



September, 2022

Background. Early Childhood Iowa, in collaboration with the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) 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 \(November 2021\)](#).

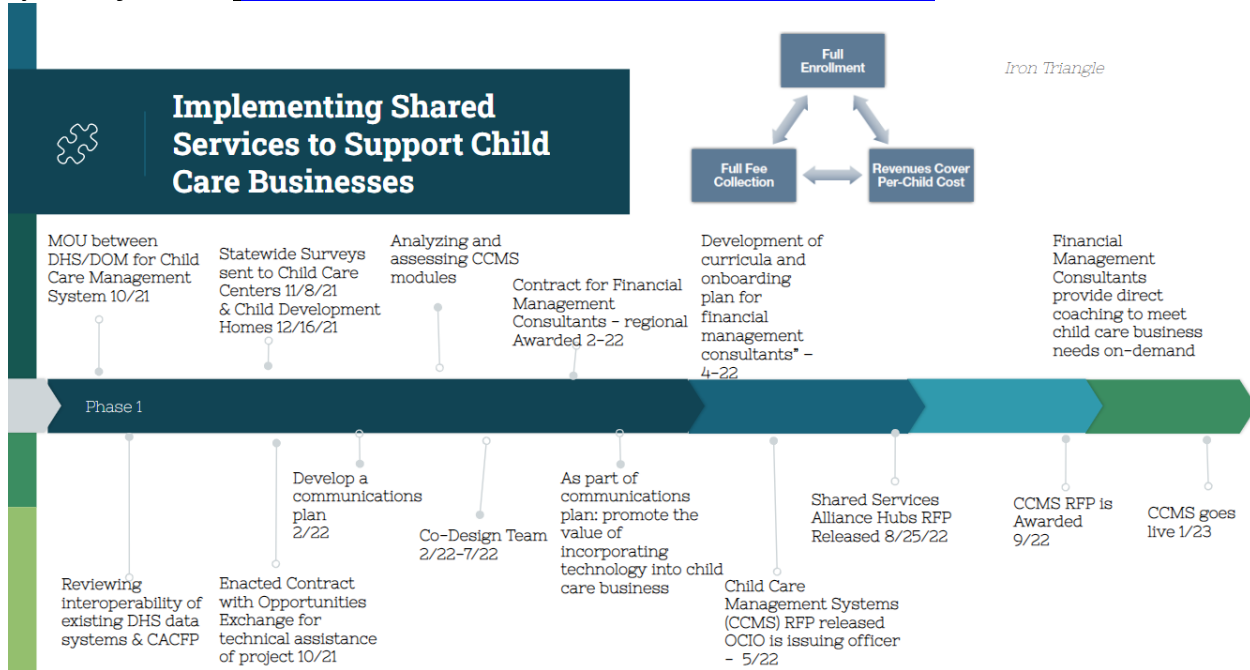
OppEx is an organization that provides technical assistance so that the early childhood field can achieve financial sustainability and strong child outcomes through Shared Services. Shared Services is when multiple child care providers agree to share specific costs and resources. The Shared Services 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 are 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.
- **Shared Services Alliance Hubs** Shared services alliance hubs support a partnership of child care providers and aims to strengthen systems and improve efficiency at the provider level by sharing resources to leverage economies of scale. Shared services alliance hubs can assist providers in a variety of areas, and each hub is customized based on the needs identified by its' members.

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 Conversations with a marketing firm are ongoing and focusing on materials for the Financial Management Consultants. | 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. See below for an opportunity to learn more at the Fall Institute. | 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. The CCMS evaluation committee is reviewing received proposals with an anticipated date to award in September. | DELAYED- moving from August to September |

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| | See below for an opportunity to learn more at the Fall Institute. | |
| Shared Services Alliance Hubs | The State of Iowa released a request for proposal (RFP) for Shared Services Alliance Hubs on August 25. The State will award funding to support up to ten (10) shared services alliance hubs. Proposals must be mailed and postmarked by September 30, 2022. | ON-TIME |
| Co-Design Team | The final meeting of this team was conducted on July 13th. Access the Co-Design Team's final report under Shared Services Project Reports and Presentations. | ON-TIME |

The Iowa Association for the Education of Young Children (IowaAEYC) is hosting the Fall Institute on September 30 - October 1 (pre-institute workshops on September 29) at the Holiday Inn Des Moines-Airport. Opportunities Exchange is offering three workshops at the conference. Providers can visit the Financial Management Consultants booth to learn more about opportunities to partner with the consultants and utilize a CCMS.

Visit the [IowaAEYC website](#) for additional information, including [registration](#) instructions. Contact Anne Geiger, anne@iowaaeyc.org or 515-331-8000 ext. 122 with any questions.