



July, 2022

Background. Early Childhood Iowa, in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) and with technical assistance from Opportunities Exchange (OppEx), 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 \(November 2021\)](#).

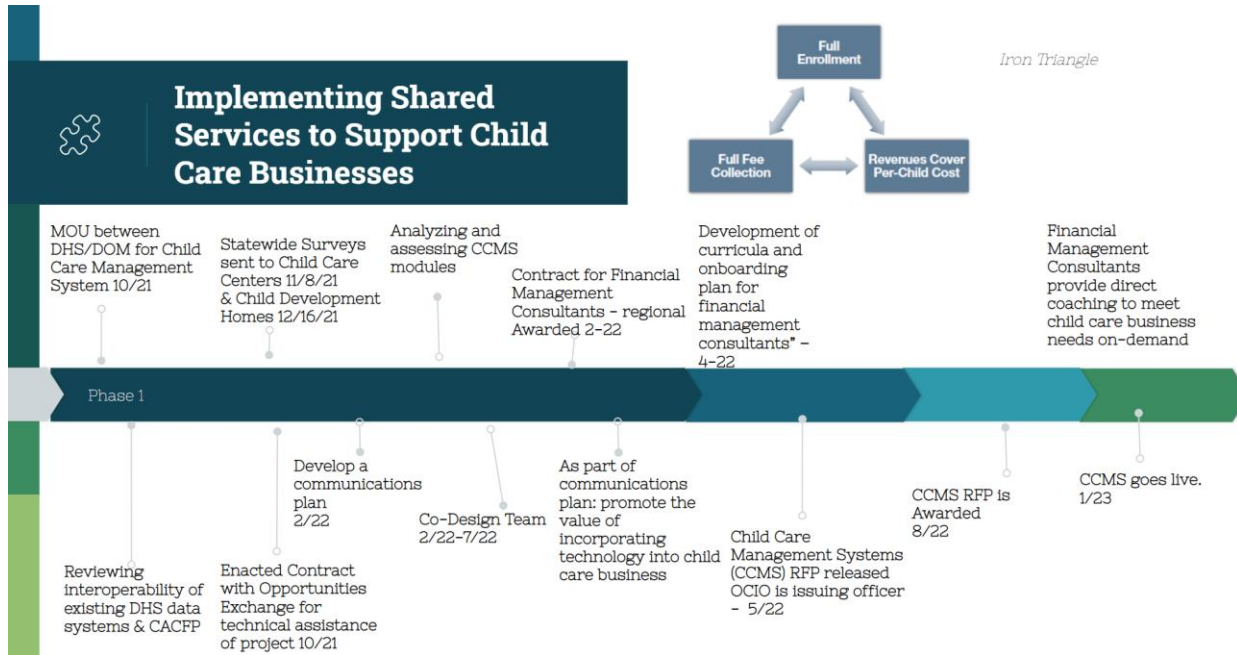
OppEx is an organization that provides technical assistance so that the early childhood field can achieve financial sustainability and strong child outcomes through Shared Services. Shared Services is when multiple child care providers agree to share specific costs and resources. The Shared Services 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 a 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)** Child Care Management Software is specifically designed to help child care providers automate their day-to-day operations so that they have more time to spend with children and are able to monitor and manage their program proactively. CCMS tools will help streamline enrollment and manage a waitlist, track and report daily attendance, generate invoices and collect payment electronically, monitor and manage classroom ratios, manage staff records including professional development certifications and payroll, and communicate with families easily and consistently. A CCMS can be linked to accounting software like QuickBooks to give accurate and timely financial reports that can be used to make sound business decisions.
- **Co-Design Team** charged with assessing and developing a Shared Services model and prioritization of child care provider needs. ECI and OppEx is engaging members in a discussion regarding shared services alliance and members gained an understanding of the overall project. Members of the Co-Design Team include child development home providers, child care centers, organizations and stakeholders in Iowa's child care system, and DHS.

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 provide the financial management consultants. Financial management consultants will support child care businesses in implementing a successful financial business model using a CCMS. The financial management consultants are receiving training/onboarding from OppEx.	ON-TIME
Child Care Management System (CCMS)	On-going meetings with DHS information technology (IT) staff, shared services state project staff, OppEx and Resultant (a technology consultant company OppEx utilizes) to identify and plan the best method for connecting a CCMS to Iowa's child care subsidy system (KinderTrack). The State of Iowa released a request for proposal (RFP) on May 12 to select and contract with up to two software vendors to provide a CCMS. Interested CCMS software vendors must submit their formal proposal to the State by July 8.	ON-TIME
Co-Design Team	The fifth meeting of this team was conducted on June 14. The team walked through CCMS use and features that help child care businesses save time and money, increase revenue and strengthen business practices. In addition, the team discussed financial management consultant rollout plans to support	ON-TIME

	child care businesses use of a CCMS and provided feedback about service and support options for a shared services alliance hub.	
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