New Orleans Early Education Network

Strategic Plan

February 2017
New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN) Strategic Plan

February 2017

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In New Orleans, Louisiana, leaders, reformers, and philanthropists focused on education have overlooked high-quality early childhood education (ECE) for too long. The early years are the most crucial in a child’s life, and high-quality early learning experiences put children on a trajectory to greater success in school and in life. But currently, access to high-quality ECE programs is not enough to meet the city’s needs, especially for the 42 percent of young children living in poverty.¹ In response, the New Orleans Early Education Network (NOEEN), a network of ECE providers and stakeholders, decided to form a new organization, which will work to improve the quality of the ECE sector in New Orleans for all children and families.

The mission of NOEEN is to ensure an excellent start for every child in New Orleans by strengthening the early childhood education sector. While NOEEN is currently managed by Agenda for Children, NOEEN will become an independent nonprofit ECE intermediary organization. NOEEN will be a model for other communities in Louisiana, as well as for cities nationwide looking to create lasting educational improvements for young children. NOEEN has a strong theory of action and a detailed implementation plan. Now, NOEEN must secure the founding leadership and philanthropic support needed to make this vision for New Orleans families a reality.

The K-12 school system in New Orleans transformed in the post-Hurricane Katrina era, and made many impressive strides in student outcomes. However, one critical element of a high-quality education system has been missing: early childhood education. The city can deepen and accelerate educational progress by focusing on young children, who have been largely overlooked by education leaders, reformers, and philanthropists.

For the thousands of New Orleans children living in poverty, high-quality ECE could be life-changing. A child who receives high-quality early education is more likely to arrive at kindergarten prepared with the academic and social-emotional skills to succeed in school, and less likely to need special education services. Families and communities also thrive with high-

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quality ECE: Parents with ECE access for their children are more economically stable, because reliable, high-quality ECE allows them to work.\textsuperscript{5} The local economy will not only benefit from higher labor force participation among today’s parents, it will also have a stronger workforce for generations to come. If every child in New Orleans enters kindergarten with a solid early learning foundation, they will be on a better trajectory for success in learning and life, and the city as a whole will be on a path to greater shared prosperity.

The transformation of New Orleans’ K-12 education system and the ongoing recovery efforts in the city were possible because of large investments of time, money, and effort from within the city and across the country. A similar investment is needed now to build the city’s early childhood ecosystem. Local families with young children and ECE providers should not be the only Louisianans concerned with New Orleans’ ECE sector. Local and state business, political, and community leaders have a clear stake in the success of New Orleans’ ECE sector, as do national philanthropic ECE supporters. High-quality ECE will support the city’s economy and help retain and attract talent to live and work in New Orleans. In the long term, high-quality ECE will form the foundation of a thriving New Orleans educational system from cradle to career.

There is a tremendous, urgent need in New Orleans for an improved ECE system. Over 23,000 children ages 4 and under live in New Orleans,\textsuperscript{6} more than 42 percent of them in poverty.\textsuperscript{7} Even more young children, 62 percent, live in households below 185 percent of the poverty level.\textsuperscript{8} But there are not nearly enough high-quality, affordable slots in Pre-K, child care, or Head Start programs to serve all these children. There are about 5,200 publicly funded or partially subsidized ECE seats in New Orleans, only enough to enroll about 23 percent of children under age 5.\textsuperscript{9}

Children in poverty have the most acute need for high-quality ECE, but an improved ECE landscape in New Orleans will benefit all families. This includes a growing number of young professional families who may not qualify for publicly subsidized ECE, but still struggle to find affordable, high-quality care for their children. K-12 school leaders in New Orleans increasingly recognize that high-quality ECE can set their students up for later academic success, and as such, more schools are offering Pre-K, despite budgetary pressures.

New Orleans must improve early childhood education and invest in its young children. Many local ECE educators and providers, including charter schools, community-based centers, and Head Start/Early Head Start providers, have already begun working together to improve the city’s ECE system. The New Orleans early education sector can learn from the successes and challenges of K-12 reform efforts in the city, capitalize on the existing strengths and expertise of leaders within the local ECE sector, and develop citywide approaches that meet the needs of young children within the unique context of New Orleans. With coordinated, strategic action, New Orleans has the potential to be a model of ECE excellence for other communities in Louisiana, and for cities nationwide.

\textsuperscript{5} The White House Council of Economic Advisers, “The Economics of Early Childhood Investments,” 2014.
\textsuperscript{6} American Community Survey, 2015 5-Year Estimates.
\textsuperscript{7} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{8} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{9} NOEEN estimate (2016).
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
To create sustainable, successful change in New Orleans’ ECE sector, it is important to understand the details of the ECE landscape, and its strengths and challenges. As of January 2017, 157 New Orleans ECE providers participate in some form of public funding program. Efforts to improve ECE within New Orleans must address two distinct, but interdependent, ECE program age groups: 4-year-olds, and infants and toddlers from birth through age 3.

**Programmatic Overview of New Orleans Early Care and Education**

**Children Ages 0-4 in New Orleans by Race & Hispanic Origin, 2015**

- African American: 60%
- White: 26%
- Hispanic: 8%
- Asian: 2%
- Other Races*: 3%

*children who identify as more than one race, American Indian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

**Source:** Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program: July 1, 2015, release date: June 2016

**Children Ages 0-4 in New Orleans by Age 2015 Total = 23,425 children**

- Infants: 4,797
- One: 4,660
- Two: 4,661
- Three: 4,701
- Four: 4,606

Access to Subsidized ECE

Access to ECE seats for at-risk children in New Orleans\(^{10}\) differs substantially based on age, as Figure 2 shows. Access to publicly funded seats is relatively high for 4-year-olds in Pre-K classes, but extremely low for younger children.

Access for 4-Year-Olds

One of the key strengths of the New Orleans ECE sector is high access to Pre-K for at-risk 4-year-olds. There are over 3,000 subsidized or free Pre-K seats available in schools and child care centers, enough to serve approximately two-thirds of all New Orleans 4-year-olds, not only the at-risk youth. These slots receive funding from several federal and state sources, including Head Start, The Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program (LA4), Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) subsidies, the Preschool Enhancement Grant (PEG), and Nonpublic School Early Childhood Development (NSECD) program.

The availability of school-based or school-affiliated Pre-K for 4-year-olds has grown in recent years because of an influx of state and federal grants targeting school-based ECE.\(^{11}\) In cases where schools want to offer Pre-K, but do not have adequate space or expertise in early childhood, schools may partner with community-based child care centers. Though students attend Pre-K at a child care center, the school is responsible for the program, and students may progress directly from Pre-K into kindergarten at that school.

Access to ECE for Ages 0-3

For children ages 0-3, the landscape of ECE in New Orleans is very different. Access to affordable care for this age group is a major challenge. Outside of Early Head Start/Head Start and a limited number of partially funded child care subsidies, there is very little public financial support for ECE. Head Start and child care subsidies reach only 11 percent of children ages 0-3, leaving many families to find other solutions, such as relying upon family members.

\(^{10}\) Defined as children below 185 percent of the poverty level and/or at risk of a developmental delay.

\(^{11}\) Of the three school-based Pre-K programs, the LA4 program is by far the largest public Pre-K program in New Orleans, funding about 1,600 seats in the city. NSECD funds approximately 450 Pre-K seats, while the PEG grants fund approximately 115 new Pre-K seats, and support quality in some existing programs.
Measures of Program Quality

Access itself is a barrier to quality early learning for too many New Orleans children. But simply having access is not enough — ensuring children have the early learning experiences they need to prepare for success in school and life requires *high-quality* ECE programs. To measure quality in ECE programs, Louisiana uses the Classroom Observation Scoring System (CLASS), a widely used observational measure of the quality of adult-child interactions. CLASS data suggest New Orleans has room for growth, especially in Pre-K Instructional Support, where New Orleans’ scores fall well below the state average. Instructional support is a common weakness for Pre-K classrooms throughout the country, even as research shows that disparities between high- and low-income children are dramatically reduced in classrooms with high instructional support scores. Given the city’s large and longstanding academic and economic inequities, New Orleans ECE programs must improve to give children the high-quality early education experiences they need and deserve.

Access to Programs That Meet Families’ Preferences and Needs

Access to high-quality early education is about more than just CLASS scores. The best program for any individual child is one that delivers quality learning experiences while also meeting each family’s unique needs. Parents may enroll their children in most ECE programs the same way they enroll older children for K-12 schools: via the EnrollNOLA OneApp. Using OneApp, families submit a ranked-choice application to ECE seats in the city. The system then matches children to a program in a unified lottery. Including early childhood programs in the unified enrollment system has been one of NOEEN’s key achievements thus far, described below, in “Organizational History.” But finding an ECE seat that matches a student’s specific needs is rarely straightforward for families.

First, programs are not evenly distributed throughout the city, and unlike K-12 students, ECE students are not entitled to transportation support. Families living in areas of the city that lack robust bus service (e.g. New Orleans East) or areas where there are many young children but fewer free programs (e.g. Algiers) may find it difficult to actually reach programs for which they are eligible.

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12 With the exception of ECE seats funded through the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), which is not currently integrated into the OneApp system.
Also, with the exception of programs for gifted and talented children or children with disabilities, all free or subsidized ECE seats have income and/or employment-based requirements, which means parents must complete a multistep paperwork and verification process for enrollment. For families that are working, have literacy issues, or lack reliable transportation, the application and verification process can pose a major barrier to an ECE seat.

Additionally, not every ECE program has extra services that families may need, such as extended or flexible care hours for parents working on a nontraditional schedule, staff trained to serve children with special needs, or multilingual staff. New Orleans must work to eliminate families’ barriers to high-quality ECE programs, so that children who will benefit the most from high-quality ECE have that opportunity.

Financial Support for High-Quality ECE Programs

ECE programs face substantial financial challenges. The per-student funding available via public funding streams is rarely enough to provide high-quality care or enable ECE providers to be financially sustainable. As a result, many early learning centers cannot set their rates at levels that could support high-quality instruction or well-qualified staff.

The expansion of Pre-K access in New Orleans has created additional financial challenges for child care centers serving younger children. Because of the high teacher-child ratio and low subsidy values for infant and toddler care in centers, centers used to offset the higher cost of infant/toddler care with Pre-K enrollment. The expansion of access to school-based Pre-K since the early 2000s has removed many 4-year-olds from the market for community-based Pre-K, destabilizing the already precarious financial outlook for infant and toddler care. This phenomenon is not unique to New Orleans, but it is especially acute because of the predominance of small child care centers in the New Orleans landscape (vs. larger centers that may be able to achieve some economies of scale). Without intervention, access to child care for infants and toddlers may worsen in the coming years.

Looking Forward

New Orleans ECE is at a turning point: Barriers for families to access high-quality care and financial pressures for programs present challenges, but the expansion of ECE access for 4-year-olds and the emerging energy and leadership from within the sector present opportunities for growth and improvement. Now is the time for all those who care about New Orleans’ future to ensure an excellent start for every New Orleans child.
In 2012, the Louisiana State Legislature passed Act 3, which aimed to create a comprehensive and integrated delivery system for ECE and improve kindergarten readiness. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) took a parish-based approach to Act 3 implementation, identifying lead agencies in each parish to build local ECE networks. This created a new opportunity to better coordinate ECE at a local level. The networks have several key responsibilities:

- **Coordinate Observation** of ECE classrooms using the CLASS tool;
- **Unify Enrollment** in publicly funded ECE programs and the K-12 system, across Early Head Start, Head Start, and Pre-K programs;
- **Streamline Funding** for several ECE funding streams, by submitting a unified funding recommendation to the LDOE for the allocation of publicly funded Pre-K seats among all providers in the parish; and,
- **Communicate with ECE Providers** about state policies and initiatives, serving as a local connector between the state and a multitude of ECE providers.

In most parishes, the parish school district serves as the lead agency. But, with New Orleans’ decentralized education system and the transition underway from the Recovery School District (RSD) to the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), the city needed a different kind of network.

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In New Orleans, Agenda for Children was chosen as the lead agency to create an early childhood network. Agenda for Children, led by CEO Dr. Anthony “Tony” Recasner, is a respected and well-known organization in the New Orleans early childhood sector, with over 30 years of experience advocating for ECE, collecting and providing data on child well-being as the home of Louisiana KIDS COUNT, and providing training and technical assistance to ECE providers and communities in Southeast Louisiana. Agenda already had ongoing relationships with many ECE providers and stakeholders across the city in its role as the Child Care Resource and Referral agency for 14 parishes in Southeast Louisiana.

**NOEEN under Agenda for Children**

In consultation with many local ECE providers and stakeholders, the Agenda for Children team established a transparent and collaborative network structure to build credibility and buy-in from the ECE provider community. The New Orleans Early Education Network – NOEEN – represents over 150 partner ECE programs. Under the management of Agenda for Children, NOEEN has been led by an 11-member steering committee, which includes representatives from across the ECE community: RSD, OPSB, Head Start and Early Head Start, charter schools, Catholic schools, and child care centers.\(^{14}\)

Currently, Agenda for Children’s Board of Directors and the NOEEN steering committee share oversight of NOEEN’s work. Agenda for Children’s board provides guidance on the overall strategic direction of NOEEN, approves the budget and staffing, and oversees Agenda for Children’s CEO, while the NOEEN steering committee functions as a collaborative decision-making body for the NOEEN program. The steering committee members have been essential thought partners over the past several years, helping to develop and approve a wide range of policies, and providing critical feedback on how NOEEN activities affect programs and families. The steering committee is one formal way in which NOEEN ensures that key decisions and policies are done with instead of done to program partners.

NOEEN has had many early successes as it focused on fulfilling the requirements of Act 3 and increasing kindergarten readiness in the unique context of New Orleans:

- **Coordinated CLASS observations** in over 500 ECE classrooms in the first year of implementation, with higher-than-required quality assurance processes and accompanying training and professional development for teachers and program directors to use and understand the CLASS ratings;
- Successfully implemented **coordinated ECE enrollment** in the 2016-17 school year in partnership with EnrollNOLA, published the New Orleans Guide to Early Care and Education for parents, and performed public outreach via partner programs to inform families of the shift to the new system; and,
- Created a **transparent and unified application process** by which ECE providers, including schools and child care centers, could apply for public funds. Applications are rated by a committee, and these ratings determine NOEEN’s recommendation to the Louisiana Department of Education for the allocation of publicly funded seats.

\(^{14}\) Organizations represented on the NOEEN Steering Committee: RSD, OPSB, Agenda for Children, LSU Health Sciences Center, Kingsley House, Total Community Action, Kids of Excellence, Clara’s Little Lambs, Archdiocese of New Orleans, Louisiana Department of Health Early Steps, and Crescent City Schools.
None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the NOEEN steering committee’s work to build credibility and increase engagement within the community of ECE providers in New Orleans. NOEEN has demonstrated that change and progress are possible, and that leadership can come from within the ECE sector, rather than from the top down.

While NOEEN has had notable successes under the management of Agenda for Children, there is still a long way to go to ensure excellence across the sector as a whole. The members of the steering committee recognized that New Orleans needs a more robust and comprehensive effort, beyond the mandates of state law, to create a thriving, high-quality early childhood sector that would meet the needs of children and families in New Orleans. This requires a new organization with the capacity to bring together stakeholders across the ECE sector, identify opportunities for improvement, attract new supports and funds, and work aggressively towards a unifying vision for ECE excellence citywide. This new organization could be a model for other lead agencies across Louisiana, and for cities across the country aiming to improve their early childhood outcomes.

**Strategic Planning**

The NOEEN strategic plan aims to position the organization to strengthen the early childhood sector as a whole. To accomplish its goals and vision for excellence across the ECE sector, NOEEN will become an independent organization.

While Agenda for Children has launched and incubated the network over the past three years, the steering committee concluded that NOEEN should become an independent organization, for several reasons. Agenda has its own organizational priorities, particularly in growing its work in professional development and technical assistance for ECE educators and leaders. The overlaps between this work and NOEEN could become problematic; for example, in coordinating funding, Agenda for Children is in the position of being a coach and technical assistance provider to ECE programs, while wielding some amount of influence over their financial futures through the coordinated funding process. In order for NOEEN to realize its full potential, the steering committee and Agenda for Children staff and board concluded that NOEEN must operate as a separate entity.

Agenda for Children will be a vital partner going forward, and NOEEN will continue to value the relationships Agenda has cultivated with steering committee members and other early childhood providers. Details on the structure of NOEEN as a new, independent organization are covered in “Governance and Organizational Design,” below.

**Intermediary Role**

To achieve its vision and goals, NOEEN steering committee members determined that NOEEN should be structured as an intermediary organization. An intermediary is a place-based organization that leads planning, coordination, and management across a set of stakeholders to enable common goals. This choice is rooted in NOEEN’s founding structure as a network of ECE providers and stakeholders, and in recognition of the fact that there are already many direct service providers playing various roles in the New Orleans ECE landscape, but there is no organization coordinating and unifying programs across the sector to achieve an overarching vision of excellence.
The key roles of an intermediary are to:

- Convene stakeholders from across the sector;
- Provide neutral assessments of progress and performance, and foster a better understanding of the current landscape;
- Help service providers improve the quality of their work and encourage existing or new organizations to address unmet needs in the sector;
- Attract and allocate resources across the sector; and,
- Evolve approach and focus areas over time based on sector needs.

Given the broad, complex, and systemic nature of the challenges facing ECE in New Orleans, NOEEN will not confine its role to one specific program area, and will instead act as a nimble, galvanizing intermediary, identifying and addressing strengths, weaknesses, and inefficiencies across the sector and coordinating citywide solutions. As an intermediary, NOEEN can also serve as a model to ECE lead agencies in other Louisiana parishes, as the structure of an intermediary organization is adaptable to a variety of environments.
The vision, mission, and statement of impact for NOEEN set out an ambitious, but achievable vision for the launch of the organization and the future of the ECE sector in New Orleans. The vision statement, specifically, aims to set out a unifying “north star” for the whole ECE sector to work towards.

**Vision**
The New Orleans early childhood sector supports families’ aspirations for their children from birth through age 8 by providing access to high-quality early learning programs and schools, ensuring that all children receive a strong foundation for their future success.

**Mission**
The mission of NOEEN is to ensure an excellent start for every child in New Orleans by strengthening the early childhood education sector.
Statement of Impact
Currently, New Orleans has a strong foundation in place for ECE, with a high level of access to publicly funded seats among 4-year-olds. However, the ecosystem is fragmented, with quality unevenly distributed across neighborhoods. Community support for ECE is enthusiastic, but still nascent. Among the key indicators of the current ECE landscape are:

- **Access:** Approximately 5200 youth aged 0-4 have access to free or subsidized early learning programs.
- **Not all families are aware of how to access the full breadth of early learning program choices.**
- **Quality:** 42 percent of seats are high-quality.
- **Not all families are satisfied with provider options, affordability, and quality.**

By 2026, NOEEN intends that:

- **All New Orleans children from birth through age 4 will have access to affordable, high-quality early learning programs that prepare them for success in school and life.**
  - Access: Increase the number of free or subsidized seats for children aged 0-4 from 5,200 to 10,000.
  - Awareness: 80 percent of New Orleans families are aware of the importance of ECE and of how to access the full breadth of early learning program choices.
  - Quality: 80 percent of ECE seats are high-quality.
  - Satisfaction: 80 percent of New Orleans families are satisfied with ECE provider options, affordability, and quality.
- **New Orleans’ schools and early learning centers will work together to ensure kindergarten readiness and aligned, quality learning experiences for children through third grade.**
  - Partnerships: Formal vertical partnerships are formed among schools, early learning centers, and Head Start grantees.
  - Transitions: 80 percent of children experience smooth transitions from their ECE setting to their school setting.
  - Aligned Professional Development: 80 percent of ECE and K-3 teachers engage in coordinated professional development.
- **New Orleans residents will understand the value of and support investment in the ECE sector.**
  - Investment: NOEEN catalyzes increased investment in ECE sector from local individuals and foundations.
  - Public support: 51 percent of voters support a dedicated, sustainable local funding stream to support ECE.

Achieving these impacts and this vision will echo beyond New Orleans: The city will inspire similar efforts throughout Louisiana, and will be a model for national efforts to cultivate robust ECE systems.
To achieve this intended impact, the strategic plan identifies seven focus areas to address the changes needed in the sector and bring about NOEEN's vision for ECE in New Orleans:

1. Strengthen the quality of the New Orleans ECE sector in order to meet community needs
2. Influence local and state-level discussions to advance our mission
3. Increase public and private ECE funding
4. Collect, analyze, and share unbiased data to increase transparency, help improve program quality, and inform sector priorities
5. Support parent choice through coordinated enrollment and parent information initiatives
6. Allocate publicly funded seats to high-quality providers to meet localized demand
7. Increase the ability of the ECE sector to attract, develop, and retain talent

Each focus area has several accompanying strategies, which specify NOEEN’s activities, either through direct action or by supporting and cultivating actions by other partners. NOEEN has begun to identify several potential partners for indirect strategies, explained in the “Key Partnerships” section, below. This mix of direct and supportive strategies is critical to an effective, efficient intermediary organization, and will allow NOEEN to focus direct action on the work that it is best positioned to accomplish, while spurring improvements across the sector. The NOEEN leadership and staff will continue to review these strategies and the implementation plan as the organization launches. Each focus area is explained in detail below, with the specific strategies that NOEEN will use to create positive change in that area.
1 Strengthen the quality of the New Orleans ECE sector in order to meet community needs

Access to high-quality early learning programs in New Orleans is uneven, and families face many challenges in finding a best-fit program for their children, at an affordable price, in an accessible location, with the quality of services their children need to get an excellent start. Strategies for NOEEN to increase the capacity of the sector to meet the needs of families include:

**Direct Strategies**
- a. Use data to identify the most pressing needs and challenges facing the sector and cultivate solutions, including seeding new organizations and capabilities.
- b. Facilitate collaboration and information sharing among ECE providers to address common problems.
- c. Evaluate progress against goals and spearhead continuous improvement efforts in the sector.

**Indirect Strategies – Cultivate or Support Others**
- d. Improve the quality of existing publicly funded ECE seats by enabling providers to access high-quality technical assistance and professional development services that address identified needs.
- e. Develop partnerships between early learning programs and schools to ensure smooth transitions from preschool to kindergarten and aligned, quality learning experiences for children from kindergarten through third grade.
- f. Increase understanding of developmentally appropriate practices across the early childhood and K-12 sectors.
- g. Support the efficient and effective use of public funds by encouraging ECE providers to improve their non-programmatic and financial capabilities.
- h. Support the development of new, high-quality ECE providers.

2 Influence local and state-level discussions to advance our mission

Realizing this vision will require policymakers to support and understand the importance of ECE, as well as changes in public policies that support access and quality. NOEEN will be a champion, convener, and organizer, to make ECE a top priority in Louisiana and New Orleans and demonstrate the potential of this approach for other communities. NOEEN will do this work in partnership and coalition with existing advocates working on behalf of children and families in New Orleans and statewide.

**Direct Strategies**
- a. Provide input to state and local government decision makers to help them shape an ECE policy agenda that is responsive to families’ needs, provider needs, and on-the-ground concerns.
- b. Serve as a leading champion of ECE, locally and statewide.
- c. Align stakeholders to amplify the sector’s voice and move key issues forward.
- d. Advocate for key policy, legislative, and campaign issues, as appropriate.
Indirect Strategies – Cultivate or Support Others

- Align existing systems to support children holistically (including health, housing, and social services), and encourage the creation of new systems or programs where there are gaps.

Increase public and private ECE funding

The ECE sector in New Orleans cannot achieve excellence without sufficient, stable funding to provide access to care for children across the spectrum of age and family income. This work is central to NOEEN’s mission, and as such, all strategies are direct. Lack of adequate funding has impeded the progress of the sector thus far, especially for children ages 0-3. One of the most important roles of NOEEN as an intermediary is to attract public and private investments in the sector, and to ensure that these investments yield outcomes for the children of New Orleans.

**Direct Strategies**

- a. Raise awareness of the importance of ECE in the philanthropic community and secure additional private funding for ECE. NOEEN will increase the size of overall investment in New Orleans ECE, and will not compete with existing ECE programs for philanthropic funding.
- b. Work with others to develop a sector-wide advocacy agenda that will increase the total volume of public funding.

Collect, analyze, and share unbiased data to increase transparency, help improve program quality, and inform sector priorities

Louisiana uses CLASS ratings as the primary indicator of program quality statewide. NOEEN and Agenda for Children have successfully conducted CLASS observations in over 500 classrooms, and NOEEN will remain engaged in data collection and analysis through direct strategies. Beyond CLASS, New Orleans needs a wider variety of reliable indicators to inform sector priorities. No entity is currently collecting, organizing, and using ECE data to provide an action-oriented, unbiased view of quality at the individual program level or citywide. Better data will inform improvement efforts across strategy areas, and help families more effectively judge the choices available to them across a variety of ECE program options.

**Direct Strategies**

- a. Via contract, identify and collect reliable and fair data on individual ECE programs, including data on quality, demand, family satisfaction, and other indicators as appropriate.
- b. Analyze data on program quality and demand.

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15 The Classroom Observation Scoring System (CLASS) is a widely used observational measure of the quality of adult-child interactions in ECE and elementary school settings.
NOEEN has already been working on supporting parent choice and streamlined enrollment processes. This focus area would exclusively use supportive, indirect strategies to build upon the work already underway by EnrollNOLA, and lower barriers to choice presented by lack of information or transportation challenges.

**Indirect Strategies – Cultivate or Support Others**
- Facilitate coordinated enrollment process via EnrollNOLA and the OneApp system, continuing to enhance the work NOEEN has already been doing.
- Provide families with information that will help them choose a “best-fit” program for their child.
- Increase and improve transportation options to facilitate access to high-quality seats.

Allocation of publicly funded seats is another focus area that builds upon NOEEN’s current work. The strategies here will leverage NOEEN’s other work on strengthening quality and data analysis (focus areas 1 and 4) to concentrate public funds towards the highest-quality programs in the neighborhoods where those seats are most needed.

**Direct Strategies**
- Shift existing publicly funded seats to higher-quality providers based on data.
- Partner with the Louisiana Department of Education, Head Start grantees, and others to reallocate publicly funded seats to meet demand in each neighborhood.

Talent is a challenge for most ECE programs in New Orleans across the areas of training, recruitment, development, and retention. NOEEN would work with human capital partners to encourage and cultivate a more robust and stable pipeline of qualified, trained ECE educators in New Orleans.

**Indirect Strategies – Cultivate or Support Others**
- Increase the attractiveness of the ECE sector as a place to work.
- Build sustainable ECE teacher and paraprofessional pipelines.
As an intermediary, NOEEN will mobilize partners to accomplish key pieces of the overarching sector improvement strategy. Where these partners already exist, NOEEN will support their work. Where potential partners do not yet exist, or lack required capacity to provide needed services, NOEEN will work to fill that gap. Even among the strategies that NOEEN will perform directly, there is generally a strong need for stakeholder buy-in and support for the strategy to be successful. Identifying and maintaining key partnerships will be an essential component of the organization’s work.

Key Partners
There will be many levels of partnership in NOEEN’s work; the first are “key partners,” organizations NOEEN will work with on a sustained and close basis in order to accomplish one or more of the strategies above. These partners will span the ECE and K-12 sectors, as the graphic at right illustrates.

Where potential partners already exist, NOEEN will support them by collaborating on key issues, removing barriers to success, connecting partners to resources as needed, and providing access to the broader NOEEN network. Where there is a gap, NOEEN will cultivate or incubate new partners by issuing RFPs, offering startup grants to promising new organizations, and raising philanthropic funds to support specific initiatives.
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<th>Existing Potential Partners</th>
<th>Partners Needed: Cultivate or Incubate</th>
</tr>
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<td>1. Strengthen the quality of the New Orleans ECE sector in order to meet community needs</td>
<td>Agenda for Children, OPSB, charter operators, and others</td>
<td>Support providers to efficiently and effectively use public funds, support the development of new providers</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Influence local and state-level discussions to advance our mission</td>
<td>Advocacy organizations, such as Louisiana Policy Institute for Children and Stand for Children and public agencies such as RSD, OPSB, and LDOE</td>
<td>Align existing systems to support children holistically</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Increase public and private ECE funding</td>
<td>Advocacy organizations, such as Louisiana Policy Institute for Children and Stand for Children</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Collect, analyze, and share unbiased data to increase transparency, help improve program quality, and inform sector priorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Support parent choice through coordinated enrollment and parent information initiatives</td>
<td>EnrollNOLA, Agenda for Children, Urban League</td>
<td>Increase and improve transportation options to facilitate access to high-quality seats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Allocate publicly funded seats to high-quality providers to meet localized demand</td>
<td>Louisiana Department of Education, Agenda for Children, Head Start grantees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Increase the ability of the ECE sector to attract, develop, and retain talent</td>
<td>Higher-education institutions and nonprofit human capital organizations</td>
<td>Increase attractiveness of the field, operate or create teacher preparation pipelines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ECE Providers**

NOEEN’s success will depend on communicative, ongoing relationships with the community of ECE providers in New Orleans, across all focus areas. Providers are the link between NOEEN’s work and the communities and neighborhoods of New Orleans, which makes their on-the-ground perspectives vitally important. To date, providers have had a voice in governance and decision making via the steering committee. Moving forward, providers will be represented on the NOEEN ECE advisory board and will be key stakeholders in the organization.

NOEEN will continue to build relationships and closely partner with a diverse range of ECE providers, including charter schools, community-based centers, and Head Start/Early Head Start providers. While publicly funded programs are important to NOEEN, and are central to
several focus areas, NOEEN will also maintain partnerships with ECE providers who do not receive public funds. This openness to various kinds of providers will allow NOEEN to better serve its mission of ensuring an excellent start for every child in New Orleans, not just those in certain ECE settings.

**Families**
While ECE providers are essential partners and stakeholders for NOEEN, the organization’s primary constituents are children and families. Families are at the center of NOEEN’s vision and mission, and supporting their voices, engagement, and choices is a central theme throughout NOEEN’s focus areas. Although families’ primary touch point with NOEEN will be their ECE provider or the enrollment system, the organization will listen to parents more directly, through focus groups, advisory boards, community-based events, and citywide parent surveys.

**Business and Community Leaders**
Creating a thriving early childhood sector in New Orleans is not just a concern for families with young children and ECE providers. Businesses and other local leaders should become supporters and champions of high-quality ECE, because it forms the foundation of a child-friendly city. High-quality ECE is a community-wide asset that will grow the city’s economy and improve its workforce for generations to come.

Local leaders in New Orleans, including the business community, faith leaders, and local elected officials, also have an important role to play in achieving NOEEN’s vision of an early childhood sector that supports families’ aspirations for their children. These leaders can be advocates and trusted communicators throughout the community, elevating the importance of ECE for New Orleans. NOEEN will motivate and activate leaders as partners in a broader community engagement effort to jump-start the conversation about ECE in New Orleans.

**Individual, Business, and Philanthropic Funders**
Implementing NOEEN’s strategy and achieving its goals requires increased public and private funding for the ECE sector — indeed, this is one of NOEEN’s focus areas. The private part of that strategy requires partnerships with individuals, businesses, and foundations. NOEEN will work to increase philanthropic and private investment in the ECE sector as a whole, not only to support its own efforts and direct strategies, but to grow the total size of investment in the sector, so as not to take away from support for existing efforts.

NOEEN’s efforts will grow the total level of investment in ECE by engaging with funders locally and nationally. Locally, NOEEN will encourage increased investment from those already contributing to the sector, and engage funders who support education and anti-poverty work to also support ECE. NOEEN will also work to engage national funders in New Orleans ECE by offering a compelling vision for improved ECE in the city, and a strong plan to ensure impact.
NOEEN will incorporate as an independent nonprofit organization so that it can effectively achieve its mission of ensuring an excellent start for every child in New Orleans by strengthening the ECE sector. In doing so, NOEEN will be able to focus solely on its mission, while minimizing organizational red tape.

NOEEN will serve as a model for other communities in how to be an effective intermediary that can comprehensively address the needs of the early childhood sector. Over the past three years, NOEEN has built a strong collaboration and shared vision among a core group of program partners, which has been supported with both public funding from LDOE and private funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. As NOEEN expands beyond its initial work, additional partners from philanthropy, business, and government will need to lend their support in order to fully realize the organization’s potential.

The strategic planning committee has developed the following plan for board governance and organizational staffing so that NOEEN can successfully transition from its current status as a program of Agenda for Children to an independent organization.

**Board of Directors and ECE Advisory Board**

Thoughtful, transparent governance is essential to NOEEN’s success. The organization’s board of directors will be responsible for major organizational decisions, high-level strategic oversight, hiring and evaluating NOEEN’s executive director, and fiduciary duties. Because the role of the board of directors will evolve as the organization matures, the strategic plan sets out a two-part plan for the board: a first-year founding board, followed by a long-term governing board. The
board’s most important initial responsibility will be hiring an exemplary executive director for the
organization.

The executive director, along with other key staff members, will be responsible for day-to-day
operational management and decision-making, including programs, partnerships, and
fundraising. NOEEN’s executive director and staff will work closely with an ECE advisory board
of local providers and stakeholders, to get feedback and input from the field on key programs.
Board roles are explained in further detail below.

Board of Directors Year One: Founding Board
The founding NOEEN board of directors will incorporate NOEEN as a 501(c)(3), fundraise, hire
an executive director, and create a strong foundation for NOEEN’s launch as an independent
organization. Founding board members will be appointed for one-year terms, with an option for
reappointment to the longer-term governing board. The NOEEN steering committee will recruit
founding board members who have enthusiasm for the mission, dedication to the ECE sector,
demonstrated fundraising acumen, and a willingness to commit to more intensive involvement
during the launch phase of the organization. The founding board will likely be smaller than the
governing board due to the significant amount of time and energy needed from founding board
members.

Board of Directors Year Two and Beyond: Governing Board
As the organization moves beyond the launch phase, the executive director and founding board
members will recruit new members to broaden the skills and knowledge represented on the
board. The governing board will guide the ongoing strategic direction of the organization,
evaluate and advise the executive director, provide fiduciary oversight, and play a role in the
organizational fundraising strategy. The board will include members with institutional fundraising
experience, business expertise, local- and state-level advocacy skills, ECE sector knowledge,
and/or community engagement skills. The mix of skill sets and professional backgrounds on the
board will evolve as the organization’s work evolves.

ECE Advisory Board
Members of the current NOEEN steering committee, including ECE providers and other local
ECE stakeholders, will become an ECE advisory board to the NOEEN executive director and
staff. The advisory board will be an important source of local ECE knowledge, perspectives, and
expertise, and will convene regularly to give feedback and make recommendations to the
executive director and staff on programmatic priorities such as coordinated ECE enrollment and
NOEEN’s advocacy agenda. The ECE advisory board will be one important way in which
NOEEN will maintain close relationships with diverse ECE providers across the city.

Organizational Staffing Strategy
NOEEN will create significant improvements in New Orleans’ ECE sector with a small,
knowledgeable, and experienced team. NOEEN’s staffing structure will begin with four full-time
staff members focused on establishing the organization and building the foundation of NOEEN’s
work, and eventually grow to seven staff members.

NOEEN will hire staff on the basis of their ability to build relationships and partnerships while
driving the sector forward, as well as their expertise and experience in ECE. NOEEN’s team will
grow in year two and beyond, expanding the skill sets represented within NOEEN’s staff,
particularly in the areas of advocacy and community organizing. The figure below shows the
proposed year one and year two staffing structure. A more detailed explanation of each role is included in the appendix.

### Year One Staffing
The executive director will hire a founding staff that includes the following positions:

- **Program director:** Responsible for implementing the organization’s primary strategies, including providing oversight for coordinated enrollment, coordinated funding requests, and program quality observations;
- **Program analyst:** Responsible for data collection, evaluation, and analysis, including data related to enrollment, early childhood education supply, demand and quality, workforce, program observations, and funding; and
- **Executive assistant:** Responsible for coordinating scheduling, tracking key deliverables, and coordinating fundraising operations under the executive director’s guidance.

The executive director, program director, and program analyst will all contribute to the essential work of building strong relationships with partners, including the ECE advisory board. The program director and the program analyst will also focus on supporting the priority strategies for the launch of the organization (see “Focus Areas and Strategies”). The program director will have extensive experience and expertise in early childhood education, and will preferably have experience in schools, Head Start centers, and/or private early learning centers. Contracted back-office support may include a part-time controller, and contracted technical assistance providers may support specific strategies of the work.

### Year Two Staffing
In year two, NOEEN will deepen organizational capacity by adding the following positions:

- **Advocacy director:** Responsible for working with the ECE advisory board and advocacy partners to develop an advocacy and public policy agenda, increase public
funding for the sector, build relationships with state and local policymakers, and maintain partnerships with coalitions of advocates for children and families;

- **Community engagement director:** Responsible for organizing and engaging local families, businesses, ECE providers, and the general population to increase awareness of the importance of early childhood education and of how to find and apply for early childhood programs; and,

- **Program director:** Responsible for a portfolio of program and partnership strategies, particularly working with school-based ECE program partners. The second program director will have experience with and relationships in the K-12 sector, to help NOEEN engage effectively with partners across the ECE and K-12 sectors, and to set up a strong system for young children transitioning into elementary schools.
The NOEEN strategic planning committee has developed a financial plan for the first five years of operation (2017-2021), which will support the personnel and programmatic expenses needed to accomplish the organization’s work while minimizing overhead. This plan depends on individuals, businesses, and foundations to make a substantial investment in high-quality early learning experiences for all of New Orleans’ youngest children and their families.

Through the first five years of operation, including the start-up year, NOEEN will require a total of $4.4 million in philanthropic support, about $1 million annually at the projected “run rate” for the organization. In this financial model, 2017 is a partial year, with the bulk of organizational expenses beginning in June, when the organization launches as an independent entity. Highly qualified staff are the largest and most important organizational expense, as the organization ramps to full capacity at seven full-time staff members. The model also anticipates slightly higher program costs in the first few years of operation as NOEEN creates robust systems and forges new partnerships.

The assumptions within the model are conservative in order to ensure that NOEEN is not surprised by a significant financial deficit in any year. For example, the financial allocation for personnel costs assumes the upper end of the salary range for each position, so that the executive director will be able to hire highly qualified staff. Budgetary benchmarks from other intermediary organizations and local start-up education nonprofits have provided useful guidance.
Approximately 50 to 55 percent of organizational expenses will be for personnel, and 30 to 40 percent will be for programmatic expenses, with a 10 percent to 15 percent allowance for overhead costs. In the event of an unexpected fundraising shortfall, NOEEN should be able to reduce expenses in any given year by $200,000-$300,000 by minimizing contracted supports and limiting programmatic and marketing expenditures.

Some key assumptions within the financial model include:

- An annual program budget of $50,000-$100,000 to support key initiatives such as bringing together local stakeholders to develop and then execute on advocacy priorities;
- A $100,000-$200,000 budget for contracted supports to NOEEN providers and partners, including trainings, technical assistance, and other outsourced work;
- An annual marketing and communications budget of $40,000-$50,000 to build public awareness and support for ECE;
- Fringe benefits equal to 25 percent of salaries;
- Approximately $75,000 annually in accounting, audit, and legal support — this includes funding that could go toward a part-time controller;
- Approximately $75,000 for office rent, supplies, and basic technology expenses; and,
- Annual cost escalations of 2 percent for most cost items, including salaries.

The financial model currently includes an annual Louisiana Department of Education contribution of approximately $250,000 to cover a portion of Act 3 implementation as the lead agency for New Orleans, as well as a small amount of revenue from individual donations ($20,000-$100,000 per year). Financial projections assume other revenue must come from philanthropic support, from businesses and foundations. In order to generate the funds needed to support NOEEN’s important work, the executive director will spend part of his or her time fundraising from local, state, and national foundations that are eager to support this coordinated ECE effort in New Orleans. Early on, this will be the primary source of funding, and these supporters will be crucial to the launch and early success of NOEEN. With the benefit of that foundation support, NOEEN will then focus on generating interest and support from local corporations that understand the importance of advancing the local ECE sector. The local donor base of corporations and foundations will form a sustaining base for NOEEN. Finally, over time, NOEEN aims to build a strong individual donor base and possibly generate funding through a sustainable tax revenue stream. While this is something that the organization may work toward over time, the financial model assumes that this is not a source of early support for the organization.
NOEEN’s implementation plan guides the sequence of decisions and actions leading up to the launch and first years of NOEEN’s operation as an independent organization. A more detailed implementation plan is included in the appendix.

Launch Implementation Overview:

1. **Stakeholder Engagement and Communications:** The NOEEN steering committee will begin by sharing and discussing this strategic plan with ECE providers and other stakeholders in New Orleans, including current and potential funders, in spring 2017.

2. **Fundraising:** Dr. Anthony Recasner, CEO of Agenda for Children, will lead the fundraising efforts for the organization’s launch, with the goal of covering the executive director and program director salaries for the first year. Once an executive director is hired no later than May 2017, he or she will assume responsibility for fundraising. The executive director will work with the board to adopt a five-year fundraising plan.

3. **Founding Governance:** An ad-hoc subcommittee of the current NOEEN steering committee will recommend a slate of founding board candidates for consideration by the full steering committee by March 2017. These board members will take over the task of incorporating NOEEN as a new, independent nonprofit. The first official NOEEN board of directors meeting will be held no later than April 2017.

4. **Hiring Leadership:** The founding board of directors, with input and support from the ECE advisory board, will lead the search for an executive director. The board may retain a search firm to facilitate this process so that a highly qualified executive director is hired no later than May 2017. The executive director will hire a program director by August 2017. Hires for other director-level positions will proceed as called for in the implementation plan.

5. **Transition from Agenda for Children:** Dr. Anthony Recasner will assist the founding board of directors to transition NOEEN into a separate nonprofit organization, and to transfer lead agency status under Act 3 to NOEEN, under the leadership of the founding board of directors.

6. **Programs and Services:** The executive director and program director will create an 18-month plan, with key activities and milestones identified, to be approved by the founding board no later than August 2017. This short-term program plan will map to the organizational intended impacts, with a medium-term (5-year) and long-term (10-year) plan to follow.
NOEEN envisions a better future for New Orleans children and families, and this strategic plan lays the foundation for a strong, successful, mission-driven organization to support that vision. However, there are several key risks that could limit NOEEN’s effectiveness. This section anticipates some of these risks, and identifies mitigation strategies and corrective actions for each.

**Fundraising Risks**

**Startup Funding Gaps:** The primary risk of any newly independent organization is that the organization will not raise sufficient startup funds. NOEEN will minimize this risk by aiming for an initial fundraising goal of two to three times the total amount needed for year one. If startup fundraising is below targets, NOEEN can postpone hiring staff and, if necessary, Agenda for Children can continue to deliver lead agency services until NOEEN is able to take on that role.

**Continued Operational Funding Gaps:** NOEEN will avoid operational funding gaps by making fundraising a top multiyear priority for the executive director, and focusing initial advocacy efforts on securing increased public funding for the sector and the organization. If this challenge occurs, NOEEN may consider adding dedicated development staff, which is not currently a part of the staffing plan.
**Hiring Risks**

**Executive Director Hiring Delay:** One of the first priorities for the new founding board will be to hire an executive director. If a strong candidate has not been hired by June 2017, the board may appoint an interim executive director to lead the organization until the board names a permanent executive director.

**Hiring Delay for Other Key Staff:** Once the executive director begins, he or she will move quickly, with support from the board, to hire the other staff needed to move forward with the year one implementation plan. If a delay occurs, the executive director may choose to use temporary or contract support until permanent employees are hired.

**Governance Risks**

**A Limited Pool of Available Board Members:** The community of prospective board members in New Orleans is not large, creating a risk that the ideal candidates to serve on the NOEEN board may not be available. To avoid this risk, the NOEEN steering committee will create a list of potential board members that can be considered as soon as possible, and the executive director will work to recruit desired board members in year two and beyond. It may take longer than anticipated to recruit the most desirable board members.

**Advocacy and Communication Risks**

**Establishing NOEEN's Credibility with Public or Policymakers:** To ensure the public and policymakers perceive NOEEN as a respected and credible voice on ECE matters, the executive director and staff will focus on building strong, positive relationships across stakeholder groups, and seeking out opportunities to show NOEEN's value-add to New Orleans as a whole.

**Family Dissatisfaction:** Families may be dissatisfied with NOEEN's work, especially as it relates to coordinated enrollment. High-demand programs generally have far more applicants than seats, so many families are not able to attend their most-preferred program. In any given year, hundreds or even thousands of children who apply for a seat do not receive one. To mitigate this risk, the NOEEN and EnrollNOLA teams will develop clear, accessible materials to help parents better understand the process for enrollment. At the same time, NOEEN will work to increase the number of free or subsidized seats available in the city. Staff, including the director of community engagement, will raise public awareness of how the process works and how NOEEN is working to increase the number of available seats, especially in high-demand programs.

**ECE Provider Perception of NOEEN's Role:** Most local early childhood education programs struggle to attract sufficient, sustainable funding. NOEEN could be seen as a competitor for funds by the very organizations it seeks to support and strengthen. To help prevent this, NOEEN will seek funding primarily from national and state-level foundations, as well as corporations that are not already supporting ECE. Additionally, NOEEN will work hard to provide a range of support services to early childhood education programs, including sub-grants to support program improvements.
Conclusion

Every young child in New Orleans deserves high-quality early learning experiences, in a setting that best meets his or her needs. The ECE sector in New Orleans has the potential to give all children a strong foundation for success in elementary school and beyond, but the sector needs support to achieve that goal, especially for the neediest children. As a new, independent nonprofit organization, NOEEN will lead the way to ensure an excellent start for every child in New Orleans. NOEEN will work strategically, through partnerships and direct action, to catalyze improvements in program quality, policy, funding, community support, parent education, and sector talent. NOEEN’s vision for a stronger New Orleans ECE sector is achievable, and the city could be an exemplar of early childhood success for other Louisiana parishes and cities nationwide. This vision depends on organizations and individuals in New Orleans and throughout the country to take action today, and commit to a brighter future for the youngest children in New Orleans.
### NOEEN Proposed Staff Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Target Hire Date</th>
<th>Core Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>Lead organizational strategy, lead fundraising and development strategy, lead board management, lead partnership development, manage directors and executive assistant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Director 1</td>
<td>Jul-17</td>
<td>Create program plan and set program goals, build key partner relationships, manage Act 3 compliance, manage program analyst, lead ECE provider data analysis and quality improvement, contribute deep ECE content knowledge and experience, manage advisory board communications.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Analyst</td>
<td>Oct-17</td>
<td>Analyze program data, assist program directors, coordinate advisory board and other stakeholder meetings, track progress towards program goals, support priority program initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Assistant</td>
<td>Oct-17</td>
<td>Manage scheduling for executive director, set up organizational knowledge management framework, coordinate board meetings, coordinate fundraising operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy Director</td>
<td>Jan-18</td>
<td>Build advisory relationships with state and local policymakers; develop advocacy agenda with advisory board input; anticipate, identify, and secure ECE sector public funding opportunities; elevate New Orleans ECE importance in state and local budget/policy; track and respond to relevant policy proposals; inform and mobilize provider partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Engagement Director</td>
<td>Apr-18</td>
<td>Organize and engage local families, businesses, ECE providers, and other community leaders on the importance of high-quality ECE and NOEEN’s vision for New Orleans families and children, create meaningful opportunities for feedback from the public on NOEEN’s work, identify new potential partners and programmatic gaps within New Orleans’ neighborhoods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Director 2</td>
<td>May-18</td>
<td>Co-manage program plan implementation and Act 3, contribute deep Pre-K-12 content knowledge and experience, serve as liaison to OPSB, charter schools, and other K-12 and higher education partners, manage programs focused on Pre-K and Pre-K to elementary school transitions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Draft Implementation Plan to Support NOEEN Strategic Plan

Jan 23 2017

**Key:**
- Indicates milestone
- Indicates activity

## Operational area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task / Milestone</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>End</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition from Agenda as lead agency</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify interim leadership to manage transition</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>January-17</td>
<td>February-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Take steps to establish independent organization</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>February-17</td>
<td>June-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOEEN established as lead agency with the state</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>June-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications and stakeholder engagement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Share strategic plan with NOEEN Steering Committee</td>
<td>Strategy committee</td>
<td>January-17</td>
<td>January-17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share transition of NOEEN and implications with Agenda staff</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>February-17</td>
<td>February-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share strategic plan with providers and other stakeholders in NOEEN network</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss strategic plan and forthcoming approach with current and high-potential funders</td>
<td>Dr. Anthony Recasner</td>
<td>February-17</td>
<td>March-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate transition of NOEEN to Agenda and NOEEN partners as relevant</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>February-17</td>
<td>April-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gain input on approach and transition from key Dept of Education staff</td>
<td>Dr. Anthony Recasner</td>
<td>January-17</td>
<td>April-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Launch fundraising efforts for Year 1</td>
<td>Dr. Anthony Recasner</td>
<td>February-17</td>
<td>March-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 1 startup capital secured (to cover ED and program director salaries)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>March-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partner with ED to support transition of fundraising efforts</td>
<td>Dr. Anthony Recasner</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>July-17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop draft 5-year fundraising plan</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>July-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secure board approval for 5-year fundraising plan</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>July-17</td>
<td>July-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secure 5 year fundraising plan in place</td>
<td></td>
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<td>July-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funds raised for years 2-3</td>
<td></td>
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<td>March-18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Long-term funding strategy in place</td>
<td></td>
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<td>January-20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approve ad-hoc committee to identify incorporation board members</td>
<td>NOEEN Steering Committee</td>
<td>March-17</td>
<td>March-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governing board identified</td>
<td></td>
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<td>March-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>First governing board meeting</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Late March 2017</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Confirm additional board members to fill out full governing board</td>
<td>Board Chair/Executive Director</td>
<td>June-17</td>
<td>December-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hiring</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hire search firm to support ED hiring</td>
<td>Founding board</td>
<td>March-17</td>
<td>March-17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage search firm through hiring process</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>March-17</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide input to ED job description and final candidates for ED role</td>
<td>NOEEN Steering Committee</td>
<td>April-17</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide on ED hire</td>
<td>Founding board</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ED hired</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Finalize job description and launch search for program director</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>July-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program director hired</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Finalize job descriptions and launch search for program analyst and executive assistant</td>
<td>Program Director, Executive Director</td>
<td>August-17</td>
<td>October-17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program analyst and executive assistant hired</td>
<td></td>
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<td>October-17</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalize job description and launch search for advocacy director</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>October-17</td>
<td>January-18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy director hired</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>January-18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalize job description and launch search for community engagement director</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>January-18</td>
<td>April-18</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community engagement director hired</td>
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<td>April-18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finalize job description and launch search for 2nd program director</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>March-18</td>
<td>May-18</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd program director hired</td>
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<td>May-18</td>
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<td>Program</td>
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<td>Establish key activities and milestones within each strategy for the next 18 months</td>
<td>ED and Program Director</td>
<td>May-17</td>
<td>August-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>18 month programmatic milestones confirmed by governing board</td>
<td></td>
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<td>August-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Backwards map 10 year intended impact metrics to annual metrics</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>July-17</td>
<td>August-17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Medium and long-term plan under development</td>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>July-17</td>
<td>October-17</td>
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</table>
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- Dr. Angela Keyes, Tulane University
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- Dana Henry, Stand for Children
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- Holly Reid, RSD
- Jay Altman, FirstLine Schools
- Jen Roberts, Baptist Community Ministries
- JoAnn Clarey, Agenda for Children
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- Julie Smith-Price, Newcomb Children’s Center
- Kate Mehok, Crescent City Schools
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- Kristi Givens, Kids of Excellence
- Kristen Illarma, EnrollNOLA
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- Melanie Bronfin, LA Policy Institute for Children
- Mary Garton, Orleans Parish School Board
- Myrialis King, Foundation Prep
- Nancy Freeman, Agenda Board Member
- Patrick Dobard, RSD Superintendent
- Rochelle Wilcox, Wilcox Academy of Early Learning
- Ron McClain, Institute of Mental Hygiene
- Todd Battiste, United Way
- Tom Shepley, New Schools for New Orleans
- Sonjia Joseph, Clara’s Little Lambs
- Teresa Falgoust, Agenda for Children
- Thelma French, TCA
- Tomika Suarez, Rainbow Academy and Preschool

NOEEN Steering Committee

Dr. Anthony Recasner
Patrick Dobard
Mary Garton
Maria Blanco

Dr. Keith Liederman
Thelma French
Kristi Givens
Sonjia Joseph

Carole Elliot
Joyce Ridgeway
Kate Mehok
The Mission of the New Orleans Early Education Network

The mission of NOEEN is to ensure an excellent start for every child in New Orleans by strengthening the early childhood education sector.