



NEBRASKA ECCE PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN PLAN

August 5, 2021

CONTEXT

Nebraska has an extraordinary opportunity to develop a statewide public education campaign that builds support for quality early childhood care and education (ECCE) in the state. Leveraging available public and private resources and building on a rich tradition of collaboration in the state, Nebraska is well positioned to craft a strategic communications program that helps to advance its broader strategic aims of access, quality, collaboration, and alignment of early childhood services and programs.

This campaign plan details a two-year public education campaign that will help to ensure Nebraskans have a shared understanding of what it means to provide quality care and education for young children and the essential role that caregivers and teachers play in providing that quality. Equitable access to opportunity, quality care, and education for each and every child will be at the heart of our efforts, given the very real challenges and gaps that exist in the state today. Efforts will focus on building the support that is necessary to help move the state forward in providing access to quality early childhood care and education for all children.

The recently developed Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan provides the foundation and impetus for the campaign. Embracing the vision, values, and definition of quality in the strategic plan, the campaign will be responsive to all four goals in the strategic plan, but especially to Goal 1 which focuses on ensuring equitable access to quality early care, education, and other essential services.

- **Strategic Plan Vision:** Provide all Nebraska children and their families with access to quality early childhood services that support children's healthy development from birth through age 8.
- **Strategic Plan Values:** Equity; Whole-child approach; Shared responsibility; Community leadership and collaboration; Continuity of care; Wise stewardship; Continuous improvement

The campaign plan is informed by:

- **Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan** – The public education campaign will directly align with this statewide strategic plan that was made possible under the auspices of the federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG) in 2019 and that continues to be refined and supported by stakeholders across the state.
- **PDG Needs Assessment Findings** – This critical component of the preschool development grant surveyed families and stakeholders across the state, providing rich data and information for the

public education campaign. Ongoing needs assessment updates will continue to inform campaign planning and implementation.

- **PDG Activity 3e, Parent/Public Education Campaign** – Informed by the requirements of this important federal contract, this campaign plan outlines efforts to reach parents and families, among others, to ensure that we are maximizing parental choice and empowering families to make the best decision for the care and education of their children.
- [Nebraska Early Childhood Workforce Commission Report](#) – Recommendations from this three-year commission of public and private sector leaders directly inform the campaign plan. Goal 3 of the recommendations speaks directly to building public will and commitment in the state to support quality ECCE and the workforce that provides those services.
- **Holland Foundation Grant Proposal** – Private sector support from an Omaha foundation provides additional resources to build support for quality early childhood care and education in the state with a special focus on the early childhood workforce.
- **Buffett Institute Audit of Early Childhood Communications in Nebraska** – With the help of dozens of Nebraska stakeholders, this statewide communications audit is helping to identify the multitude of communications resources and assets that exist in the state today.
- **Additional Background Materials** – An extensive and wide-ranging set of background materials and resources about ECCE in Nebraska has provided additional context and understanding essential to the development of this campaign plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The campaign goal is to **build support for quality early childhood care and education** in Nebraska.

Direct target audiences include:

- Parents and families
- The ECCE workforce
- Networks and organizations who engage influencers (defined as community/opinion leaders and local public officials)

Quality early childhood care and education is made possible through a qualified and supported early childhood workforce, entrusted by parents and families to care for and educate their young children. Our campaign goal of building support for quality early care and education cannot be accomplished without putting the needs of this workforce—including professional compensation, training, preparation, and overall well-being—at the center of this effort. The workforce delivers access to quality.

Without additional early childhood professionals, including those with improved qualifications, Nebraska will continue to suffer from care and education deserts—especially in rural areas and among the most vulnerable groups—holding back the potential of children, families, communities, and the state’s economy. Critical to placing the workforce at the center of access to quality is aligning the workforce with the overall campaign goal and objectives to empower them for this and future efforts. Part of the overall intent is to start shaping the dialogue among other key groups as well, including the early childhood system and public officials and opinion leaders whose support is critical to advance and sustain necessary investments in quality care and education.

The campaign will focus on building an aligned understanding of quality between parents and the field (based on the definition in the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan) and beginning to turn that understanding into increased support for equitable access to quality for Nebraska families.

Over time, increased parent and public awareness as a result of coordinated communications can be leveraged to educate influential policymakers, state agencies, funders, and others on the need to prioritize investments in a high-quality ECCE system that includes support for its workforce. This will build the foundation for future efforts to build a quality ECCE system in Nebraska.

To achieve the goal of building support for quality ECCE in Nebraska, the campaign objectives are to:

1. **Promote an aligned understanding of quality** in ECCE across audiences
 - ***Quality is defined in terms of each child's experience.*** A child experiences quality early care and education as physical and emotional safety in the context of frequent, warm, one-on-one interactions with a caring adult who engages the child in language rich and educational activities. To increase the likelihood that a child experiences quality, early care and education settings are structured to promote the well-being of early childhood professionals and to foster each child's healthy development and learning. The delivery of quality care and education across settings is facilitated by policies and continuous quality improvement practices that prioritize each child's experiences according to their developmental needs.
 - Each child may have a different learning experience, but it should be personalized according to how they learn best, their personal context and how they can best reach their full potential—high-quality providers are able to facilitate this.
2. **Increase the understanding and appreciation of the role of the workforce** in providing quality ECCE in Nebraska
3. **Expand recognition of the economic importance** of quality ECCE care and providers in Nebraska with influencer and workforce audiences
4. **Build public will for access to quality ECCE** across all three target audiences
5. **Increase communications capacity** among campaign partners and collaborators to sustain and continue community engagement efforts made in public campaigns

THEORY OF CHANGE

The campaign theory of change is to **use significant communications resources to create an aligned understanding of quality, place the workforce at the center of quality, empower parents to seek more access to quality providers, and provide parents and the public with the motivation to support greater public investments** in an ECCE system that fully supports the transformational work of providers and equitable access to quality for all children.

The time is ripe for such a public education effort.

Nationally, and in Nebraska, there is increased attention being paid to ECCE issues—more so than in recent memory because of the COVID-19 pandemic that made the issue more urgent to families, policymakers, and business leaders than ever before. Access to quality, parental supports, and what local, state, and the federal government do to support families are issues that directly impact families throughout Nebraska as they face the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic and the recovery.

There are many aspects of quality early childhood education for which public engagement is critical. Chief among them is the workforce itself, which for the parent and child is the deliverer of the ECCE system. Support for the ECCE system, therefore, comes down to supporting the people who support parents and families. We know from [national parent research](#) that educators are the keepers of quality for parents—their impressions of and experiences with their early childhood programs start with those teachers and adults who care for their children. Thus, **as we elevate an aligned definition of quality, we will position the workforce as the gatekeepers of quality in ECCE, communicating that we need more people in the workforce who are empowered to provide quality, who are fairly and equitably**

compensated to provide access to quality, and who are given opportunities to grow professionally just like any other highly trained, valued, and valuable workforce.

In doing this, the campaign can tie equitable access to quality—and its demand—to the number of trained and supported early childhood caregivers and teachers in the workforce. If supporting the workforce is not a part of this solution, our chances of greater public support are diminished.

Fortunately, **Nebraska has a deeply committed network of ECCE funders, advocacy groups, and community groups with varied and strong stakeholder relationships**. As a group, they have already created the lion's share of communications materials necessary for a comprehensive public education campaign; however, their work has yet to aggregate into a whole or be coordinated into a cohesive campaign supported by robust and focused paid and earned media. This is a theme also identified under Goal 3 of the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan that focuses on collaboration and coordination.

This is the opportunity that should be seized with this campaign: bringing together the significant investments already made in research, message development, materials development and outreach, giving them greater cohesion and turning up the volume so we reach parents, the workforce, and the public. Through this effort, we can have greater control over the dialogue among key stakeholders and create an environment where equitable access to quality ECCE can become a reality in Nebraska.

This campaign will:

1. Empower parents and families as decision makers to ask for access to quality
2. Position the workforce as critical providers of quality outside of the family
3. Promote a shared understanding of the definition of quality ECCE between families and the field as defined by the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan
4. Make clear that supporting the workforce with professional development and compensation is essential to having enough providers to supply each child and family with access to quality
5. Give parents a clearinghouse website to go to for easy-to-navigate resources and more information
6. Connect existing materials so they present cohesive thought and utility to parents and the public
7. Create and disseminate materials to Nebraska communities and PDG and other partners that can be used with target audiences
8. Use existing networks, relationships, and aligned activities of partners to reach ECCE system and policymaker stakeholders

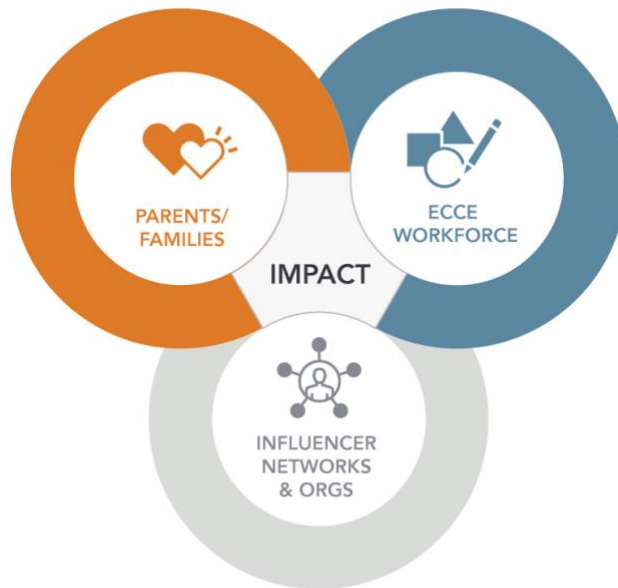
AUDIENCE TARGETS

The primary audience consists of parents and families, ECCE caregivers, and networks and organizations who engage influencers, setting the stage for a dialogue with ECCE systems builders, policymakers, etc. around the principles of access to quality and the importance of the workforce.

The first phase of this campaign will focus its efforts on reaching three audiences:

Direct Targets

- Parents and families
- ECCE workforce
- Networks and organizations who engage influencers (defined as local public officials and opinion/community leaders)



Indirect Targets (See Appendix A)

As the campaign evolves, we will have primed a broader audience for aligning around the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan. This work will be done through current stakeholder engagement activities.

- ECCE system
 - Includes state agencies, higher education, public school leadership, etc.
 - Message strategy will reach this audience in part through the rollout of the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan
- State-level public officials/policymakers (deciders)

AUDIENCE OVERVIEW

Parents and Families

Targeting Nebraska parents and families will simultaneously support building public demand and fulfilling the PDG requirements for a parent-focused education campaign. We will work to reach parents and families experiencing need and those who are historically underserved in the state (in part informed by the Index to Support Public Awareness Efforts About Quality Early Child Care in Nebraska from the Center for Public Affairs Research at the University of Nebraska at Omaha), particularly through the [Communities for Kids](#) network of partners and other state member-based organizations (such as the Nebraska Association of School Boards and the Nebraska Community Foundation). Specific counties/communities will be determined during the implementation and media planning phase.

Goals:

- Communicate to parents the importance of quality ECCE and that Nebraska needs more access to the quality they want and deserve for their kids
- Illustrate through storytelling what a quality workforce looks like, its importance in providing quality care and education, and describe what is needed to expand the workforce
- Support the professional development, compensation, and well-being of a quality workforce—providing incentives for people to go into business and stay in the business of caring for and educating young children in order to achieve the quality early education Nebraska’s children need
- Build excitement around the opportunity for children and families

Intended Outcomes:

- Increased demand for equitable access to quality ECCE
- Parents understand ECCE educators as key to the quality they seek
- Build desire for more access to quality—with a supported, quality workforce at the center
- Parents feel excitement about solving the problem of greater access to quality ECCE
- Increased understanding of where to turn for more information, resources, and accessing quality ECCE

ECCE Workforce

New messaging around the need for a high-quality, prepared, and compensated workforce will build upon and supplement existing communications resources. Ensuring buy-in and support for this effort among the ECCE workforce is critical to success. Reaching them should be done through trusted messengers that can strengthen buy-in and engage workforce voices from marginalized communities to bring them to the forefront of this effort.

Goals:

- Elevate the workforce so they can be seen, heard, and appreciated
- Empower the workforce to speak about their needs to fulfill their mission to children and families
- Help the workforce understand and build support for pathways to professional development
- Promote the common understanding and experience of quality care and education between parents and the workforce
- Leverage the Early Childhood Workforce Leadership Cadre (once developed) to bring voices from the workforce to the forefront of this campaign and ensure their perspective and input are central to the effort

Intended Outcomes:

- Improved workforce self-perception of professionalism, importance, and empowerment
- Strengthened and supported ECCE workforce
- Empower the workforce to be advocates for their own needs
- Begin to provide a rallying point around professional development pathways, compensation, and empowering public policies

Networks and Organizations who Engage Influencers

This audience includes networks and organizations who reach local public officials and opinion/community leaders. Influencers may be local and regional leaders in government, schools, businesses, and the philanthropic sector; family advocates who are actively engaged in leadership roles; or opinion leaders.

Goals:

- Through existing networks like [Communities for Kids](#); the PDG Activity 3 projects; [First Five Nebraska](#); the [Nebraska Children and Families Foundation](#) (NCFF); the Thriving Children, Families and Communities Conference network; and others, this campaign will reach influencers in Nebraska communities to strengthen parent and family engagement efforts already underway.
 - As much as possible, influencer network outreach should align with legislative districts targeted by First Five Nebraska and point them to the [My Nebraska Story](#) campaign and existing [influencer/community resources](#).

- Similarly to the parents and families audience, outreach will be informed by the intersections we see (from census data and current on-the-ground efforts) between communities of need and communities of influence.
- Networks and organizations are armed with messaging and resources that help them reach the influencers they engage—with information those influencers can share.

Intended Outcomes:

- Campaign outreach to key networks that demonstrates their use of campaign materials with influencer audiences in their communities
- Use of those materials is intended to achieve:
 - Increased philanthropic and business support for ECCE investments
 - Increased ECCE investments
 - Increased access to quality ECCE programs

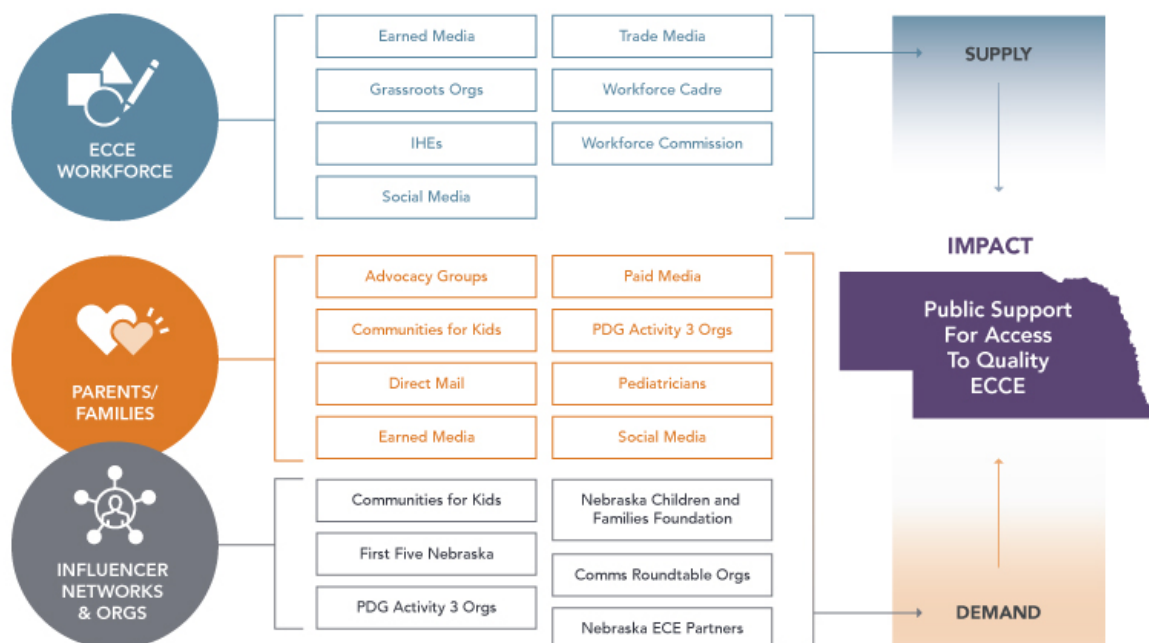
CAMPAIGN MODEL

For the greatest efficiency of campaign funding, we are aiming to satisfy PDG requirements with a parent/public education campaign that is aligned with long-term goals identified in the Campaign Logic Model (See Appendix B).

However, in doing so, we are creating the ideal conditions for future policies and investments by laying out a set of principles around access to ECCE quality that center around a high-quality, appropriately compensated workforce that solves for the scarcity of quality providers due to current market conditions in Nebraska.

The campaign model makes use of targeted outreach and valuable resources that leverage the communications power of partners and key community groups throughout the state.

This graphic shows the three direct audiences and is representative of some of the outreach strategies/channels that will be used in the campaign.



CAMPAIGN STRUCTURE

This campaign will be coordinated by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute and an agency partner (to be selected) but will be an ongoing collaborative effort from organizations working toward PDG requirements and the network of Communities for Kids partners who are on the ground and engaging directly with parents and families.

We should consider formation of a campaign advisory group to assist with consultation and outreach, potentially formed in collaboration with and possible representation from:

- PDG Activity 3 project organizations
- Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (Communities for Kids liaisons)
- Advocacy partners, including First Five Nebraska
- Workforce Leadership Cadre
- PDG Pls
- PDG Nebraska Leadership Team (includes DHHS and NDE)
- Nebraska Early Childhood Partners
- Nebraska Early Childhood Communications Roundtable
- Nebraska Extension
- Parents/Families
- Community leaders
- Nebraska Community Foundation
- Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative (Parent Ambassadors)
- [Nebraska Early Childhood Policy Leadership Academy](#)
- Funders – PDG, Holland Foundation, Buffett Early Childhood Institute

A full-time campaign manager should be designated to lead the campaign and coordinate efforts across the Institute, campaign communications vendors and various state partners. Contractors for media support, web design, and other services will be identified during the RFP process.

This campaign will be funded through support from PDG, the Holland Foundation, and the Buffett Early Childhood Institute with additional resources sought as possible.

EXISTING RESOURCES, MESSENGERS, AND CHANNELS

Working within the campaign structure, we will invite messengers and leverage existing channels and resources as identified by the Buffett Institute Audit of Early Childhood Communications in Nebraska and PDG Activity 3 partnerships (see Appendix C). This will enable us to be most efficient within the campaign timeframe and budget, while also coordinating resource dissemination among partner organizations so that campaign audiences are able to navigate the messaging, collateral, and resources available to them. Gaps identified in existing resources and channels will inform new resource development.

Among others, organizations, initiatives, and resources may include:

- [Learning Begins at Birth](#) (First Five Nebraska)
- Child Care Essentials: [Choosing Quality Childcare in Nebraska](#) (Nebraska Extension)
 - [The Right Place](#)
- [Getting Ready](#) (UNL)
- Ready Rosie (PDG Activity 3)
- Coordinated Enrollment Pilot Expansion (NECC)

- Help Me Grow (CHMC)
- [211 Nebraska](#)
- [The Bottom Line](#) research (First Five Nebraska)
- [Communities for Kids](#) (through NCCF liaison staff) – 42 communities
- [Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative](#) Parent Ambassadors
- [My Nebraska Story](#)
- [Bring Up Nebraska Initiative](#)
- [Nebraska Community Foundation](#)
- *My Nebraska Story* communities – 11 communities (overlap with Communities for Kids)
- Other critical resources identified by the Buffett Institute Audit of Early Childhood Communications in Nebraska findings (*to be expanded upon completion of the audit*)
 - [Educare Lincoln](#)
 - [Lincoln Littles](#)
 - [Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative](#) (Elevate your Business and Licensing Toolkit)
 - [Nebraska Early Learning Network](#)
 - [Rooted in Relationships](#)
 - [Northeast Nebraska Growing Together](#)

As new or additional resources continue to be produced by these partners as part of the ongoing PDG work, they can be affiliated with the campaign and included prominently on the clearinghouse website.

To facilitate efficient campaign management and execution, a campaign CRM will be chosen and put in place.

CAMPAIGN PRIORITY TARGETS

[Consider adding detailed legislative targets and strategy once determined by First Five Nebraska and Communities for Kids to inform priority focus areas for initial phases of campaign.]

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

The campaign must be additive to what is already being done by a wide range of collaborating organizations in Nebraska’s ECCE community. It should not supplant what they are doing, but rather make it more cohesive, accessible, powerful, and easier for Nebraskans to use. Much of what would need to be built for a successful campaign already exists—a variety of materials, relationships, and networks—saving the campaign money and time and allowing it to put greater resources toward housing multiple efforts under a single thought or call-to-action and turning up the volume through paid and earned media. In short, Nebraska has all the spokes for a great campaign. We simply need to provide the hub, the thematic rim that resonates with parents, and the media expenditures to turn the wheel.

With many materials and web resources already in existence and being disseminated through partner organizations, additional resources developed for this campaign will aim to serve as a clearinghouse for what already exists, aligning messaging and compiling resources in one easy-to-navigate location that is clearly organized by target audience.

Materials Development

Additional materials created specific to this campaign will incorporate the shared definition of quality, point target audiences toward the clearinghouse of resources available in the state, and communicate a clear call-to-action for finding more information and building demand for equitable access to quality ECCE.

All campaign materials will be culturally relevant/appropriate, informed by current on-the-ground efforts and community partners, and will be responsive to parent needs, especially to reach those most in need. Materials can be customized and co-branded as needed, according to unique community needs and resources/contact information and will be disseminated by leveraging existing networks and channels identified in previous sections of the plan.

New materials developed will be informed in part by findings from the Communications Audit to address existing gaps.

Message Strategy

- Develop the message strategy linking equitable access to quality with the effective development of young children and the economic viability of families and the state of Nebraska.
- Central to this is reinforcing to parents that quality resides in the provider and the workforce, and that the workforce needs more help for it to grow and to be available to every child and family in the state.
- Consider building upon the existing [Thriving Children, Families, and Communities Conference](#) brand, a neutral, highly-respected event that lends itself to a campaign theme (like Thriving Nebraska) which can be embraced by all partners involved.

Market Research and Message Testing

A great deal of local, state, and national research exists on parent and public perceptions on this issue, including how they value the workforce. However, there are some gaps, such as placing ECCE investments in context with other needs and priorities; how ECCE might be attached to those priorities; how to give parents permission to widen their search for help and information outside of more narrow family and peer networks; and, how to link the needs of the workforce with the needs and goals of parents.

Suggested areas to probe in additional quantitative research are:

- Understanding where ECCE falls with respect to other priorities for Nebraska voters and better insights on how parents understand and describe quality
- Testing campaign hypothesis of putting the ECCE workforce at the center and finding the best ways to link that to preferences and motivations of parents
- Testing campaign theme line(s), core messaging and concepts
- Understanding how to increase urgency and provide parents with the permission to ask for help
- Understanding audience usage preferences for channels and finding information

Additionally, communications-focused questions should be incorporated (as appropriate and relevant to audiences) in the 15 community focus groups being held as part of the ongoing needs assessment and strategic planning work.

Website

- Build a user-friendly website that directs users to where to find more information about accessing quality ECCE.
- This website will be a clearinghouse for existing resources and materials, bringing together the work of partners across the state, directing parents where to go for providers in their community ([Nebraska Child Care Referral Network](#)) and unifying all aligned efforts under one campaign theme that speaks to the unique needs of each community and statewide.
- Ensure the website is available in English and Spanish.

Marketing Materials

- Any newly developed materials can be co-branded and/or customized with community contact information by partner organizations (consider using a tool like Canva for ease of co-branding). Collateral may include:
 - 1-pager, rack card, or palm card directing audiences to clearinghouse URL
 - Social sharegraphics & template posts for partners to use
 - Template email outreach for partner organizations and Communities for Kids leaders to use to contact target audiences
- Ensure materials are available in English and Spanish

Direct Outreach, Advertising, and Engagement

Because the primary focus of this campaign is on bringing together existing efforts and resources in the field, emphasis should be on the mix of paid and earned media to create a groundswell of support for equitable access to high-quality ECCE in Nebraska.

The goal is to develop a marketing plan according to a paid media budget that uses tactics that most efficiently engage parents and families and the ECCE workforce. Tactics to consider include:

- Direct mail
- Digital advertising
- Telephone town halls
- Letter writing efforts

Earned Media (PR)

The campaign will develop an effective media relations strategy that supports campaign tactics in a targeted and ongoing way. This will be done in conjunction with a media firm selected during the RFP process.

- *Media Relations:* Coordinate outreach and relationship-building efforts with state outlets, key national outlets (as appropriate), reporters and columnists through interviews, editorial board meetings and opinion leader outreach.
- *Leadership Group Development:* Leverage partnerships through the Early Childhood Workforce Leadership Cadre (once developed) along with members of the Nebraska Early Childhood Workforce Commission and others who are willing to be champions for the campaign. These partners can carry and amplify the campaign message through media opportunities that we identify for them (placing OpEds, joining editorial board meetings, participating in interviews, etc.). Groups such as these will not be an element of the campaign structure/strategy, but rather empowered to carry the message to their networks and endorse campaign activities with target audiences.

Campaign Evaluation

An evaluation plan for the campaign will be developed in concert with the Campaign Logic Model (see Appendix B) and campaign plan. Metrics will align with short- and long-term goals and include questions such as:

- Are networks aligned around one general message and materials use?
- Who are our champions?
- How many communities have been reached?

In addition, once a targeted media plan for the campaign is developed, individual metrics will be established to help evaluate the campaign's reach and success.

Timeline and Budget

The budget available for this campaign is approximately \$3 million (\$1.5 million annually)* at the outset. This campaign plan outlines the initial effort and is intended to be built upon by partners and stakeholders in subsequent phases. The anticipated campaign timeline is as follows:

- **August 2021:** Buffett Institute develops and disseminates RFP for agency to implement the campaign
- **September 2021:** Selection of agency and vendors
- **October – December 2021:** Campaign production gets underway
- **January 2022:** Campaign launches (consider phased launch)
- **December 2023:** Anticipated campaign sunset

** Additional funding will augment paid media budget, as available.*

APPENDIX A: INDIRECT AUDIENCES

ECCE System

This indirect audience, in alignment with the Campaign Logic Model and PDG activities, includes state agencies, higher education, public school leadership, and other key subgroups identified in the Nebraska Strategic Plan and PDG work.

ECCE System Partners and Leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nebraska Leadership Team (NLT) members (NDHHS, NDE, NCFF, BECI, BECF, FFN, NECC)• State agencies and policymakers• Universities and faculty• ECCE providers who are actively engaged in regional and state organizations in leadership roles
Support ECCE Providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Intervention Service Coordinators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning Region Teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ESU Coordinators
Public School Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Principals/ superintendents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ESU Administrators
University
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nebraska Extension Early Childhood Faculty
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• University Faculty
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NU Chancellors
Governance Boards
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NCFF Board
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NECC Board
Professional Associations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nebraska Association of County Extension Boards

Logic Model long-term objectives:

- Aligned understanding of quality across ECCE system (Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan definition)
- Adequate funding to ensure all children have access to a quality ECCE setting
- Increased capacity to sustain and continue community engagement efforts made in public campaigns

Deciders

This audience includes state-level public officials/policymakers who are making decisions about current and future legislation in Nebraska. Decider targets to be determined.

Logic Model long-term objectives:

- Supportive and sustainable ECCE legislation and funding.
- Public officials will understand the need and urgency to make necessary investments in Nebraska ECCE.
- Leaders will understand immediate actions that can be taken to improve early learning outcomes in Nebraska.
- Policymakers move to a common definition of a unified quality standard with different ways of implementing it by setting

APPENDIX B: CAMPAIGN LOGIC MODEL

DRAFT Logic Model: Parent/Public Education Campaign (Rev. 7/10/2021)

Ultimate Goal: Where do we want to be? The goal of this project is to build support for quality early childhood care and education in Nebraska. A principal audience is parents and families, but we will also reach others, including the early childhood workforce and system, and public officials and opinion leaders whose support is critical to sustain the necessary investments in quality early care and education. The campaign will focus on ensuring an aligned understanding of quality and building public support for all children having access to quality early childhood care and education.

Context: Why are we doing the work? Children, families, communities, and Nebraska benefit when there is access to quality early childhood care and education. We want to ensure that there is consistent understanding of quality across the state and sufficient support to sustain the needed investments in the early childhood system. For all children to have access to quality care and education, it is important to increase awareness of the early childhood workforce as important providers of quality, and the need to increase and sustain them.

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Intermediate Outcomes for Individuals/Systems	Long-Term Outcomes
Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PDG Needs Assessment et al - Communications Audit - Market Research - Opinion Research - Message Research - Other State/National Campaigns 	Collaboration with ECCE Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather feedback on campaign research, and proposed strategy and plan - Ensure alignment of campaign strategy and plan with Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan 	Research summaries shared with ECCE partners and feedback documented Additional market research and analysis as needed Campaign Strategy aligned with the Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan	Collaboration with ECCE Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased collaboration and trust - Shared understanding of research summaries - Shared agreement and support of campaign plan - Principles of campaign are internalized and begin to shape this and other activities 	Audience Understanding and Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aligned understanding of quality across audiences (Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan definition)
Strategy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nebraska Early Childhood Strategic Plan - Integration/Alignment with other Institute and statewide initiatives 	Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review/analyze relevant research - Conduct additional research as needed (market research, focus groups, etc.) 	Messages that align with PDG definitions of quality and equity Draft Campaign Plan Final Campaign Plan (revised with feedback from ECCE partners)	Communications capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use of shared campaign assets across ECCE partners (market research, comms audit, messages, materials, etc.) - ECCE Partners and PDG Activity 3 Projects support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased understanding and appreciation of the role and professionalism of the workforce in providing quality ECCE
Expertise				

- Input from ECCE partners, consultant, and Buffett Institute
- Leverage other PDG Activity 3 projects

Budget

- \$3.5 million consolidated budget (over 3 years)

Staff

- Institute staff as lead/facilitators
- Leveraged contributions from ECCE Communicators
- Consultants and contractors

Develop and Implement Campaign Strategy/Plan

- Select agency for campaign implementation and help with any additional research
- Develop messages and materials
- Conduct targeted outreach:
 - Parents/families
 - ECCE workforce
 - ECCE system
 - Local public officials and opinion/community leaders (*influencers*)
 - State-level public officials/policymakers (*deciders*)

Document and Disseminate Evaluation Findings

- Hire evaluation partner
- Develop evaluation plan
- Conduct evaluation
- Document findings and disseminate evaluation report (describing campaign process, findings, and impact)

Comms agency RFP and/or invitation for submissions

Comms agency contract

Campaign materials developed in one or more languages (English & Spanish)

Campaign metrics and analytics (owned media, earned media, paid media, etc.)

Evaluation contract

Evaluation plan

Evaluation report (with campaign case study)

and extend the campaign through their channels

Dissemination

- Increased interaction with channels identified in the campaign plan and communications audit (tactics tied to audience and aligned with existing on-the-ground efforts, measured by digital analytics when relevant)
- Increased growth of ECCE database contacts and partners (measurable through CRM)

Workforce

- Improved workforce self-perception of professionalism and importance
- [Add continuity goal]

Investment

- Supportive ECCE legislation and funding
- Increased philanthropic and business support for ECCE investments

- Increased support and demand for quality ECCE

- Increased understanding of where to turn for quality ECCE

- Increased recognition of the economic importance of quality ECCE providers and care

Workforce

- Strengthened and supported ECCE workforce
- Increased size of ECCE workforce
- Increased support for the ECCE workforce (professional development and compensation)
- [Add continuity goal]

Investment

- Adequate funding to ensure all children have

access to a quality
ECCE setting

Sustainability

- Increased capacity to sustain and continue community engagement efforts made in public campaigns

APPENDIX C: PDG ACTIVITY 3 PROJECTS

Year 1 Scope of Work Summaries (2020-2021)

Activity 3b: Learning Begins at Birth (FFN)

Lead: Adam Feser / Progress Report: Adam Feser

Through PDG support in 2019, Nebraska has re-developed a material resource called Learning Begins at Birth, with information about child development and how to nurture it; parent-child interactions that build social-emotional mental health; what quality childcare is and how to find it; children's health; and services available to children and parents. In 2020, PDG funds will be used to solicit additional feedback from families on distribution, print additional copies, translate into more languages, and create a website for online accessibility, to more easily link families with additional information and services. Partners will be engaged to develop a sustainable plan to ensure ongoing distribution.

- Step 1: Identify community partners to distribute Vietnamese and Arabic copies.
- Step 2: Reach out to birthing hospitals to ensure there is a distribution procedure.
- Step 3: A small group with working knowledge will explore the potential for other electronic media.
- Step 4: Expand the distribution list to OB/GYN's and other contacts.
- Step 5: Development of an awareness marketing tool and promotion of link to NDE site.
- Step 6: Explore ownership and long-term sustainability options.

Activity 3b.i.: Child Care Essentials: Choosing Quality Childcare in Nebraska (Nebraska Extension)

Co-Leads: Holly Hatton-Bowers and Jaci Foged

Activities consist of developing a resource for families about early care and education for children, the importance of quality care, and how to locate quality care based on the needs of their child and family. The new materials will replace a longstanding "The Right Place" brochure and booklet that Nebraska has used for this purpose.

- Step 1: Have a survey sent to families for initial reactions and thoughts about the existing "The Right Place" brochure and booklet and what additional information they would like to have. The sample for the survey will be small.
- Step 2: Meet with CYFS Media Communications team to identify a Project Brand Identity and Project name brainstorm, begin planning the layout design and illustrations.
- Step 3: Content for the booklet is developed.
- Step 4: Share possible branding ideas and project name ideas, possible graphics with core team members.
- Step 5: Content is reviewed by core team and any revisions are made.

Activity 3c: Getting Ready (UNL)

Lead: Lisa Knoche / Report: Tamara Hechter-Galvin

An evidence-based initiative focused on interaction among children, their families, and EC professionals to promote parental warmth, sensitivity, and active participation in supporting children's early learning. GR promotes kindergarten transition by helping parents become more confident in working with educational systems. Its strong evidence base developed through randomized controlled trials show positive effects on child development and parenting skills. Through the PDG in 2019, it expanded into six agencies. In 2020, expansion will continue to 60 preschool educators across the state through training and intensive coaching supports. Booster coaching sessions will be provided to 75 home visitors involved in PDG pilot activities.

- Step 1: Identify project coordinator.
- Step 2: Reconnect with EC programs and original home visitors/providers involved in PDG pilot project
- Step 3: Conduct three additional coaching support sessions with home visitors/providers from pilot project
- Step 4: Identify EC programs to participate in preschool and 0-3 center or home-based GR training and coaching
- Step 5: Identify four state-based coaches
- Step 6: Provide initial training to four state-based GR Coaches
- Step 7: Train and provide ongoing coaching support to 60 preschool/0-3 center or home-based educators and related staff
- Step 8: Provide ongoing training to four state-based GR coaches to prep train-the-trainer

Activity 3d: Ready Rosie (NCFF)

Lead: *Marti Beard* | *Progress Report:* *Noelle Wegner*

Marti communicated that Noelle Wegner & Shonna Werth have a more direct connection with 3d. An evidence-based, birth-elementary age family engagement resource is currently being piloted in more than 300 classrooms with 3,000 children statewide. RR offers 1,000+ “Modeled Moment” English and Spanish videos to families via text, email, and a website, letting educators target specific skills and individualize the videos to be shared with parents of their students. It can also be used to provide interactive family workshops, for PD, and to support a cohesive family engagement plan. First year goals include:

- Maintain 302 current RR classrooms
- Increase RR classrooms by 100 for a total of 402
- Increase total number of children served by 1000
- Provide initial implementation training and eight additional trainings

The RR team will provide ongoing training, support and monitoring of usage by families and teachers/providers and will provide ongoing technical assistance to programs.

Activity 3e: Parent/Public Education Campaign (BECI)

Co-Leads: *Erin Owen and Renee Wessels* | *Progress Report:* *Erin Owen & Erica Nett*

Support public awareness efforts that center on educating parents and families about quality child care and education programs and services in ways that are accessible, digitally driven, culturally and linguistically appropriate, and responsive to how today’s parents receive information and make decisions. Also reach the ECCE workforce and system to ensure alignment of quality, and community/opinion leaders to build support for sustaining the necessary investments in ECCE.

- Step 1: Personnel hired including Communications Specialist 0.5 FTE shared with NA, Digital Specialist 0.5 FTE
- Step 2: Develop annual work plan
- Step 3: Assemble planning team with partners
- Step 4: Orient planning team to purpose, goals, and aims, and identify roles and responsibilities
- Step 5: Review PDG Continuation Grant objectives, other Activity 3 programs, and the NE ECE Strategic Plan with planning team
- Step 6: Review available research and/or conduct communications audit
- Step 7: Outline campaign plan, goals, and strategies to inform Agency RFP

Activity 3f: Coordinated Enrollment Pilot Expansion (NECC)

Lead: Mary Lariviere | Progress Report: Brandee Lengel & Mary Lariviere

Coordinated Enrollment Pilot Expansion: implement a coordinated application, eligibility, and enrollment pilot, building on a successful model currently used in Omaha by the Nebraska Early Childhood Collaborative. The pilot uses shared services principles to increase high-quality early learning opportunities by providing coordinated application, eligibility, and enrollment for three high-quality early learning centers serving at-risk infants and toddlers through an Early Head Start-Child Care partnership. The pilot will be expanded to three more sites serving vulnerable populations.

- Step 1: Develop strategy to gather parent feedback to better understand barriers to families in accessing benefits that support child development
- Step 2: Implement strategy to gather feedback from parents of children enrolled in participating programs and on waitlists
- Step 3: Based on parent feedback, refine the approach to serve a more diverse group of programs and provide one point of access and public benefits enrollment navigation for parents in participating centers
- Step 4: Determine Partner Agencies and complete MOUs
- Step 5: Develop application, eligibility, enrollment, referral and follow-up system
- Step 6: Hire and train additional staff; Train current staff on new processes
- Step 7: Develop and disseminate information to families including those on waitlists
- Step 8: Implement coordinated eligibility and enrollment process
- Step 9: Coordinate recruiting and application events
- Step 10: Identify and share lessons learned with key stakeholders

Activity 3g: Help Me Grow (CHMC)

Co-Leads: Rick Helweg & Holly Dingman | Progress Report: Rick Helweg

Whitney Koehn (UNL) is involved in with 1,2,3 Connect with Me – another parent education program.

Uses effective universal early screening - including the Ages and Stages Questionnaire - and then links expectant mothers and children 0-5 with essential health, developmental, and social-emotional services. It includes outreach to families and providers, including physicians, and a centralized point of communication using phone technologies, trained Care Coordinators, and a self-care referral platform which ECCE and other health and human services professionals can use to better connect families to needed services. Funds will facilitate expansion of the model to include child care resource and referral services, including the Nebraska Child Care Referral Network, with potential to reach 37,426 0-5-year-old children in Lincoln and Lancaster County. Year 1 of PDG funds will be utilized to establish and launch the Centralized Access Point, including training of Care Coordinators, Health Care Providers and Community Service Agencies. Over three years, the CAP will undergo a QI process utilizing CAP data and critical input from users to determine necessary changes and additional trainings needed to better serve families with young children.

- Step 1: Create the framework for Nebraska's Centralized Access Point (CAP), identifying key partner activities to support the CAP and establish partner agreements covering roles, responsibilities, resource and data sharing for the CAP
- Step 2: Establish evaluation plan and base-line data points for the CAP, including a standardized intake and referral form and the opportunity to connect with Electronic Health Records.
- Step 3: Define a formal feedback loop pathway (evaluation summary; call; fax; letter) for developmental services, utilizing PRC and Care Coordinators, utilizing CAP and pilot consistent standardized

referral form in partnership with the Health Care Provider Work Group that meets HIPAA/FERPA rules to assist with bi-directional referral pathway/process and assist with tracking families to close the loop

Step 4: Identify and support technology expansion for the CAP.

Step 5: Identify and update HMG resource directory to be integrated into CAP, including Nebraska Child Care Referral Network

Step 6: Identify and train HMG call center and care coordinators

Step 7: Conduct outreach and training activities with health care providers and community service organizations.

Step 8: Launch the HMG Centralized Access Point

Step 9: Maintain training and technical support from Help Me Grow National Center.

Step 10: Utilizing CAP data and user feedback, create the first report of the CAP and identify opportunities for improvement in Year 2 of PDG