

Overview:

Once partners have completed a landscape analysis to identify early learning centers in their community that may be potential partners, and they have decided to develop a **formal partnership**, they should begin discussions to develop their agreement or contract for their partnership. The contract should be grounded in shared goals and **specific roles and responsibilities** for each stakeholder regarding personnel, program and shared services. It is beneficial for representatives from each program to invite stakeholders within their programs, including financial and legal staff to these conversations. It is also helpful to include staff who are knowledgeable about each shared service the partnership will provide. Some areas to consider are, emergent bilinguals, special education, food services, transportation, registration, attendance and data entry. In the end, the agreement the partners negotiate will be a legally binding contract that will involve sharing of funds.

Identify Existing Program Strengths:

What is exceptional about each program? These will be the “gifts” each partner brings to the partnership.

- Teacher qualifications
- Student outcomes
- Curriculum
- Physical environment
- Family engagement
- Community engagement



Identify Partnership Needs:

What improvements are needed at each program? Answers to this question will frame each partner’s “asks” or benefits requested from the partnership.

- Student progress monitoring
- Teacher qualifications
- Curriculum
- Physical environment
- Family Engagement
- Increased enrollment
- Access to additional community resources
- Access to additional funding



Set Partnership Goals:

All prekindergarten partnerships have the overarching goal of increasing access and elevating quality of prekindergarten to increase school readiness of all students. Each partnership will have additional goals based on the needs of the children and families in their community.

What do we want the partnership to accomplish?

- Increase enrollment
- Build school readiness
- Elevate quality of prekindergarten programs
- Provide professional development
- Increase program options for families
- Decrease class size
- Provide before and after care
- Increase family engagement
- Provide a PK3 program

Recognize non-negotiables:

During the contract development process, it is extremely important that stakeholders identify and discuss the negotiables and non-negotiables for their respective programs. The most significant non-negotiables are the requirements of their regulatory agencies. Each partner remains responsible for meeting the standards of their regulatory agencies during the term of the partnership

Early Learning Program	Local Education Agency
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Child Care Licensing•National Accreditation•Texas Rising Star•Texas School Ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•HB3 High Quality Prekindergarten Components•District or Charter School Procedures and Policies

Roles and Responsibilities Buckets:

Once the goals of the partnership have been established, it is important to identify the roles and responsibilities each partner will be accountable for throughout the term of the partnership. Establishing clear roles and responsibilities will help each partner understand their expectations and boundaries as they work together to accomplish the shared goals of the partnership. Generally, roles and responsibilities can be grouped into four buckets: Teacher, Programming, Shared Services and Funding.

Teacher

- Recruit, hire, and employ the certified teacher
- Teacher’s Salary and benefits
- Recruit, hire and employ the teacher’s assistant
- Professional Development and coaching
- Teacher evaluation

Programming

- Daily Schedule
- Full-Day PK4
- Full-Day PK3 or Half-Day PK3
- Teacher Schedule – Lunch/Planning
- Enrollment and Attendance
- Program Calendar
- High Quality Prekindergarten Curriculum/Materials
- Student Progress Monitoring
- Classroom Space
- Classroom Furniture and Materials
- Consumable Materials
- Family Engagement
- Data Sharing Agreement
- Emergency Preparedness/Crisis Plans

Shared Services – support services and wrap-around services/care

- Substitutes
- Special Education Services
- Bilingual/English as a Second Language Services
- Food Services
- Before/After care/Holidays
- Transportation
- Family Engagement
- Home Visits

Funding

The funding conversation will require input from a team of people who are directly involved with implementing each shared service. Consider including staff who support food services, transportation, Emergent Bilinguals, Special Education, and data entry. Always keep in mind that all partnership decisions regarding funds need to be approved by finance and legal staff representing the LEA and the ELP.

- Identify funding source to pass through – ADA, Title I, Early Ed. Allotment, Local
- Invoicing procedures and timeline – consider LEA timeline vs. ELP timeline
- Staff responsible for invoicing
- Procurement process

