



May, 2022

Background. Early Childhood Iowa, in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) and with technical assistance from Opportunities Exchange (OE), is launching a multi-phase Shared Services project with proven success in other states. This collaboration is in response to the [Governor's Child Care Task Force Report \(November 2021\)](#).

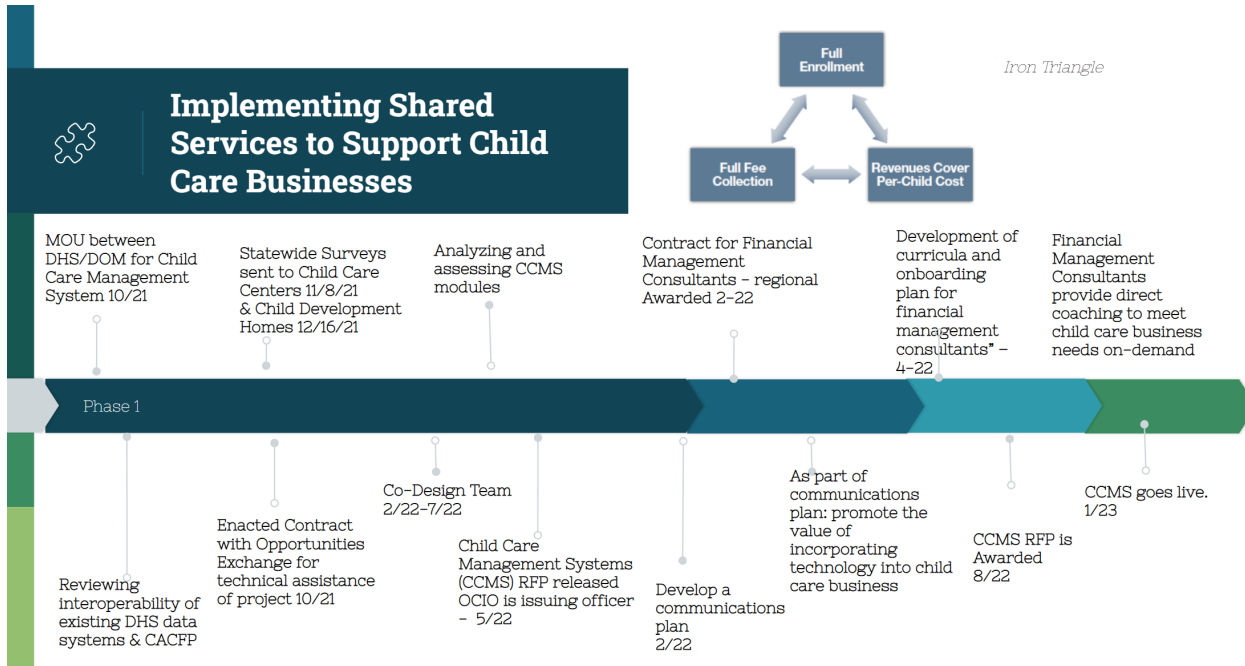
Opportunities Exchange is an organization that provides technical assistance so that the early childhood field can achieve financial sustainability and strong child outcomes through Shared Services. Shared Services is when multiple child care providers agree to share specific costs and resources. The Shared Services project will include the implementation of a child care management system (CCMS) and the provision of technical assistance through financial management consultants to help child care businesses monitor and implement a framework for a Shared Service Alliance. The CCMS and financial management consultants will assist providers with successful financial model (full enrollment, full fee collection and ensuring revenues are covered per child cost) called the Iron Triangle.

The Shared Services project also includes the assessment, development and prioritization of "other" shared service components including the framework for a Shared Services Alliance. A co-design team made up of child care providers and early childhood experts began working on February 8, 2022 and will conclude their work in six months.

SHARED SERVICES Project Overview:

- **Communications Plan** developed for periodic communications to agencies, partners, providers, and the general public to keep open and clear communication throughout the Shared Services Project.
- **Financial Consultants** Financial consultants will work with child care providers as they navigate the Child Care Management System. Consultants will focus on the Iron Triangle (full enrollment, full fee collection, ability to cover per child cost) as a successful financial model.
- **Child Care Management System (CCMS)** meetings with DHS IT, Resultant (specializes in IT procurement and works with OE), and ECI have been in discussion with options for the structure of connectivity measures to prepare for the CCMS RFP and development.
- **Co-design team** charged with assessing and developing a Shared Services model and prioritization of child care provider needs. OE is engaging members in a discussion regarding shared services alliance and members gained an understanding of the overall project.
- [Opportunities Exchange](#) offered a national conference in April that Iowa had a team attend. It was a great learning opportunity that offered knowledgeable speakers and presentations as well as conversations and learning from other state projects.

Updates found at <https://earlychildhood.iowa.gov/workforce-support>



Key Projects Timeline: Color Coding- ON-TIME; DELAYED; BEHIND SCHEDULE; NOT STARTED; COMPLETE

Project Name	Key Updates	Timeline
Communications Plan	Monthly Updates Initial conversations with a marketing firm have begun.	ON-TIME , ongoing
Financial Consultants to Support child care providers with CCMS financial planning	Mid-Sioux Opportunity, Inc. is the contractor selected to pilot the financial management consultant for the selected CCMS vendors. Financial management consultants will promote Shared Services by working with child care businesses to implement a successful financial business model.	ON-TIME
Child Care Management System (CCMS)	Infrastructure discussions and planning are underway regarding state IT logistics and IT guidance is being provided via Opportunities Exchange and their expert partners at Resultant. Currently, an RFP is being finalized to identify specifications needed from the child care management system software vendors.	ON-TIME
Co-Design Team	The third meeting of this team was conducted on April 12. The team learned more about options for shared service models. Opportunities Exchange shared examples from other states. Also discussed were possible strategies for Iowa to explore. The team requested specific items to give their opinion to at their next meeting.	ON-TIME