. This work will be co-led by the Alliance Pedagogical Leader, for the contract period. She will work with all Alliance centers to develop and implement practices that enable participation in regular learning opportunities and time off the floor to plan and reflect. She will work on building the capacity of the member pedagogical leaders (PL), helping them participate in appropriate professional development (PD) experiences, and nurturing their ability to improve quality in their programs. She will also work to ensure that all technical assistance (TA) providers from outside entities (such as Quality Rating, Head Start/Early Head Start, etc.) who are working to support the center coordinate their activities, communicate effectively with site-based leaders, and understand the Alliance approach to site-based pedagogical leadership. The site-based pedagogical leaders, in turn, will provide coaching/mentoring TA and coordinate PD for their centers, with support from the Alliance Pedagogical Leader.

The grant provides a \$xx stipend to one pedagogical leader at each participating center to support their ability to do this work. Additionally, the AAA Hub will fund and staff xx hours of substitute time at each center, to enable participating in pedagogical leadership.

Responsibilities of AAA Hub:

- Provide one-on-one and group coaching/mentoring for pedagogical leaders (PLs) on topics such as (but not limited to) Coaching/Mentoring skills, curriculum development, key elements of quality

- Help teachers and PLs find and attend courses and trainings provided by organizations other than AAA Hub; assist PLs to help teachers integrate what they learned into their daily practice
- Provide customized training directly for PLs and staff as appropriate
- Maintain sub/floater pool to partly enable PL time off the floor [Target: 10 hours of substitute time per week per center]
- Help coordinate the work among all TA provided in the centers, regardless of the source of the TA

Owner and director responsibilities

- Encourage and support PLs in their roles
- Provide sufficient paid time off the floor for PLs and teachers so that the PLs can fulfill all their responsibilities. [Target: 10 hours per week of paid time, off the floor, for each PL.]
- Identify opportunities and challenges for improving quality in their centers and take action to address challenges
- Develop a staffing plan that supports intentional pedagogical leadership at each site. This includes, but not limited to: enabling each teacher to have paid time off the floor, to plan, reflect and engage in supervision, conduct child assessments, and work with peers. In some cases this may include a plan to lower child to staff ratios via additional staff in classroom or smaller group size. (OppEx will work with the Alliance coordinator and centers to identify the cost of these challenges.)

Pedagogical Leadership responsibilities

- Provide one-on-one and group coaching/mentoring with teachers
- Perform monthly classroom observation for each teacher
- Meet with teachers in reflective sessions to develop monthly action plans to address challenges and build on opportunities for improvement
- Submit monthly reports (via survey monkey) no later than last working day of each month

Funding for substitute teachers: AAA Hub will maintain a substitute pool to ensure that teachers are able to leave the classroom to participate in reflective supervision and quality improvement activities. AAA Hub will be the employer of record for the substitutes, will manage deployment of the substitutes and will pay the substitutes directly. Each site will have a budget of X hours for substitutes time over the course of the grant period. The substitutes time is intended to enable the PL and teachers to participate in trainings and meetings and to have time off the floor to plan and coordinate PD and to deliver or participate in coaching/mentoring and TA.

Encourage center directors to participate in learning opportunities: AAA Hub will encourage the support with (when applicable) resources for travel to Shared Services Alliance study tours and conferences.