

## **Early Childhood Alliance (ECA) Charter**

The creation of the Early Childhood Alliance (ECA) was motivated by the realization that children's early learning and care were occurring in "silos" despite the fact that, in many cases, multiple educational settings and providers were servicing the same children. Recognizing the scope of need and the community's large size, the ECA began by initially engaging with those who demonstrated an active interest in the community's early childhood landscape. The initial group of stakeholders included public schools, local private early childhood providers, non-profit organizations, and libraries. Over the next few years the ECA has evolved and engaged in purposeful expansion to bring more voices to the table in order to make collaborative strategic decisions with the community rather than for the community. The Steering Committee of the Early Childhood Alliance hereby establishes this charter outlining the governance structure under which the collaboration will operate. The charter will go into effect following approval from the general membership of the ECA and will be reviewed annually.

### **SECTION I: Vision, Mission and Goals**

#### **Vision**

All young children and their caregivers have healthy relationships, safe environments, and high-quality learning experiences in order to reach their full potential.

#### **Mission**

To advocate for and coordinate comprehensive community-based supports for young children and their caregivers that promote equity and honor strengths and diversity.

#### **Focus Areas**

Professional Development  
Collaborative Screening and Placement  
Child, Family and Community Engagement  
High-Quality Learning Experiences

#### **Core Values**

Address Equity & Disparity  
Honor Diversity  
High-Quality Services  
Support Whole Child Development

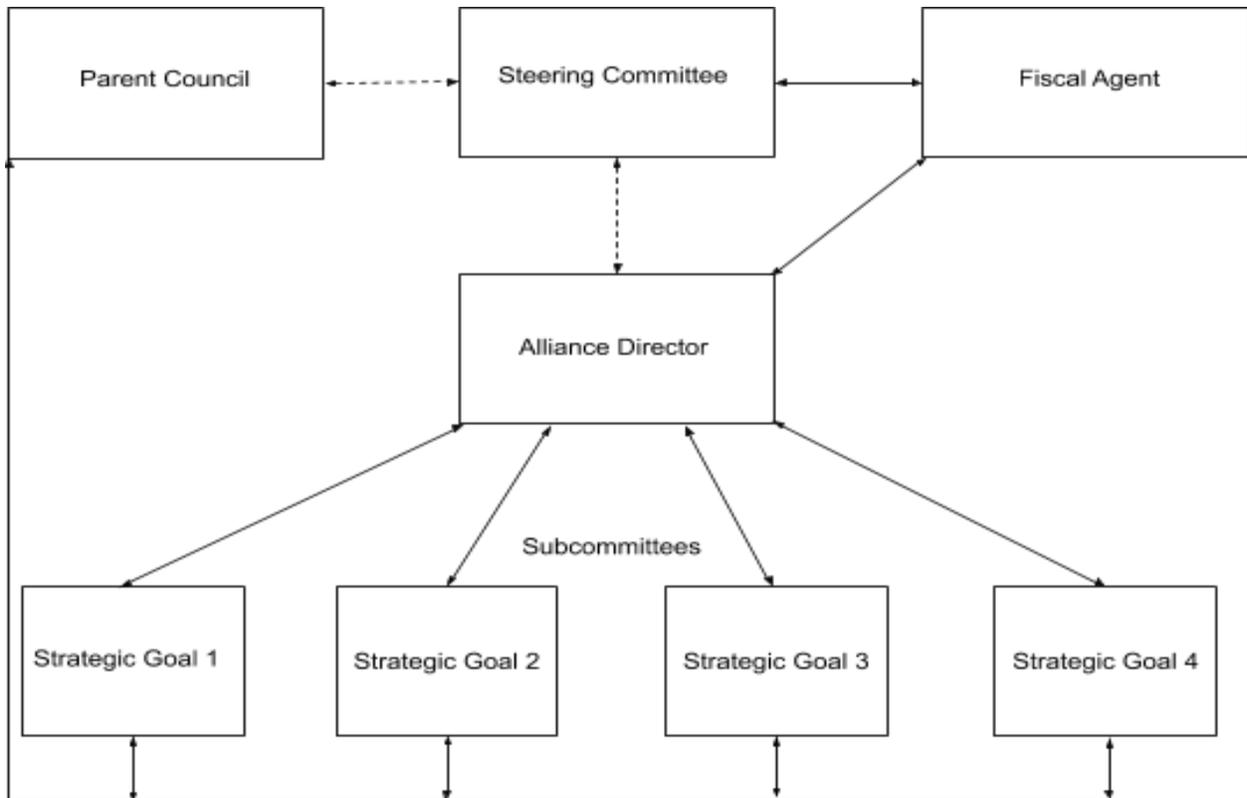
#### **We seek to support these initiatives through Collective Impact**

Relationship Development - Understanding, Appreciation, Respect  
Common Goals  
Shared data & decision making  
Communication/marketing  
Funding/Stewardship

## Goals

The ECA will engage in a collaborative strategic planning process at least once every five years to review the mission, vision, focus areas, core values, and determine long-term goals. The strategic plan will define the work of the subcommittees.

## SECTION II: Governing Structure



### 1. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee shall meet a minimum of four times per year. The work and decisions of the Steering Committee shall be documented by agenda, minutes, and sign-in sheets and shared with the ECA through newsletters, website, email and/or meetings.

The responsibilities of the Steering Committee are to:

- Promote equity and honor strengths and diversity
- Liaise with member organizations in assigned domain and/or sector
- Set the strategic plan and direction of the ECA through effective engagement of the general membership

- Provide input on the appointment and evaluation of the ECA Director
- Provide fiscal oversight
- Actively seek financial opportunities for sustainability
- Communicate with the press regarding ECA activities and events
- Volunteer to chair and/or participate in at least one subcommittee
- Report to committee members and general membership on updates and progress of subcommittee work
- Annual review of the charter
- Support long term success

The ECA Steering Committee will have representation from all sectors of the community and will be reflective of the community and the ECA membership. To ensure equity of voice, the goal is to have one representative from each of the following sectors on the steering committee:

- Physical Health and Nutrition
- Early Intervention
- Public School Districts
- Private Schools
- Community Childcare Centers
- Parent Council
- Local Government Departments
- Home Visiting Programs
- Family Child Care
- Social Service Providers
- Acting Fiscal Agent

Placement and Term Commitment of Steering Committee Members:

Any organization may volunteer to provide a representative to the Steering Committee. If there is more than one organization from a sector, the general membership will vote via anonymous ballot to elect the steering committee member organization. The leadership of the elected organization will then appoint an individual to serve on the Steering Committee. The representative for each sector will be responsible for gathering input, providing feedback, and speaking on behalf of their sector not their individual organization. The term for Steering Committee members will be 2 years. The membership term can be renewed by general election vote.

## **2. General Membership & Responsibilities**

The ECA will hold a minimum of three general membership business meetings per year. At the meetings, updates on progress toward completion of established goals will be shared. Additionally, members will discuss issues related to the work and outcomes of the ECA and will participate in information sharing and idea-generating activities.

The responsibilities of the ECA's general members are to:

- Elect steering committee members
- Participate in ECA meetings

- Participate in subcommittee(s) as appropriate
- Provide input and information to assist with reporting
- Offer connections to important resources
- Support overall goals and mission
- Host meetings and events
- Effectively participate in strategic planning and direction setting
- Promote parent participation and engagement in general membership

### **3. Subcommittees**

Subcommittees will be developed to implement specific strategies to accomplish the goals of the ECA. Membership is made up of ECA members or other interested community stakeholders.

Each subcommittee will commit to upholding the core values of the ECA and will be chaired by at least one member of the Steering Committee.

Each subcommittee will develop a work plan that outlines:

- Goals and objectives
- Strategies
- Action steps
- Timelines
- Evaluation process

Each subcommittee will identify the roles and responsibilities of its members, for example, note-taker and timekeeper. The Chairperson will be responsible for setting meeting dates, convening of meetings, and reporting to the Steering Committee. Subcommittees will make decisions based on consensus and that align and support the work plan and overall strategic goals. Action plans and meeting minutes will be recorded by the note-taker and will include agenda, minutes, and a sign-in sheet for each meeting. Budget requests or significant changes to work plans must be approved by the Steering Committee.

Subcommittees report the progress of their work to the Steering Committee via quarterly reports and work plans. Reports from subcommittees to the general membership will occur at regularly scheduled meetings.

### **4. Parent Council**

The purpose of the Parent Council is to advise the ECA, ensuring that the parent perspective is guiding the work of the ECA.

Representatives of the Parent Council will be reflective of the communities that the ECA serves.

The Parent Council will determine the frequency of their meetings and document their activities with sign-in sheets and notes. The Parent Council will select one representative to sit on the Steering Committee to share updates and priorities, as well as provide input.

Involvement in subcommittees is encouraged and offered to all parent council members.

### **SECTION III: Decision Making Process**

The ECA adopts a consensus decision-making process. The following values shall be used as a guideline in the course of decision making.

#### **Inclusive and Participatory:**

All group members are encouraged to voice their perspectives and to fully share the needs of all stakeholders affected by a decision during deliberations.

#### **Collaborative:**

All participants are respected and their contributions welcome. Consensus decision-making will focus on the goal of building relationships through discussion and shared ownership of decisions.

#### **Agreement-seeking:**

In decision-making, widespread or full agreement will be sought. In cases where a unanimous consensus cannot be reached, a majority rule vote will be taken and the decision point will be entered into the minutes. When more than one representative from an organization is present, it is understood that the representatives will receive just one vote per organization.

It is the preference for decisions to be made in person. However, when decisions are time-sensitive, the steering committee or subcommittee workgroups will have discretion to make a decision via conference call or by email.

### **SECTION IV: Fiscal Administration**

The ECA Director will be the employee of the fiscal agent, accountable to and subject to the Human Resources Policies and Procedures of the organization.