

Colorado Professional Development Plan for Early Childhood Educators and Providers (2006)

Colorado Office of Professional Development

The Smart Start Colorado Office of Professional Development is the statewide entity responsible for improving the quality of services, supports and education for young children and their families by enhancing the knowledge and skills of early childhood professionals. The mission will be accomplished through an integrated and comprehensive system of professional and workforce development that addresses funding, core professional knowledge qualifications and credentials, quality assurance, and access and outreach.

Goals of the Colorado Office of Professional Development:

1. Linking Training and Professional Development Opportunities

The office serves as a central resource and develops a coordinated approach to link and align availability and implementation of training, professional development activities and opportunities, culturally inclusive practices, and technical assistance at the state, regional and local level.

2. Supporting High Quality Professional Development

The office supports professional development that meets and exceeds the requirements of national, state, regional, and local policies.

3. Developing Standards

The Office leads the development of professional development standards to support consistency of quality of trainings and trainers.

4. Increasing the Availability and Accessibility of Professional Development

The Office promotes universal availability of and access to high quality, culturally competent professional development opportunities

5. Identifying and Analyzing Gaps and Needs in Professional Development

The Office advocates for addressing gaps and needed changes in activities and opportunities.

6. Developing a Plan for Sustaining and Growing the Office

7. Reviewing and Evaluating Professional Development Efforts

Evaluate and report on the status of early childhood professional development in Colorado.

Office of Professional Development Background

The Community College of Denver (CCD) merged the Early Childhood Professional Credential Office into the Smart Start Colorado Office of Professional Development when awarded the grant by the Colorado Department of Human Services. The infrastructure was in place at CCD that included administrative support, computer and

database technical support, website hosting, fiscal oversight, payroll functions, fundraising capacity, and professional development opportunities for staff. By merging the two offices, the functions of the Office of Professional Development began implementing the plan when the contract was awarded.

Understanding the multi-disciplinary nature of Smart Start Colorado Early Childhood System

The proposed executive director of the SSCOPD has been a member of the Early Childhood State Systems Team (ECSST) since its inception and was a member of the preceding state teams. The ECSST has been the driving force on the development of Smart Start Colorado which is a multi-disciplinary early childhood initiative. Additionally, the executive director was the co-chair of the ECSST Professional and Workforce Development Task Force. All of the Task Force’s recommendations for this Office and actions steps that are part of Smart Start Colorado work plan include the disciplines of early childhood education, child health/medical home, early childhood mental health and parent education and family support. An advantage of the Office of Professional Development being at CCD is the ability of the college to leverage resources in all of these disciplines. The Professional Development Advisory Board will include individuals from the fields of early childhood health, mental health, early childhood education, parent education and family support. Parents will be included on the Advisory Board as will individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. While the beginning focus for the Office is early childhood education, CCD recognizes the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach as demonstrated in the following management plan and has requested funds to hire an early childhood mental health specialist as a first step in expanding the Office.

Colorado Professional Development Plan for Early Childhood Educators and Providers

YEAR ONE TASKS

1.1 Linking Training and Professional Development Opportunities

A. Begin to develop and maintain a professional development website; linked with the Smart Start Colorado website; to provide centralized information and resources related to early childhood professional development.

The Early Childhood Credential Office currently has a website, that can quickly and easily be converted to the Smart Start Office of Professional Development website. The Office will work with the Smart Start Colorado website designer to ensure linkages to and similarities in the look, feel and user friendliness of the two websites.

The Early Childhood Credential website is housed through the Community College of Denver (CCD) server and maintained by both staff at the Credential Office and the CCD webmaster. The college provides this service in gratis and will do so for the SSCOPD. The Credential Office website provides information about and links to the following: online courses; T.E.A.C.H. scholarships; the early childhood loan re-payment program; Qualistar Early Learning ratings; child care licensing; statewide and county early childhood and school age/youth credential data; credential applications; early childhood and school age/youth core knowledge and standards; local resource and referral programs; Consolidated Pilot contacts; and, early childhood college courses around the state.

The statewide training calendar will be added to the OPD website. In year two the training registry information will be added. Additional content for the website will be determined by the SSC, ECSST and the OPD Advisory Board.

B. Begin to assess the needs for specific provider trainings to support professional development.

The Office of Professional Development will conduct an environmental scan utilizing the following: professional development information on the Pilot Continuation Reports; phone interviews with head start directors, pilot professional development coordinators/pilot coordinators, early childhood councils in non-pilot communities, local resource and referral agencies and early childhood professional organizations; and, information about training needs from state agencies.

A format, to gather this information, will be designed with input from the Advisory Board the PWD task force, state agencies and the ECSST. Also, the OPD will work with the Prevention Leadership Council about the information they may be gathering on early childhood professional development needs.

C. Establish and maintain a Professional Development Advisory Board that includes diverse cultural and multi-disciplinary representation.

The OPD will seek broad representation for the Professional Development Advisory Board that will include individuals from the fields of early childhood health, mental health, early childhood education, parent education and family support. Parents will be included on the Advisory Board as will individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. An initial place to solicit members who will meet there criteria is from the PWD task force. Additionally, the ECSST will be asked for recommendations to fill Advisory Board seats. While the emphasis for years 1 and 2 of the OPD will be early childhood care and education, it is important that the Advisory Board is not overly represented from that discipline. It is anticipated that the Advisory Board will meet at least once in year one and then at a minimum of every other month in years two and three.

D. Assess the most effective way to accomplish the following tasks and submit a plan for how the Office will most effectively address the following in years two and three:

- **Link and align professional development activities among local communities.**

The Pilot Leadership Alliance has already begun much of the work about linking and aligning professional development as have the state agencies that provide resources and training. The OPD, building on that strong model, will have a devoted agenda item about professional development at both the at the Pilot Leadership Alliance and Consolidated Pilots meetings in year two. Year three, the Office will develop a process to align local efforts.

- **Provide and/or coordinate technical assistance to communities about professional development.**

The existing statewide credential coordinator's position will be changed in year two to work with local communities on broader PD issues that would include but not be limited to the development of local plans, coordination of training among state agencies, professional credentials, the sharing of resources across community boundaries. This statewide professional development coordinator will work specifically with Pilot communities, local resource and referral agencies, early childhood college faculty, and local early childhood councils.

- **Provide professional and career development resources and guidance.**

Starting with information that already has been gathered and found in various locations, such as the T.E.A.C.H. data, the Credential website and Pilot continuation reports, the OPD will compile a more comprehensive database of resources and career development opportunities in year two. This information will be available on the OPD website and through a resource brochure that will be distributed through the resource and referral agencies, at early childhood professional conferences and in credential mailings. Staff – T.E.A.C.H. coordinator, associate director, PD statewide coordinator and mental health specialist – will provide phone, e-mail and face-to-face counseling about resources and guidance on career paths available in early childhood. Staff will visit local community early childhood councils (both Pilot and non-pilot). Resource information will be shared with early childhood faculty and coordinators at both the community and four year colleges. OPD staff will be available as guest lectures in early childhood college classes throughout Colorado to talk with students

about career development opportunities. Career and professional development opportunities and issues will be shared through early childhood professional organization newsletters.

- **Provide and coordinate leadership training.**

In year two, the OPD will electronically compile the availability of leadership training in Colorado and nationally. This information will be posted on the website and included in the resource brochure mentioned previously.

The Clayton Foundation Early Childhood Resource Institute has developed comprehensive, results driven leadership training. The OPD will work closely with the Institute to promote a training of trainers model to ensure the availability of this training throughout Colorado. Clayton's *Reflective Leadership* training is a yearlong program conducted by the Institute. This training helps program directors to create organizational processes and conditions and to develop management practices that support quality. Content areas include: communication skills; teambuilding; aligning organizational values with worksite practice; human resource management; conflict management.

- **Develop leadership that is diverse and culturally competent.**

In year two, the Office will work with Clayton Foundation on its training on cultural competency to identify key components in leadership training. While Clayton's training is somewhat focused on the use of environmental rating scales, it offers a good starting point. The *Cultural Competency* training examines how biases influence daily workplace relationships. Topics include: describing personal culture, understanding the basis of everyone's personal bias, identifying stereotypes, recognizing our own biases, and exploring the impact of biases in work environments. The training includes in-depth discussion that examines biases related to early education programs (curricula and settings).

The Office also will work on developing internships and mentorships that will provide opportunities for individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds to develop their leadership skills.

Year three, the OPD will put together a committee of experts to review the content of available leadership training for diverse and cultural competence. Additionally, the Office will develop modules where needed to supplement existing leadership training.

- **Link and align eligible early childhood professionals with existing internships, fellowships and apprenticeships.**

In year two, the Office will develop a database of existing internships, fellowships and apprenticeships and the criteria for each opportunity. This information will be a component of the above mentioned counseling provided to practitioners in early childhood. Additionally, it will be on the OPD website and brochure. Information will be made available through the professional organizations, the Pilot Leadership Alliance. Additionally in years two - three, the Office will create an outreach

campaign to individuals of color and from diverse cultural backgrounds for the internships.

In year three, the office will work with state agencies, advocacy organizations and local early childhood councils to develop additional opportunities for internships that will promote leadership.

- **Link, align and provide technical assistance for peer support groups as needed.**

The Office of Professional Development will use their website to provide, link and align technical assistance to peer support groups. The peer support groups would include but not be limited to: early childhood professional organizations, foundations, advocacy organizations, and local resource and referral agencies. In year two, the OPD with representation from local early childhood communities, the Pilot Leadership Alliance, and professional organizations will develop a needs survey to find out what technical assistance would be beneficial. The survey will then be distributed to pilot and early learning community programs throughout the state. The findings from the survey will be distributed and implemented in year three.

- **Coordinate coaching and mentorship opportunities for early childhood professionals.**

The Office of Professional Development will form a working committee of interested parties and stakeholders from the Clayton Foundation, Colorado Community Colleges, Qualistar Early Learning, Colorado Department of Education, to begin to research coaching and mentorship opportunities that are available for early childhood professionals. The OPD will facilitate the coordination of these opportunities. Further, the OPD will develop information for the OPD website on coaching and mentorship programs in year two. The OPD will research information from other states on funding for model programs.

1.2 Development of Standards

Begin to facilitate the process of identifying and organizing consistent training standards with stakeholders and the Advisory Board in order to implement A-C in Paragraph 3.4.3.1

Training standards for early care and education providers were developed in 1996, *Colorado's Core Knowledge and Standards: A Guide for Early Childhood Professional Development*. These standards will be updated in Spring 2006 by the Credential Office. These early childhood care and education professional standards are currently being used by Qualistar as content areas for approving training that is paid for by Qualistar. This is part of its training registry system. Please see 3.4.2.2 A about how the Office will ensure consistent training standards by adapting the Qualistar training registry.

Working with stakeholders, such as Head Start CDE, CDHS, Qualistar, OPD Advisory Board, the Office will start the process of gleaning out standards that apply across the early childhood disciplines of health, mental health, parent education and family support. These “primary” standards will form the basis of standards that apply to specific disciplines to be developed in years three - four.

1.3 Availability and Accessibility

A. Identify and market financial resources for professional development.

Work with foundations on the promotion of the focusing on the PD. TEACH, Loan repayment all part of the resources brochures and publicize through the Office website, professional organizations newsletters at conferences, through early childhood local councils, pilots, etc.

B. Serve as a clearinghouse for statewide early childhood training calendar for professional development opportunities.

The OPD will negotiate the transfer for the responsibility and maintenance of the training calendar and transfer the current training calendar from Qualistar's website to the SSCOPD website.

3.4.1.4 Supporting High Quality Professional Development

A. Work to ensure that professional development continues to be an important component of the quality ratings and tiered reimbursement strategies for early care and education settings.

The director, assistant director and online project manager of the Credential Office have been involved with many state level policy and work groups. As a result of the merging of the Credential Office and the Office of Professional Development, staff members will continue their membership and involvement with these groups. Additionally, the new OPD staff member, the mental health specialist, will attend appropriate meetings with Harambe and the Blue Ribbon Panel on Early Childhood Mental Health. These groups include, but are not limited to, the following: the Early Childhood State Systems Team, the Pilot Leadership Alliance, Qualistar Early Learning Network's Trainer Approval Committee, the Early Child and School Readiness Commission's Articulation Task Force, the Colorado Community Colleges Online Program (CCCOOnline), the Early Childhood Faculty Coalition, the Colorado After-School Network.

The Credential Office was a key player in helping Qualistar shape the professional development component of the quality rating system. The educational criteria for professional credentials were the basis for the professional development part of the quality rating system. As the Rand Research Study on the Qualistar rating system is coming to a close, the OPD will continue promoting the incorporation of the Colorado's Early Childhood Credentials into the rating system, and will work with Qualistar to streamline the processing of the college transcripts by utilizing the OPD staff. Much as the director qualifications for a large child care center and the professional credentials have been aligned, and the process streamlined for practitioners by electronic transfer of data.

B. Facilitate further discussion of articulation agreements with early childhood among institutions of higher education.

The Credential Office director administered the mid 1990s project that developed a seamless system of horizontal articulation among Colorado Community Colleges. This included common course names, numbers, content and number of credits. Staff is presently providing technical assistance and expertise as a member of the Early

Childhood and School Readiness Commission's (CDSR) Articulation Task Force. Progress to date has included meetings with the Chief Academic Officer, Matt Gianneschi, at the Commission of Higher Education (CCHE) who has offered help in facilitating meetings with early childhood faculty at the community colleges and four-year institutions of higher education about reviewing the current Teacher Education articulation agreement. Additionally, CCHE has indicated a willingness to help pursue a "universal" articulation agreement once a college is willing to offer an early childhood interdisciplinary baccalaureate degree. The Credential Office is working with CSU on the possibility of offering this degree or modifying their existing degree in human development and family studies. A database (map) will be developed. Articulation work will continue under the auspices of the Office of Professional Development including strong partnerships with the ECRS Commission, CCHE, early childhood faculty and students.

1.5 Identification and Analysis of Gaps and Needs in Professional Development

A. Develop formal relationships with a wide range of early childhood partners including funders, the Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission, and key early childhood programs at state agencies, including the Colorado Departments of Education, Human Services, Public Health and Environment.

The Office of Professional Development will develop memorandums of understanding (MOU) with funders, Smart Start Colorado, the Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission, and key early childhood programs at state agencies, including the Colorado Departments of Education, Human Services, Public Health and Environment. The MOU's will outline the roles, responsibilities, and operational interface among the agencies and the Office.

1.6 Developing a Plan for Sustaining and Growing the Office

A. Begin developing a public-private funding plan for long-term sustainability of the Smart Start Office of Professional Development, which includes the exploration of charging fees, accessing private funding, as well as other fundraising strategies.

The Office of Professional Development will do an environmental scan about how other states fund their Office of Professional Development. Additionally, information will be gathered on early childhood professional development and resources sought from state agencies that are involved with the Smart Start Colorado systems work. Currently, the CDHS is the largest funder of professional development systems work. As we look to expand the focus of the Office to include disciplines such as early childhood mental health, health and medical home, parent education and support, it will be important for the OPD to expand revenue from disciplines other than just early childhood education. The Community College of Denver (CCD), fiscal agent for the SSCOPD, has the ability to assess fees, e.g. for issuing credentials or for training. This change for the college went into effect July 1, 2005. Additionally, CCD has a resource development office, Institutional Advancement – detailed information is listed under Fundraising and Ability to Charge Fees – that will help research, pursue and write grants for private foundation funding as well as state and federal grants for the OPD. The OPD will utilize the OPD Advisory Board in identifying potential revenue sources.

B. Plan with the Funding Task Force of the Early Childhood State Systems Team.

Credential Office staff is currently a member of the Funding Task Force of the Early Childhood State Systems Team. This working relation will continue. Since the Office of Professional Development is the first piece of Smart Start Colorado to be put in place, it is important to work in a more formalized way with the Funding Task Force. As in the past, it is crucial to have a funding plan, which is agreed upon for all the systems work that can be presented to foundations and other grantors. The proposed OPD director currently sits at the ECSST which is a plus in being up to speed on the systems work and facilitating the integration of funding plans.

1.7 Review and Evaluation of Professional Development Efforts

A. Assure accountability of the Office through timely reporting of professional development activities.

The Office of Professional Development will provide quarterly reports to the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and to private funders. The Professional Credential Office has been providing similar reports to CDHS for the past six years. Also, reports have been sent out to Pilot coordinators and early childhood councils on numbers of professional credentials in their communities along with demographic information on those getting credentials. Community information will be expanded as appropriate and will continue to be sent out quarterly. Regular reports on activities will be given to the Advisory Board. Data requests from the Colorado Department of Human Services, Colorado Department of Education, the Early Childhood State Systems Team, and ECSR Commission are answered in a timely manner. We also occasionally provide additional data, upon request, to Pilot coordinators and school districts.

B. Identify an assessment tool to use for evaluation of Office tasks that includes a method or methods of assessing quality outcomes for children.

The Office of Professional Development will work with Omni Research and Training to develop an assessment tool for evaluation of the Office and its tasks including the evaluation of culturally competent practices. Omni is involved with the state level child outcomes work as well as developing the Community Needs Assessment Tool Kit. A quick survey from the National Registry Alliance resulted in the finding that there is no consistent method by which other state professional development offices are assessed. The National Registry Alliance has developed a draft *Best Practices for Registry Systems*. This document will be used as the content-basis for developing a qualitative assessment tool. One aspect of any assessment tool used will be a client feedback form for both practitioners and entities such as Pilots, state departments and community agencies. Client feedback tools used in Montana and Wyoming have been researched, and will be used as the basis for Colorado's survey. The client survey will be available both in paper format and online through the Office website. Once a year, surveys will be sent to partners and individuals. Results will be included in the fourth quarter reports. Quantitative data will be collected on the numbers of credential issued, numbers of individuals trained, number of individuals accessing resources and will be part of the quarterly reports issued. The Office of Professional Development will work with other ongoing entities – the ECSST, Preventive Leadership Council, the Outcome and Evaluation Task Force, CDE's Results Matters project, and Qualistar Early Learning – in identifying quality outcomes for children that will be collected statewide. This evaluative

work will include looking at particular aspects of the early childhood system that improve child outcomes, including credentials and professional development of practitioners. It is important that the Office of Professional Development is integrated into the larger assessment work of Smart Start Colorado.

YEAR TWO TASKS

2.1 Supporting High Quality Professional Development

A. Develop plan that includes transition strategies/action steps to coordinate early childhood credentials statewide and manage the Credential Office.

The Community College of Denver (CCD) applied to this request for proposal in order to merge the Credential Office and the Professional Development Office. The Credential Office provides strong building blocks for the Smart Start Colorado Office of Professional Development. An infrastructure is already in place at CCD that includes administrative support, computer and database technical support, website hosting, fiscal oversight, payroll functions, fundraising capacity, and professional development opportunities for staff through the college and the larger Colorado Community Colleges and Occupational Education System. The Community College of Denver is a respected institution of higher education which is one of only a few Hispanic Designated Colleges in Colorado. An advantage of the Office of Professional Credential being at CCD is the ability of the college to leverage resources in disciplines such as child health, child mental health and early childhood education and in systems areas, such as hosting the Credential Challenge Tests, and its partnerships with community colleges and four year colleges throughout Colorado. Unlike many institutions of higher education, the Community College of Denver takes 8% indirect on grants enabling the preponderance of funds to go directly into the operating, staffing and project work of the Office.

B. Promote the utilization of Building Blocks and Early Learning Guidelines to all licensed child care providers.

Information about and copies of Building Blocks and Early Learning Guidelines will be made available through the Office of Professional Development's website. Articles will be written for early childhood professional organizations' newsletter. The Colorado Departments of Education, Human Services, and Public Health and Environment, the Office and other partners will pursue the development of and resources for training on the Early Learning Guidelines. The Office will convene meetings with early childhood faculty to identify where the guidelines are taught within early childhood courses and develop a crosswalk between the guidelines and courses. The Office will begin to develop a crosswalk between the *Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Standards* and the Early Learning Guidelines, and to create an Early Learning Guidelines Endorsement on the professional credential.

C. Promote the expansion of Early Learning Guidelines to infants and toddlers.

The Colorado Department of Education has begun the expansion of the Early Learning Guidelines for infants and toddlers. The Office will provide content expert staff to be a member of the team developing these guidelines and will promote their use as mentioned above.

2.2 Development of Standards

A. Integrate and maintain a central training registry.

Qualistar Early Learning has established a non-credit training registry with content based on *Colorado's Core Knowledge and Standards: A Guideline for Early Childhood*

Professional Development. While this was developed specifically for the training funded by Qualistar and usually provided by local resource and referral programs, Qualistar had a very broad and inclusive committee (including staff of the Credential Office) whose intent was to develop a registry that could later be adopted by other entities that provide or approve training. The Office will work with and provide resources to Qualistar on adapting its database to approve training based on *Core Knowledge* and that can count towards educational requirements for the early childhood credential. Approved trainings will be listed on the Office's online training calendar.

B. Integrate and maintain a central trainer registry.

Again, Qualistar has developed criteria for the approval of trainers and a database. The Office of Professional Development will collaborate with Qualistar to integrate this part of a training system. The intent is that the list of approved trainers will be available on the Office website. Criteria used to approve trainers will be the same criteria used to approve trainers of pre-licensing and ongoing training as required by Child Care Licensing. Only training provided by an approved trainer will count towards credential requirements.

C. Integrate and maintain a central trainee registry.

The Office will build on the Credential database and establish a trainee registry for those taking pre-approved (content and trainers) training, which will include pre-service and ongoing training. The licensing model recommendations most likely will include the need for approved training and trainers for pre-service and ongoing training. The trainee registry will help track those who have met the Child Care Licensing training requirements, streamlining the work of licensing workers.

D. Develop translations of approved (informal) training into credits for prior learning.

Translation of approved, non-credit training into credits for prior learning is the purview of each college. That said, the Office of Professional Development will convene a task force of community college and interested four year early childhood faculty to work on establishing some common criteria for this translation. The use of the *Core Knowledge and Standards* in both the approval of non-credit training and their incorporation into the eight core early childhood community college courses, provides a common language for the translation. The two levels of the credential challenge test are based on the *Core Knowledge and Standards*. The tests may be used as is or modified as one of the ways to translate non-credit training. Early Childhood faculty at community colleges has a long history of collaborating starting with the project that resulted in common course titles, numbering, content and number of credits.

E. Develop process to endorse content of pre-service and ongoing training.

Working with the CDHS, CDE, the Professional Development work group of the Licensing Model Committee, and the Office of Professional Development Advisory Board, the Office will establish content and trainer criteria for the pre-service and ongoing training again, using the *Core Knowledge and Standards*. Endorsing the content for required trainings will be inline with the approval of other noncredit training. The

approved trainers and the levels of training for which they are approved will be listed on the Division of Child Care’s training vendor list as well as on the Office’s website.

F. Recognize/translate out-of-state training into State approved training.

The Office will pull together a committee to establish criteria for the acceptance of out-of-state non-credit training. Some considerations are the following: whether this training went through any approval process by the other state; if that state has early childhood core knowledge and standards; did that state look at the qualifications of the trainer; does that state have a system of training and/or a professional development office. The National Registry Alliance will be used to provide information on how other states “recognize” out-of-state trainings. Again, the credential challenge tests would provide one avenue of translation.

2.3 Availability and Accessibility

A. Utilize technology to increase access to professional development information, including the expansion of distance learning opportunities and the technology support in order to use these opportunities.

One advantage of merging of the Credential Office and the OPD is the Early Childhood Distance Learning Program and manager. Housed at the Credential Office and utilizing the Colorado Community Colleges Online (CCCOonline) system, this online program currently offers 17 early childhood education credit-barring courses; 550 students are enrolled Fall 2005 semester. This system of distance training can be expanded as needed to include courses in other early childhood disciplines, such as early childhood mental health, health care, parent education. The distance learning manager has and will continue to provide assistance to individuals and communities on technical support for this course work. There is an online tutorial for individuals enrolling in the online courses, a questionnaire about the individual’s ability to work independently and a link to an early childhood advisor at their home school. Also, the early childhood home page at CCCOonline provides information and resources for students, including information about T.E.A.C.H .and the loan re-payment program.

Additional Task: The OPD will start using technology for meetings and communication among instructors at Colorado Community Colleges and four-year institutions of higher education. This Virtual Community is an interactive online meeting place for any group of people with common interests. This community space is accessible through an Internet portal and only members and invited guests would have access to the information. This common community space would be available for collaboration, information exchange and common calendars. Members could hold discussions in either chat mode or asynchronous threaded discussion format. Additionally, the Virtual Community could be paired with online meeting software which would further enable various groups to meet more often. These online meetings can also be recorded for storage and future playback. The Early Childhood community would benefit from using both the Virtual Community and the online meeting software to increase collaboration and interaction among all facets of early childhood across Colorado. Early feedback from stakeholders and potential users suggests that this system would fill a problematic communication gap.

B. Develop a plan for transition strategies/action steps to administer Colorado Department of Human Services funded scholarship programs, such as TEACH.

The OPD will work on a smooth transition of the TEACH program from Qualistar. During year two, the T.E.A.C.H. coordinator would be located in the OPD. This move is from the second floor at 3607 Martin Luther King Blvd. to the first floor will help to develop the needed coordination. During year three, the specific funding attached to T.E.A.C.H. would be in the OPD, as specified in the year three contract with CDHS. The OPD will coordinate with the Colorado Department of Human Services. Further, the OPD will begin to explore other statewide scholarship opportunities.

C. Facilitate access to training opportunities for early childhood providers who are English language learners (especially Spanish-speaking providers).

The Early Childhood Distance Learning Program has offered two early childhood courses in Spanish language. Recruitment for these courses, by the OPD, will be intensified in years two and three. The OPD will track community and college early childhood trainings that address the English language learners emphasizing Spanish speaking providers. Spanish language brochures on professional development opportunities and available resources will be written and distributed in year three.

2.4 Sustaining the Office of Professional Development

A. Develop a public-private funding plan for long-term sustainability of the Office, which includes the exploration of charging fees, accessing private funding, as well as other fundraising strategies.

The Office of Professional Development will do an environmental scan about how other states fund their Office of Professional Development. Additionally, information will be gathered on early childhood professional development and resources sought from state agencies that are involved with the Smart Start Colorado systems work. Currently, the CDHS is the largest funder of professional development systems work. As we look to expand the focus of the Office to include disciplines such as early childhood mental health, health and medical home, parent education and support, it will be important for the OPD to expand revenue from disciplines other than just early childhood education and from state agencies in addition to CDHS. The Community College of Denver (CCD), fiscal agent for the SSCOPD, has the ability to assess fees, e.g. for issuing credentials or for training. This change for the college went into effect July 1, 2005. Additionally, CCD has a resource development office, Institutional Advancement – detailed information is listed under Fundraising and Ability to Charge Fees – that will help research, pursue and write grants for private foundation funding as well as state and federal grants for the OPD. The OPD will utilize the OPD Advisory Board in identifying potential revenue sources.

During year three, the OPD will be working on sustainable funding in the larger context of the Smart Start Colorado Office. These two efforts need to go hand-in-hand as this work moves forward.

B. Plan with the Funding Task Force of the Early Childhood State Systems Team.

Credential Office staff is currently a member of the Funding Task Force of the Early Childhood State Systems Team. This working relation will continue. Since the Office of Professional Development is the first piece of Smart Start Colorado to be put in place, it is important to work in a more formalized way with the Funding Task Force. As in the past, it is crucial to have a funding plan, which is agreed upon for all the systems work that can be presented to foundations and other grantors. The proposed OPD director currently sits at the ECSST which is a plus in being up to speed on the systems work and facilitating the integration of funding plans.

YEAR TWO – THREE TASKS

3.1 Supporting High Quality Professional Development

A. Coordinate and lead a campaign to increase awareness of the Office’s professional development opportunities and the importance of well-trained early childhood workforce.

The Office will work with the Early Childhood State System Team (ECSST) Marketing Task Force to ensure that the message about the importance of a well-trained early childhood workforce is part of the overall message of Smart Start Colorado. The Office also will make information available about professional development opportunities through a variety of avenues: website, training calendar, brochures, community meetings, early childhood college classes, Pilot Leadership Alliance meetings, ECSST meetings.

B. Lead and coordinate policies to impact compensation and workforce retention issues.

The Office will research policies in other states that impact compensation and workforce retention. These policies will be reviewed by the Advisory Council and recommendations will be made to the ECSST/Smart Start Colorado. Implementing approved policies will become part of the workplan for the Office in years four and five.

As members of the Policy Matters work, ECSST, the Finance Task Force, the Pilot Leadership Alliance, the Early Childhood Summit, and the Colorado Early Childhood Professional Coalition, staff has and will continue working on policies that support equitable compensation. Examples of some work which will be expanded include the following:

- Working with local school districts, that do not require teacher licenses to teach a public school preschool, about putting teachers who hold a Professional Credential on the teacher’s salary schedule as Logan County as done;
- Using Professional Credential attainment as the basis for bonus in Pilot communities;
- Working with the CDHS on tiered licensing based on professional development and differential CCCAP reimbursement (the licensing model work);
- Technical assistance to communities and individual programs on both how to set up salary schedules that are based on the level of professional development and experience, and on workplace best practices.

C. Draft and present professional development recommendations to Child Care Licensing.

The OPD will work closely with the Division of Child Care, early childhood faculty, Pilots and other stakeholders, and will take the lead on developing licensing recommendations. The office will start with the Colorado professional development recommendations in Policy Matters. The National Registry Alliance and the National Child Care Information Center will be utilized as resources on professional development best practices and recommendations.

3.2 Identification and Analysis of Gaps and Needs in Professional Development

A. Begin to develop a core knowledge base for all staff within the early childhood system, and facilitate professional development activities that supplement the core knowledge across disciplines.

Colorado's Core Knowledge and Standards: A Guide for Early Childhood Professional Development was developed in 1996. The standards will be updated in Spring 2006 by the Credential Office. These early childhood care and education professional standards are currently being used by Qualistar as content areas for approving training that is paid for by Qualistar.

Working with stakeholders, such as Head Start CDE, CDHS, Qualistar, OPD Advisory Board, the Office will start the process of gleaning out standards that apply across the early childhood disciplines of health, mental health, parent education and family support. These “primary” standards will form the core knowledge base for all disciplines within early childhood. Using the training approval registry system, the Office will work with stakeholders on including the standards as part of training.

B. Identify existing supports and incentives for professional development, ensure these incentives are accessible, and develop additional incentives where there are gaps.

In year three, the Office will have a database of resources, incentives and supports for professional development in Colorado. The OPD will work with its Advisory Board, Pilots, early childhood community councils, funders, state agencies on identifying gaps and in pursuing ways to fill those needs.

C. Office reviews and maps degrees relevant to early childhood. Facilitates discussion, and provides technical assistance and support in communication regarding degrees.

Year one, staff is presently providing technical assistance and expertise as a member of the Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission's (CDSR) Articulation Task Force. The Commission of Higher Education (CCHE) has offered help in facilitating meetings with early childhood faculty at the community colleges and four-year institutions of higher education about reviewing the current Teacher Education articulation agreement. Additionally, CCHE has indicated a willingness to help pursue a “universal” articulation agreement once a college is willing to offer an early childhood interdisciplinary baccalaureate degree. The Credential Office is working with CSU on the possibility of offering this degree or modifying their existing degree in human development and family studies. Articulation work will continue under the auspices of the Office of Professional Development including strong partnerships with the ECRS Commission, CCHE, early childhood faculty and students.

Years two and three, the Office will track early childhood degrees and articulation agreements. Also, the Office will provide this information on its website, and in individual professional development advising on the phone, in person and through e-mail.

3.3 Review and Evaluation of Professional Development Efforts

Evaluate the effectiveness of culturally competent practices in professional development activities provided and/or conducted by the office.

Using the assessment tool developed by Omni in years one and two, the Office of Professional Development will evaluate of the Office, its tasks and training. The assessment tool will include the evaluation of culturally competent practices as well as “best practices” designated by the National Registry Alliance.

In year three, the OPD will put together a committee of experts to identify aspects of training that promote diverse and cultural competence. These items will be included in years four and five as approval criteria for trainings in the registry system.

Products and Timelines

YEAR ONE (3/01/06 – 6/30/06)

WORK OBJECTIVES	TASKS	OUTCOMES/ PRODUCTS	TIMELINE
1.1 Linking Training and Professional Development Opportunities	A. Begin to develop and maintain a professional development website, closely linked with the Smart Start Colorado website, to provide centralized information and resources related to early childhood professional development.	SSCOPD website will be functional	May 2006
	B. Begin to assess the needs for specific provider trainings to support professional development.	Assessment tool designed	April 2006
		Environmental Scan completed	June 2006
	C. Establish and maintain a Professional Development Advisory Board that includes diverse cultural and multi-disciplinary representation	List of Members	April 2006
		Meeting Agenda	June 2006
	D. Assess the most effective way to accomplish the following tasks and submit a plan for how the Office will most effectively address the following in years two and three:	Written Plan	June 2006
	* Link and align professional development activities among local communities	Work with Pilot Leadership	Year 2
	* Provide and/or coordinate technical assistance to communities about professional development.	Community meetings	Year 2 & 3
	* Provide professional and career development resources and guidance.	Database of resources	Year 2
	* Provide and coordinate leadership training.	List of available training	Year 2
* Develop leadership that is diverse and culturally competent.	Develop key components	Year 2	

	<p>* Link and align eligible early childhood professionals with existing internships, fellowships and apprenticeships</p> <p>* Link, align and provide technical assistance for peer support groups as needed.</p> <p>* Coordinate coaching and mentorship opportunities for early childhood professionals.</p>	<p>Review of training for cultural competence</p> <p>Database</p> <p>Increased opportunities</p> <p>TA needs survey</p> <p>Provide TA</p> <p>Info on website</p>	<p>Year 3</p> <p>Year 2</p> <p>Year 3</p> <p>Year 2</p> <p>Year 3</p> <p>Year 2</p>
1.2 Development of Standards	Begin to facilitate the process of identifying and organizing consistent training standards with stakeholders and the Advisory Board in order to implement A-C in Paragraph 3.4.3	Updated <i>ECE Core Knowledge and Standards</i>	June 2006
1.3 Availability and Accessibility	<p>A. Identify and market financial resources for professional development.</p> <p>B. Serve as a clearinghouse for statewide early childhood training calendar for professional development opportunities.</p>	<p>Info on website</p> <p>Resource Brochure</p> <p>Training Calendar on website</p>	<p>May 2006</p> <p>June 2006</p> <p>May 2006</p>
1.4 Supporting High Quality Professional Development	<p>A. Work to ensure that professional development continues to be an important component of the quality ratings and tiered reimbursement strategies for early care and education settings.</p> <p>B. Facilitate further discussion of articulation agreements with early childhood among institutions of higher education.</p>	<p>Attendance at appropriate state meetings – ECSST, Finance TF, PLA, ECSR Commission</p> <p>Work with ECSR Commission and CSU</p> <p>Map/database</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing meetings</p> <p>June 2006</p>

<p>1.5 Identification and Analysis of Gaps and Needs in Professional Development</p>	<p>A. Develop formal relationships with a wide range of early childhood partners including funders, the Early Childhood and School Readiness Commission, and key early childhood programs at state agencies, including the Colorado Departments of Education, Human Services, Public Health and Environment.</p>	<p>Signed MOUs</p>	<p>June 2006</p>
<p>1.6 Developing a Plan for Sustaining and Growing the Office</p>	<p>A. Begin developing a public-private funding plan for long-term sustainability of the Smart Start Office of Professional Development, which includes the exploration of charging fees, accessing private funding, as well as other fundraising strategies. B. Plan with the Funding Task Force of the Early Childhood State Systems Team.</p>	<p>Draft funding plan for years two and three Attend Funding TF meetings</p>	<p>June 2006 Ongoing</p>
<p>1.7 Review and Evaluation of Professional Development Efforts</p>	<p>A. Assure accountability of the Office through timely reporting of professional development activities. B. Identify an assessment tool to use for evaluation of Office tasks that includes a method or methods of assessing quality outcomes for children.</p>	<p>Quarterly reports to CDHS and Advisory Board Office Assessment Tool developed Meetings with the Outcomes and Evaluation TF</p>	<p>March and June 2006 June 2006 Ongoing</p>

YEAR TWO – SFY 2007

WORK OBJECTIVES	TASKS	OUTCOMES/ PRODUCTS	TIMELINE
2.1 Supporting High Quality Professional Development	A. Develop plan that includes transition strategies/action steps to coordinate early childhood credentials statewide and manage the Credential Office.	Completed	Grant Award
	B. Promote the utilization of Building Blocks and Early Learning Guidelines to all licensed child care providers.	Link to info on website Crosswalk to <i>EC Core Knowledge and Standards</i>	August 2006 March 2007
	C. Promote the expansion of Early Learning Guidelines to infants and toddlers.	OPD staff on CDE’s development team	July 2006 – June 2007
2.2 Development of Standards	A. Integrate and maintain a central training registry.	MOU with Qualistar Info on website	September 2006 December 2006
	B. Integrate and maintain a central trainer registry.	MOU with Qualistar Info on website	September 2006 December 2006
	C. Integrate and maintain a central trainee registry.	MOU with Qualistar Info on website	September 2006 December 2006
	D. Develop translations of approved (informal) training into credits for prior learning.	Establish a task force on Credits for Prior Learning with EC faculty	October 2006 – May 2007
	E. Develop process to endorse content of pre-service and ongoing training.	Written criteria and trainer qualifications	September 2006 – March 2007
	F. Recognize/translate out-of-state training into State approved training.	Written Criteria and form	August 2006 – April 2007

2.3 Availability and Accessibility	A. Utilize technology to increase access to professional development information, including the expansion of distance learning opportunities and the technology support in order to use these opportunities.	TA to individuals and communities on distance learning opportunities	Ongoing
		Establishment of the Virtual Community & Meetings	July 2006
	B. Develop a plan for transition strategies/action steps to administer Colorado Department of Human Services funded scholarship programs, such as TEACH.	Written Plan/Mou	May 2007
	C. Facilitate access to training opportunities for early childhood providers who are English language learners (especially Spanish-speaking providers).	Continue offering Spanish language EC courses online	Ongoing
		Map of current trainings offered in Spanish	February 2007
2.4 Sustaining the Office of Professional Development	A. Develop a public-private funding plan for long-term sustainability of the Office, which includes the exploration of charging fees, accessing private funding, as well as other fundraising strategies.	Written plan	June 2007
	B. Plan with the Funding Task Force of the Early Childhood State Systems Team.	The above mentioned plan will be developed within the larger SSC funding plan	Ongoing meetings

YEAR TWO/THREE SFY 2007 & 2008

WORK OBJECTIVES	TASKS	OUTCOMES/ PRODUCTS	TIMELINE
3.1 Supporting High Quality Professional Development	A. Coordinate and lead a campaign to increase awareness of the Office’s professional development opportunities and the importance of well-trained early childhood workforce.	“Message” developed with SSC – on website and in brochures	August 2007
	B. Lead and coordinate policies to impact compensation and workforce retention issues.	Recommendations	December 2007
	C. Draft and present professional development recommendations to Child Care Licensing	Recommendations	Spring 2008
3.2 Identification and Analysis of Gaps and Needs in Professional Development	A. Begin to develop a core knowledge base for all staff within the early childhood system, and facilitate professional development activities that supplement the core knowledge across disciplines.	Core knowledge base identified Used as basis of training approval	October 2007 January 2008
	B. Identify existing supports and incentives for professional development, ensure these incentives are accessible, and develop additional incentives where there are gaps.	Database of Resources	August 2007
		Gaps Identified	October 2007
		Plan for filling the gaps	December 2007
		Pursuit of resources to fill gaps	January 2008 – June 2008
		Map articulation and degrees	July 2006 – June 2008
	C. Office reviews and maps degrees relevant to early childhood. Facilitates discussion, and provides technical assistance and support in communication regarding degrees.	Info on website & through advising	July 2006 – June 2008
		Office assessment results	June 2007 and June 2008
		Identified criteria for culturally competent practices in PD	June 2008
3.3 Review and Evaluation of Professional Development Efforts	Evaluate the effectiveness of culturally competent practices in professional development activities provided and/or conducted by the office.		

COLORADO STATE PLAN FOR CCDF SERVICES – SFY 2008
SMART START COLORADO OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTWORKPLAN

PRIORITY AREAS/ACTIVITIES	OUTCOMES/ PRODUCTS	TIMELINE
1. Supporting High Quality Professional Development		
<p>A. Promote the utilization of Building Blocks and Early Learning Guidelines to all licensed child care providers.</p> <p><i>This activity is a carryover from SFY 2007 since the Colorado Department of Education has not yet completed the Early Learning Guidelines</i></p>	<p>Link to info on website</p> <p>Crosswalk to <i>EC Core Knowledge and Standards</i></p>	<p>Fall 2007</p> <p>Winter 2008</p>
<p>B. Promote the expansion of Early Learning Guidelines to infants and toddlers. <i>Again, this is postponed till this year.</i></p>	<p>OPD staff on CDE’s development team</p>	<p>July 2007 – June 2008</p>
<p>C. Develop translations of approved (informal) training into credits for prior learning where appropriate..</p>	<p>Matrix of ways to translate training into credit for prior learning</p>	<p>August 2007 – May 2008</p>
<p>D. Collaborate and communicate with early childhood stakeholder groups to ensure that professional development continues to be an important component of the quality ratings and tiered reimbursement strategies for early care and education settings.</p>	<p>Work with the Lieutenant Governor’s Office</p> <p>Regular attendance at appropriate stakeholder meetings – SSC, Finance task force (TF), Public Engage TF, Outcomes and Eval. TF, Pilot Leadership Council (PLA), Early Childhood Summit, Colorado After-School Network, Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>E. Facilitate further discussion of articulation agreements with early childhood among institutions of higher education.</p>	<p>Work with the Lieutenant Governor’s Office and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.</p> <p>Establish a committee of early childhood faculty.</p>	<p>Ongoing meetings</p> <p>September 2007</p>

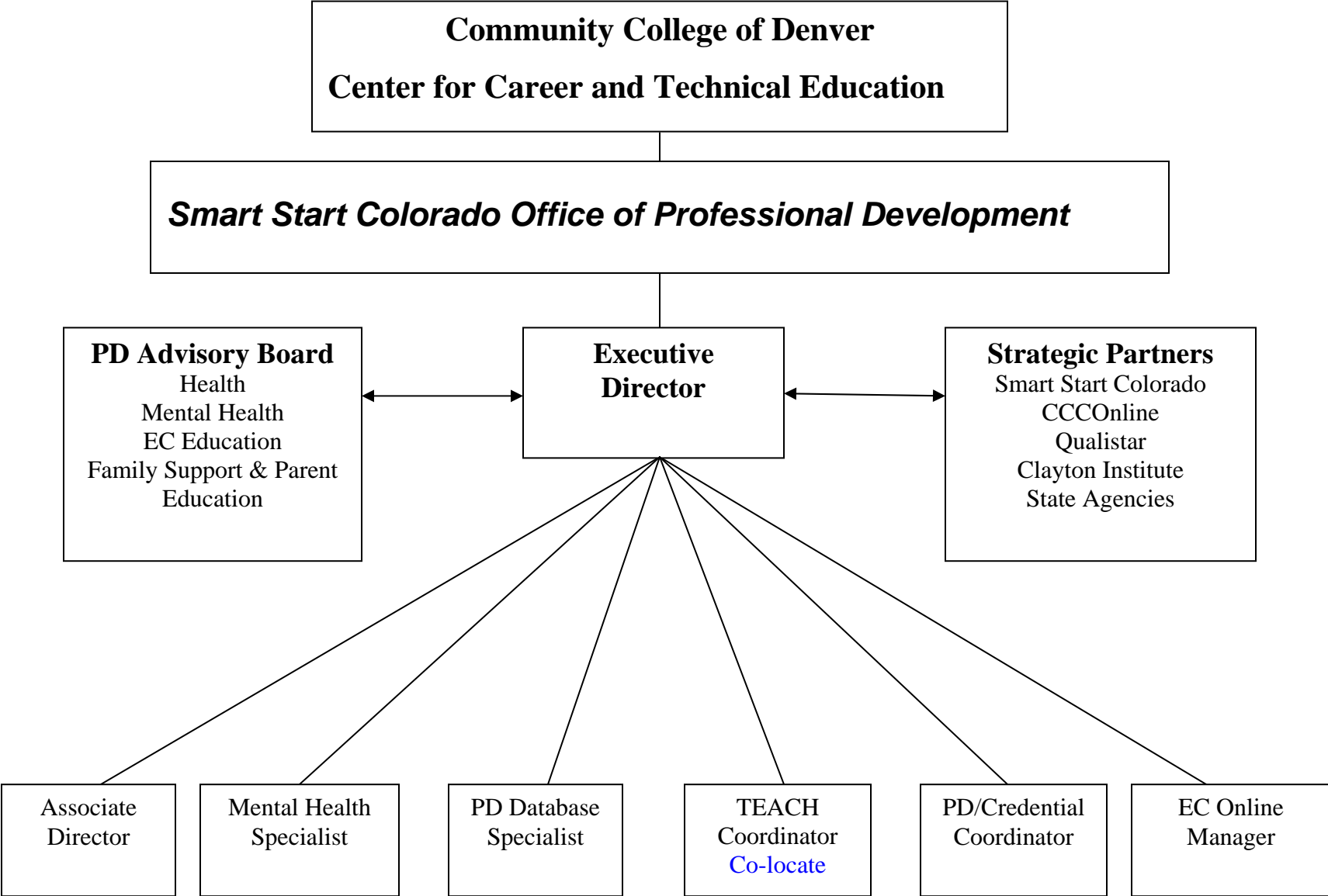
Work with the University of Cincinnati and Colorado Community Colleges on developing a 3 + 1 articulation agreement to a BS in early childhood.	Written Agreement	Winter 2008
F. Host the National Registry Alliance Conference July 2007	Hold conference	July 16-18 2007
2. Linking Training and Professional Development Opportunities		
A. Maintain and update the Office of Professional Development web pages on the SSC website	OPD info is updated and useful	Minimum of quarterly updates
B. Complete an annual training needs assessment to assess the needs for specific provider trainings to support professional development.	Complete an environmental scan	Summer 2007
C. Link and align professional development activities among local communities	Ongoing work with the early childhood councils leadership	July 2007 - June 2008
D. Provide and/or coordinate technical assistance to communities about professional development.	Community meetings	July 2007 - June 2008
E. Provide professional and career development resources and guidance.	Updated database of resources, written materials, through phone calls and e-mails	July 2007 - June 2008
F. Coordinate leadership training for early childhood professionals Develop key components of leadership training that include diversity and cultural competency.	List of available trainings is updated at least annually on the web pages Work with Qualistar, Clayton to establish quality criteria	September 2007 July 2007 - June 2008
G. Link and align eligible early childhood professionals with: *existing internships, fellowships and apprenticeships; *peer support groups; *coaching and mentorship opportunities	Database on website Work with Qualistar, Clayton to establish quality criteria	July 2007 July 2007 - June 2008
H. Staff the Professional Development Advisory Board and its committees	Meeting Agendas (6 meetings a year)	July 2007 – June 2008
3. Development of Standards		

A. Begin to facilitate the process of identifying and organizing consistent training standards with stakeholders and the Advisory Board	Printed updated Early Care and Education (<i>ECE</i>) <i>Core Knowledge and Standards</i>	August 2007
B. Vet the early childhood social emotional professional development strategic plan with state and national experts and with communities	Draft plan will be revised as necessary	July 2007-September 2007
C. Develop early childhood social emotional professional development standards with a group of stakeholders – building upon the state plan.	EC social and emotional professional development standards publication	July 2007 – April 2008
D. Vet the early childhood social emotional professional development standards with stakeholders and early childhood councils	Community meetings	Spring 2008
4. Issue Credentials		
A. Process and issue 350 - 450 Early Childhood Professional Credentials	Number of issued credentials	July 2007– June 2008
B. Process and issue infant toddler endorsement	Number of endorsements issued	Ongoing
C. Process and issue School Age/Youth Credentials	Number of issued SA/Y Credentials	July 2007 – June 2008
D. Meet with Credential Committee	Review individual Credential applications as needed for clarification	Minimum of 2 times a year
E. Update the Credential Test and increase the number of testing sites at colleges in Colorado	Updated test questions Increase in sites (more than current 8)	February 2008 By June 2008
5. Availability and Accessibility		
A. Utilize technology to increase access to professional development information, including the expansion of distance learning opportunities and the technology support in order to use these opportunities.	Technical assistance to individuals and communities on distance learning opportunities Build-out of the early childhood section of CO-Train	Ongoing July 2007 – June 2008
B. Identify and market financial resources for professional development.	Updated information on website Resource information is in the OPD brochure	Ongoing July 2007 – June 2008

	Approximately 4,000 are distributed yearly	
<p>C. Integrate and maintain a centralized list of professional development and training opportunities for early childhood professionals</p> <p>Integrate and maintain a centralized list of individuals and organizations that provide appropriate early childhood professional development and/or training to early childhood professionals</p> <p>Integrate and maintain a centralized list of individuals who have or are registered to participate in professional development or other appropriate early childhood training classes coordinated through or provided by the OPD</p> <p>These activities will include pre-service and ongoing training.</p>	<p>Work with Qualistar and the Prevention Leadership Council to build-out the EC section of CO-Train and transfer the calendar.</p>	<p>July 2007 – June 2008</p>
<p>D. Collaborate with appropriate stakeholders, in the development of a strategic plan and action steps for future coordination and perhaps consolidation of early childhood professional development resources, e.g. T.E.A.C.H.</p>	<p>In light of the role that the Lieutenant Governor is taking around the development of an early childhood system, these discussions seem premature.</p>	<p>ON HOLD</p>
<p>E. Facilitate access to training opportunities for early childhood providers who are English language learners (especially Spanish-speaking providers).</p>	<p>Continue offering Spanish language EC courses online</p> <p>Map of current trainings offered in Spanish</p> <p>Developing linkages to the University of Cincinnati that provides an extensive Spanish language program.</p>	<p>At least once a year</p> <p>February 2008</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>F. Market the services provided by the Office: Online Programs, Credentials, Resource, and Information etc.</p> <p>-Through OPD/SSC website</p> <p>-Distribute brochures</p> <p>-Presentations</p>	<p>Website and links are current</p> <p>3,000 – 4,000</p> <p>10-15 a year to conferences and EC councils</p>	<p>Ongoing – at least quarterly</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>July 2007 – June 2008</p>

6. Manage Online Learning		
A. Provide 17 online early childhood courses through CCCOnline	Number of students enrolled each semester Updated information is available on the CCCOnline website	Courses are offered Fall, Spring and Summer Semesters
B. Work with Colorado State University on its federal Head Start grant	Serve on Advisory Council	July 2007 – June 2008
C. Recruit Early Childhood online instructors and provide technical assistance and training to online faculty	Adequately staffed courses	Ongoing
D. Offer one of the two online school age courses developed SFY 2007	Course is offered	Spring Semester 2008
7. Sustaining the Office of Professional Development		
A. Develop a public-private funding plan for long-term sustainability of the Office	Refinement of the written plan in light of the possible changes as the result of the Lieutenant Governor's work.	June 2008
B. Participate on the Funding Task Force of the Early Childhood State Systems Team.	The above mentioned plan will be refined within the larger SSC funding plan	Ongoing meetings
8. Review and Evaluation of Professional Development Efforts		
A. Assure accountability of the Office through timely reporting of professional development activities.	Quarterly reports to the Division of Child Care and the Advisory Board	October 2006 January 2007 April 2007 July 2007
B. Identify an assessment tool to use for evaluation of Office tasks that includes a method or methods of assessing quality outcomes for children.	Meetings with the Outcomes and Evaluation TF	Ongoing
C. Utilize the customer satisfaction survey developed by OMNI	Office Assessment Tool developed Survey results shared with OPD Advisory Board and other interested parties	Two times a year

Organization/Staffing Chart



Office of Professional Development Strategic Partners

