



Early Childhood Education Systems Design Benchmarking Partnership

In recent years, Pennsylvania has made historic investments in its education system, including an emphasis on providing opportunities for child learning and development in the early years. To help leverage such investments, the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) has identified the need to strengthen the transition of students from early education providers to the K-12 system. This shift requires an in-depth look at the learning systems, student supports, professional learning opportunities, and the structures governing the operation of early childhood education providers and the K-12 system.

Early Childhood System Design Work in Pennsylvania

During the 2023-24 School Year, OCDEL and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit piloted an ECE SDBP in Allegheny County that brought together early childhood providers, K-12 teachers and administrators, and intermediary organizations to envision a regional system to ensure excellence, equity, and efficiency for early childhood education.

In partnership with the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE), efforts took place to foster a common language and understanding around vision, system design, and instructional foundations based on best practices domestically and internationally. This collaborative endeavor aimed to nurture a culture of distributed leadership across Allegheny County, where every vested partner contributes to the collective success of Pennsylvania's children.

This team committed to learning together over a series of four months. During their first session, leaders explored learner experiences relevant to the early years. In their second session, educators and leaders worked to envision a system that supports a learner-centered environment. Then, in the third session, they explored a targeted and agreed upon topic relevant to the needs in their region. The last session focused on actions that the ECE SDBP agreed to take moving forward.

Expressing Interest

For the 2024-25 school year, OCDEL seeks to continue the Early Childhood Education System Design Benchmarking Partnership (ECE SDBP) pilot with a focus on early childhood services in a rural region within the state. In partnership with a local Intermediate Unit (IU), the intent is to select a group of school districts and early childhood providers interested in working together across organizations to serve our

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Agencies and schools within one rural area interested in participating in this pilot are encouraged to email ra-paprekcounts@pa.gov by September 30, 2024.

Please include the following information in the interest email:

- Use **Interest in SDBP** in the subject line.
- Name of a primary contact person, position, and contact information.
- Name of school or agency expressing interest.
- The county or region served.
- Potential partners for the pilot (Early Learning Providers, Early Learning Resource Centers, IU, etc.)
- If selected, these partners will be confirmed.



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