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

January 2020. IDS is authorized by the ECI State Board and Department Directors, and advised by the IDS Taskforce, a subcommittee of ECI Results Accountability Workgroup: Heather Rouse & Cassandra Dorius (Iowa State University); Shanell Wagler & Amanda Winslow (Department of Management); Kelly Davydov (Department of Human Rights); Betsy Richey (Department of Public Health); Jay Pennington & Tom Rendon (Department of Education); Ryan Page & Tammi Christ (Department of Human Services); Marion Kresse (BooST Together for Children).

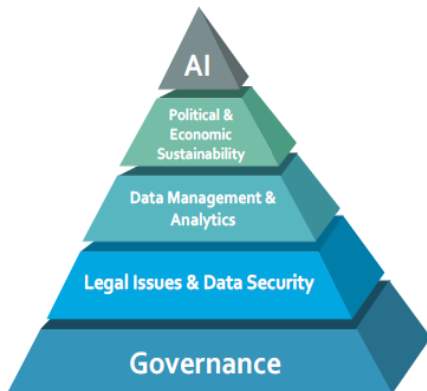## Early Childhood Iowa VISION for Iowa's Integrated Data System (IDS):

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.

Background: Public service systems are asked to *do more, do better,* and *cost less*. In line with bipartisan recommendations from the federal Commission on Evidence-based Policymaking, there is increasing attention to the value of integrated administrative data systems (IDS) to inform executive decision-making. IDSs use data already collected by programs that serve families for policy evaluation and population-based analyses to better understand impacts and gaps in public service systems over time. Legislative recommendations within the ECI Initiative (Chapter 256i) and the 2007 Head Start Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1429-642b) encourage us, as a state committed to improving outcomes for families with young children, to advance the development of an early childhood IDS. This IDS helps us 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***.

Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP): An Integrated Data System Approach:

The IDS approach[a] is a process of problem solving that uses administrative data to produce ***Actionable Intelligence (AI)***. It is not a "one-shot" research or evaluation project. Through iterative and logical inquiry cycles, the results of IDS analytics shape and refine interventions over time to maximize effectiveness. Core components of the approach are based on decades of development from existing IDSs across the U.S. and internationally. Iowa is part of AISP, a national network comprised of existing state and university partnerships working with IDS to advance social policy. They have documented IDS best-practices and created training opportunities for developing sites (like Iowa) to capitalize on what others have learned.

Iowa's IDS incorporates key, hierarchical elements that have been documented by successful IDS:

Sustainability Plan: pays attention to the costs of BOTH unaddressed social problems and the interventions designed to reduce them

Data Management & Analytics: selecting relevant and high quality data, integrating across datasets, and analyzing using scientifically rigorous methods

Legal Issues & Data Security: strict procedures to protect confidentiality while supporting ethical use of data (maximum benefits and minimum risk)

Governance: structured processes for state leadership, priority setting, project management, scientific integrity, and stakeholder engagement to maximize the ability of the inquiry process to generate actionable intelligence

Iowa's IDS Timeline and Successes:

Over the last 3 years, the IDS Taskforce led state efforts to develop and implement a strategic plan for Iowa's 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 coordinated processes to ensure the system is used to serve the legislative vision of ECI and the needs of state departments and program service providers.

These efforts were strengthened by Iowa's competitively awarded acceptance into the first cohort of a National IDS Learning Community led by the AISP 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. We collected existing models of IDS, consulted with technical and governance experts to develop our plan, and successfully obtained funding from the US Departments of Health and Human Services and Education (Preschool Development Grant B-5; PDG) to test our IDS approach by conducting a statewide needs assessment using integrated administrative data from public health, human services, and education. Given the success of these early efforts, the state of Iowa is now "on the map" of AISP's national IDS network of operational systems that currently comprise 50% of the US population.

PROJECT MILESTONES:

2015: ECI Results Accountability workgroup collaborated with Iowa State University partners to explore the possibility of building an ECI IDS to support programming and policy for young children and their families.

2016: The ECI Board commissioned an **IDS Taskforce** to engage stakeholders and begin developing a plan for the IDS, which included fundraising to host a mini-summit 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 applications for training and technical assistance valued at over $700,000 (*Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy* and *Social Innovation Fund and Third Sector Capital Partners*).

2018: Participation in the **AISP Learning Community** helped us develop our IDS infrastructure plans:

- Updated statewide data system inventories to articulate our current capacities and opportunities for IDS.
- Created an IDS Governance Plan including *IDS Vision, Mission, and Principles*; legal and ethical processes; and advanced technology for data security and integration.
- Signed legal agreements authorizing the overall IDS development and three 2019 demonstration studies.

2019: Implementation of three high-priority demonstration projects to "test" our IDS approach.

- Secured federal funding from three separate sources to support departmental priorities for understanding statewide services and gaps for vulnerable preschool aged children (USDHHS Preschool Development Grant B-5, DOM), family risks and characteristics related to family support and home visiting service outcomes (MIECHV, IDPH), and unique needs of families with parents who have histories of substance misuse (Centers for Disease Control, IDPH).
- Acquired and documented policy-relevant datasets from IDPH, DE, and DHS.
- Tested and enhanced the data integration algorithms to strengthen accuracy and equity.
- Completed analytics for three foci (see partner brief, titled *ECI IDS: Analytic Project Summaries*).
- Enhanced IDS governance structure to advance state leadership and decision-making throughout the IDS processes including project vetting, approvals, implementation, and collaborative dissemination.

2020 Goals:

- Fully operationalize the IDS Governance Structure with standing subcommittees, documented procedures, and continued advancement of state-of-the-art technical and security protocols.
- Develop a communications plan and visual identity for the IDS to share with stakeholders and the public for ongoing awareness and advocacy.
- Solidify a long-term business plan to ensure sustainability for the IDS.