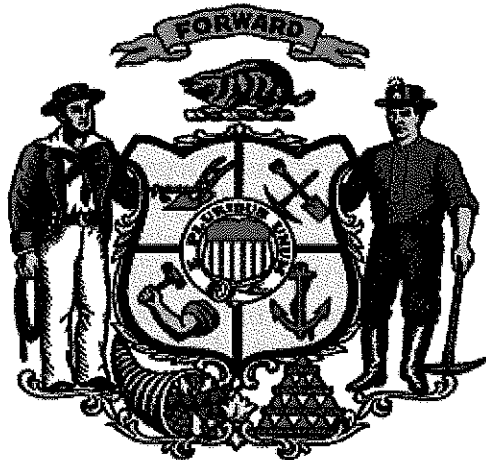# Project Charter

The Wisconsin Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System Project

09/20/2011

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Wisconsin Department of Children and Families
Wisconsin Department of Health Services

I. Project Title: The Wisconsin Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System Project (WI ECLDS)

II. Project Overview:
This project is funded by a State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics with supplemental funding made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that is also supporting the creation, work and goals of the Wisconsin Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). The third stage of the Wisconsin SLDS project involves expansion of the LDS to include information about children ages birth to five. Wisconsin has been interested in the early childhood component of data analysis for several years, as evidenced by statute in the 2009 Wisconsin Act 59 authorizing the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WI DPI) to establish a P20 Longitudinal Data System (LDS). Outcomes identified in the grant for early childhood first address the need to identify the multitude of programs and services within the State that serve these children. After programs and services are identified, analysis will be completed to determine what data is currently collected, available, and transportable. This analysis will help determine the feasibility of linking data from the different programs and services together, and to the existing LDS, and identify existing data gaps.

The development of this type of comprehensive Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System (EC LDS) is supported by the ECAC. The Council's charge is to assist in developing a more comprehensive and coordinated early childhood system that supports high quality early learning and developmental experiences. The ECAC commissioned a 2010 Early Childhood System Assessment conducted by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, which found that although the state collects many types of data related to early childhood, there is no capacity to connect it, track children's progress, or use it to assess the system (http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ecac/pdf/assessment_report.pdf). The ECAC has thus identified the creation of a comprehensive EC LDS for planning, evaluation, and decision-making purposes as one of its top priorities, and will also provide financial support for this project.

The initial focus will be on linking information from early childhood programs and services with data housed in the WI DPI, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (WI DCF), and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), and other state agencies. In addition, the Project eventually foresees making links to programs and services with adult outcomes data, such as those found in the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (WI DWD) and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (WI DOC). A more detailed work plan with goals, objectives, and defined strategies is currently under development with the EC LDS Data Project Team.

III. Project Purpose:
As a recipient of funds from the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF) in the summer of 2009, Wisconsin committed to advance essential education reform including the creation of a statewide LDS that meets all 12 elements spelled out in the America Competes Act (see Attachment B – Statewide Longitudinal Data System Requirements and 12 Elements of the

America Competes Act). The current project charter outlines activities designed to develop a work plan to extend the previous LDS work, to include early childhood data.

As noted in the 2010 ECAC Early Childhood System Assessment, despite the multitude of data collected by individual early childhood programs and services, the State remains unable to answer basic questions about child well-being and program effectiveness. An important first step in the development of the EC LDS will be identifying the key policy questions that will guide the State's system building efforts. For example, The Early Childhood Data Collaborative (ECDC), a consortium of national organizations[1] working to help states build, link, and use early childhood data systems, has identified a number of key policy questions that a well-crafted EC LDS can help answer.

1. Are children, birth through age five, on track to succeed when they enter school and beyond?
2. Which children have access to high-quality early care and education programs?
3. Is the quality of programs improving?
4. What are the characteristics of effective programs?
5. How prepared is the early care and education workforce to provide effective education and care for all children?
6. What policies and investments lead to a skilled and stable early care and education workforce?

The Project team recommended a broader set of initial policy questions which were confirmed by public feedback garnered during the Early Childhood Collaborating Partners video conference on August 11, 2011. These are the initial questions for consideration:

▶ Are children, birth to age 5, on track to succeed when they enter school and beyond?
▶ Which children and families are and are not being served by which programs/services?
▶ Which children have access to high-quality early childhood programs and services?
▶ What characteristics of programs are associated with positive child outcomes for which children?
▶ What are the education and economic returns on early childhood investments?

Guidance from the ECDC, which has identified potential fundamental elements of a Coordinated State ECE Data System, will also be considered in developing the comprehensive work plan. The ten fundamental elements include:

1. Unique statewide child identifier.
2. Child-level demographic and program participation information.
3. Child-level data on child development.

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[1] Partner organizations in the Early Childhood Data Collaborative include the Council of Chief State School Officers, Center for the Study of Child Care Employment at UC Berkeley, Data Quality Campaign, National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, National Conference of State Legislatures, National Governors Association for Best Practices, and Pre-K Now at the Pew Center on the States.

4. Ability to link child-level data with K–12 and other key data systems.
5. Unique program site identifier with the ability to link with children and the ECE workforce.
6. Program site data on structure, quality and work environment.
7. Unique ECE workforce identifier with ability to link with program sites and children.
8. Individual ECE workforce demographics, including education, and professional development information.
9. State governance body to manage data collection and use.
10. Transparent privacy protection and security practices and policies.

The federal government continues to make substantial investments in LDS development in several states, and the ECDC and other national level organizations and partnerships continue to provide leadership and guidance. At the same time, local efforts to build an EC LDS; e.g., in Milwaukee and Racine, continue to develop. As we design our work plan, we will continue to monitor, consult, and collaborate with these ongoing efforts, in order to maximize effectiveness and avoid duplication of system building efforts (see Attachment A: Additional References).

IV. Project Objectives

1. Analyze the current early childhood data environment.
   - Create an inventory of early childhood programs and services and data collection practices, including: data elements, method of collection, availability of data, data standards, and capacity for data sharing.
   - Identify alternative strategies for assigning a unique identifier to children in Wisconsin consistent with ECDC guidance.
   - Identify alternative strategies for assigning a unique identifier to program sites within Wisconsin consistent with ECDC guidance.
   - Identify alternative strategies for assigning a unique identifier to the early childhood workforce within Wisconsin consistent with ECDC guidance.
2. Establish data sharing methodologies.
   - Build consensus around common data elements and data standards.
   - Determine potential system architecture.
3. Create a work plan to begin the data sharing and analysis process.
   - Identify opportunities to exchange data to meet the long term objectives of the ECDC and work to establish a sequence of activities that best meet the priority needs of Wisconsin.
   - Determine how and when identified data elements can be added to the EC LDS.
4. Develop strategies for data governance, long term system usage and sustainability.

V. State Agency Lead Partners

1. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WI DPI)
2. The Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (WI DCF)
3. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WI DHS)

VI. Scope of Work – High-Level Deliverables

The work necessary to accomplish the Project Objectives is captured in the Scope of Work. Early in a project, these deliverables tend to be high level since the detail has yet to be determined. As the project progresses, the work plan will provide greater detail.

1. The Project Coordinator will guide and manage production of an inventory of early childhood programs and services, and the data currently collected by them (including individual-, provider-, and program-level data). Particular emphasis should be placed on those programs that collect data at the individual child or workforce level. This document should also include information about the accessibility, quality, and transferability of collected data, as well as identify existing data gaps.
2. Working with the Project Team and Data Analyst, the Project Coordinator will guide and manage development of a work plan to begin building and sustain the EC LDS, including:
   - Key policy questions to be answered by the EC LDS.
   - Options for assigning a unique ID to children, providers and programs.
   - Identification of essential common data elements and strategies for developing common data strategies.
   - Identification of short-term (low-cost, high return) opportunities for data linkages.
   - Identification of long-term data sharing architecture and strategies.
   - Strategies for addressing existing data gaps.
   - Strategies for data governance and usage.
   - Strategies for data quality assurance.
   - Strategies for privacy protection and security practices and policies.
   - Strategies for engaging state and local stakeholders, including the ECAC, policymakers, researchers, service providers, and parents, in system building and sustainability efforts.
   - Identification of additional funding sources for building and maintaining the system.

VII. Constraints and Assumptions:

1. The EC LDS Project Charter will be completed for presentation to the ECAC during the October 2011 meeting.
2. The initial work plan will be completed by December 31, 2011.
3. Budget dollars as defined by the original SLDS and ARRA grants will be used to fund this project, collaboratively managed by WI DPI and WI DCF.
4. Where appropriate, the Project Team will explore the opportunity to share technology and/or standardize technology and share the long-term costs for supporting resulting systems among participating partners.
5. Where appropriate, the Project Team will align with national standards and initiatives.
6. Project activities will be consistent with the ECAC goals and objectives.

VIII. Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Carol Noddings Eichinger, WI ECLDS Project Coordinator

- Guide and manage production of high-level deliverables described above, including:
    - Inventory and analysis of current early childhood data environment and
    - Work plan to begin data sharing activities and sustainability plan.
- Serve as liaison to internal project partners, including Project Team, state agencies, ECAC Steering Committee, contractors.
- Monitor and collaborate with local LDS building efforts.
- Identify and communicate best practices in LDS building, via ECDC webinars, literature scans, networking with other states, etc.
- Communicate Project Objectives, status, and plans to external stakeholders.
- Represent and advocate for project, as requested.
- Report as necessary to federal government on project progress (relevant to SLDS and ARRA grant requirements).
- Monitor project scope to ensure project success.

2. Data Analyst
- Perform detailed analysis of diverse computer systems and work to determine the value of system data to the goals of this project.
- Serve as liaison between the EC content area experts and department technical teams.
- Work to convert business requirements into actionable tasks for technical resources (create design specifications).
- Perform project management and planning activities as assigned by the Project Coordinator.
- Test any technical systems designed and built as a result of this project.
- Define necessary data sets and database table structures required to support the objectives of this project.
- Collect EC project artifacts and store in a manner that enables all participating parties to have access and contribute.

3. Leadership Team (Jill Haglund, Rod Packard, Jane Penner Hoppe)
- LDS report as necessary to U.S. Department of Education (USED) on project progress.
- ECAC report as necessary to U.S. Department of Health and Human Service.
- Monitor project scope to ensure project success.
- Serve as "go to" person within his/her organization, communicate project objectives, status and, advocate for project.
- Manage day-to-day activities of project coordinator and data analyst.

4. WI ECLDS Project Team: Coordinator - Carol Noddings-Eichinger, Members - Rod Packard (WI DPI), Jill Haglund (WI DPI), Jane Penner-Hoppe (WI DCF), Hilary Shager (WI DCF), Coral Manning (WI DCF), Linda Leonhart (WI DCF, WHSSCO, ECAC), Linda McCart (WI DHS), Angela Rohan (WI DHS), Dave Edie (ECAC, WCCF), Dennis Winters (ECAC, WI DWD)

- Identify key policy questions.
- Provide guidance to WI ECLDS Coordinator regarding project activities and deliverable development.
- Serve as liaisons between respective departments/organizations and WI ECLDS Coordinator regarding project status and plans.
- Serve as "go to" people within respective departments and organizations. Communicate Project Objectives, status and plans within departments; advocate for project.
- Identify and engage potential partners for work plan implementation (both internal and external).
- Ensure funds are expended according to the plan and consistent with the objectives of the grants.
- Work to resolve project issues; provide guidance as needed for project.
- Assist in monitoring project activities.

5. ECAC Steering Committee: Jane Penner-Hoppe, Jill Haglund, Linda Leonhart, David Edie, Dennis Winters, Jim Leonhart, Nancy Armbrust, MaryAnne Snyder, and Linda McCart
   - Communicate Project Objectives, status and plans to ECAC and individual departments.
   - Leverage ECAC support for project.
   - Ensure funds are expended according to the plan and consistent with ECAC objectives.
   - Develop specific goal statements and potential next steps for recommendations in 2011 ECAC report.
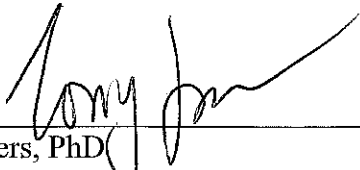   - Assist in monitoring project activities.

IX. Out of Scope
Ideas, activities, or issues listed in this section are specifically outside the scope of this project.

1. No research is intended within the scope of this project.
2. No actual data linking is intended within the scope of this project.
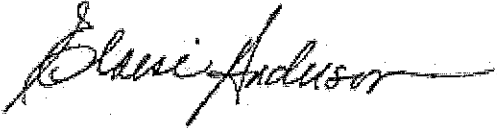
X. Signatures:

Approval:

(signature) 9/20/2011

Tony Evers, PhD   Date
State Superintendent, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

(signature) 9/20/2011

Eloise Anderson   Date
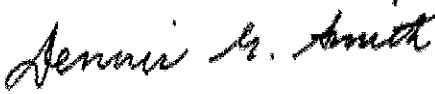Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Children and Families

(signature) 9/20/2011

Dennis G. Smith   Date
Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Health Services

Attachment A: Additional References

National Initiatives and Organizations:
Council of Chief State School Officers
   Tom Schultz, thomass@ccsso.org

Data Quality Campaign
   Elizabeth Laird, Elizabeth@DataQualityCampaign.org;
   Allison Camara,Allison@DataQualityCampaign.org

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices
   Rachel Demma, rdemma@NGA.ORG;
   Amanda Szekely, ASzekely@NGA.ORG

Pre-K Now, a campaign of the Pew Center on the States
   Albert Wat, awat@pewtrusts.org

Birth to Five Policy Alliance
   Helene Stebbins, helene.stebbins@verizon.net

Early Childhood Data Collaborative *www.ECEdata.org*

Many Missing Pieces; The Difficult Task of Linking Early Childhood Data and School-Based Data System   http://www.newamerica.net/pressroom/2010/many_missing_pieces

State of Wisconsin Resources

Building Blocks for Wisconsin's Future: The Foundation for an Early Childhood System (Governor's State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and Care December 2010 Report) http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ecac/pdf/report.pdf

2010 Wisconsin Early Childhood System Assessment Report (completed by UW-Madison LaFollette School of Public Affairs) http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/ecac/pdf/assessment_report.pdf

Wisconsin's Early Care and Education Landscape: Planning for a Coherent System (November 2009, Wisconsin Council on Children and Families)
http://www.wccf.org/pdf/ece_planning_system_11-2009.pdf

Other State Early Childhood System Models

Maryland
http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/BCFF0F0E-33E5-48DA-8F11-28CF333816C2/27804/GettingReady20102011_ExSumm.pdf

Colorado
http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/OIT-EADG/CBON/1251579897428

North Carolina
http://hugh.ncsmartstart.org/tag/data

Pennsylvania
http://www.ncsl.org/portals/1/documents/Educ/PAEarlyChild-Stedron.pdf

New York
http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_999.html
http://www.nyskwic.org/index.cfm

Milwaukee Integrated Data Evaluation and Action System (IDEAS) for Children Initiative
        Ann Terrell [terrelam@milwaukee.k12.wi.us]

Racine School Readiness Coalition Longitudinal Data Monitoring System, Dr. Carole M. Johnson, Director, The Johnson Foundation at Wingspread, 33 East Four Mile Rd, Racine, WI, 43402

The State shall ensure that the statewide P-16 education data system includes the following elements:

With respect to preschool through grade 12 education and postsecondary education:

1. A unique statewide student identifier that does not permit a student to be individually identified by users of the system (except as allowed by Federal and State law);

2. Student-level enrollment, demographic, and program participation information;

3. Student-level information about the points at which students exit, transfer in, transfer out, drop out, or complete P-16 education programs;

4. The capacity to communicate with higher education data systems; and

5. A State data audit system assessing data quality, validity, and reliability.

With respect to preschool through grade 12 education:

6. Yearly test records of individual students with respect to assessments under section 1111(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965;

7. Information on students not tested, by grade and subject;

8. A teacher identifier system with the ability to match teachers to students;

9. Student-level transcript information, including information on courses completed and grades earned; and

10. Student-level college readiness test scores

With respect to postsecondary education, data that provide:

11. Information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, including whether students enroll in remedial coursework; and

12. Information determined necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education.