



PROJECT UPDATE: The Early Childhood Iowa Integrated Data System (IDS)

April 2019. Coordinated by the IDS Taskforce, a subcommittee of ECI Results Accountability Workgroup:

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Background: In response to demands on public service systems to *do more, do better, and cost less*, there is increased attention to the value of integrated data systems (IDS) to inform executive decision-making. IDS capitalize on data already collected by programs that serve families, and create scientifically and legally valid ways to use these data for policy evaluation and population-based analyses to better understand how families are doing across public service systems and over time. ECI efforts to date have focused on enhancing effective services through local area boards. However, the legislative recommendations within the ECI Initiative (Chapter 256i) and the 2007 Head Start Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1429-642b) encourage us to go further to advance the development of an early childhood IDS. Such an IDS would facilitate statewide needs assessments to **identify gaps** in current public service system networks, **enhance cross-system programming efforts**, broaden our ability to **measure successful child outcomes** in diverse and meaningful ways, and **promote data-informed decisions**.

Early Childhood Iowa Integrate Data System (IDS):

Aligned with ECI's Strategic Plan, the IDS Taskforce has articulated the following vision for an early childhood IDS:

Iowa's early childhood system will be effectively and efficiently coordinated among health, social service, and education agencies to support healthy and successful families. This work will be informed by actionable intelligence derived from a statewide integrated data system that comprehensively identifies and addresses the needs of Iowa's young children and their families.

Over the last 2 years, our IDS Taskforce has been leading state efforts to develop the plan for an IDS that is informed by national expert models and best practices, establishes state-of-the-art privacy and security standards for the use of data for policy and program evaluation and analytics, and includes strategic processes that ensure the system is used to serve the legislative vision of ECI and the needs of our department and program service providers.

These efforts have been strengthened by Iowa's competitively awarded acceptance into the first cohort of a National IDS Learning Communities led by the Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy Network (www.aisp.upenn.edu). This Network comprises existing IDS from across the US, with international partners in governments, public services, and social policy analytics around the globe. Throughout this experience we collected existing models of IDS, identified technical and governance experts to consult on our Iowa IDS development approach, and successfully obtained funding from the US Departments of Health and Human Services and Education (Preschool Development Grant B-5; PDG) to implement a demonstration of our IDS. With the leadership of the IDS Taskforce, the state of Iowa is now "on the map" of AISP's national IDS network and we have been invited as full members of the Network moving forward. This means we will continue to meet annually with national experts and maintain working relationships with existing IDS sites as we transition from our "development phase" to our "implementation phase" of the IDS over the coming years.

Building on what was (and continues to be) learned through AISP and in continued conversations with ECI stakeholders at all levels within our public-private partnership, the **Goals of the IDS for 2019** include (1) actualizing the IDS infrastructure plans that were discussed with the Board and relevant state Directors in 2018, and (2) implementing demonstration project(s) to "test" the proposed processes and use what is learned to articulate and refine IDS procedures for future work.

ECI IDS PROJECT MILESTONES:

Fall 2015: ECI Results Accountability workgroup collaborated with Iowa State University partners to learn about IDS.

2016: The ECI Board commissioned an **IDS Taskforce** to begin stakeholder engagement and planning activities, which included fundraising to host a mini-summit of stakeholders and consult with national IDS experts from AISP.

2017: Department directors represented on the ECI Board (i.e., DOM, DHS, IDPH, DE, DHR, IWD) supported two successful, nationally competitive grant applications submitted by the IDS Taskforce that secured training and technical assistance for our IDS planning efforts valued at over \$700,000:

- **Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy** provided 18-months of funding to develop core components of an Iowa IDS and demonstration project to test the value of an IDS for program coordination and policy decision-making.
- **Social Innovation Fund and Third Sector Capital Partners** are providing 24-months of support to focus on two-generation program improvements using IDS.

2018: Participation in AISP Learning Community facilitated successful advancements in our IDS plan.

- Updated statewide data system inventories to articulate our current capacities and opportunities for IDS.
- Proposed an IDS Governance Plan including core infrastructure components to actualize our *ECI IDS Vision, Mission, and Principles* into legal and ethical auspices and technology for data security and integration.
- Successful award to support the first IDS Demonstration Study to focus on early childhood Birth-to-Five indicators and service system connections [*Administration for Children and Families Preschool Development Grant B-5 (PDG)*, December 2018].
- Secured legal agreements for the demonstration study.

2019 GOALS: Actualize the IDS infrastructure plans and implement demonstration study(s) to “test” our proposal.

2019 Quarter 1 (Jan – March) Accomplishments:

- Ongoing discussions with Department Directors, data experts, and legal counsel are working to advance the umbrella Memorandum of Agreement and the next steps to implement the overall IDS governance structure.
- IDS Taskforce, with leadership from Head Start State Collaborator Tom Rendon, has successfully worked with each of the state’s Head Start Grantees to secure legal agreements to allow their participation in data sharing for the statewide needs assessment as part of the PDG demonstration study.
- Data integration with initial sets of data about Iowa children birth to 5 for the PDG demonstration is underway. ISU partners on the Taskforce are building and testing algorithms and data documentation processes in collaboration with state department’s data teams to help inform future work and generate “routinized” efforts to build efficiencies in the data collection, management, integration, de-identification, and analysis of datasets.
- IDS Taskforce leadership has been invited to lead a group of other AISP network sites to develop cross-site best practices in the use of IDS for early childhood policy and program work – including potential pursuit of additional resources in this topic area.

Anticipated next steps for the duration of 2019 include, but are not limited to:

- Complete MOA that articulates the business use for the IDS in relation to ECI legislative mission and priorities;
- Discuss details of the overall IDS governance approach with departments to determine department-specific needs & capacities, including processes for how the IDS will continue to facilitate agency-prioritized projects;
- Complete initial integrations and analytics for a statewide needs assessment for PDG to inform a revision to the ECI strategic plan in partnership with the ECI Board to guide systems development work in the future;
- Develop and test communications strategies for sharing, discussing, and translating results from IDS-based work to ensure findings are “used” in decision-making and strategic planning. These will be tested within the context of the PDG and refined to inform further articulation of the overall IDS governance plan and implementation processes;
- Continue to pursue additional opportunities for funding that are related to high-priority program and policy issues and could serve as further “use cases” for our IDS processes; and
- Develop a long-term business plan to ensure the IDS sustainability.