



EARLY CHILDHOOD ALLIANCE
Uniting for young children.....the heart of our community
Framingham, MA

STRATEGIC PLAN

2011 TO 2014



Prepared by

***The Strategic Planning Group of the Early Childhood
Alliance of Framingham***

March 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Acknowledgements	4
Executive Summary	5
Introduction and Background	6
The Current Situation	10
Needs Assessment Summary	10
Strengthening Families Assessment	11
Setting a Strategic Direction for the Next Three Years	13
Methodology and Process	13
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) Analysis	14
ECAF Vision and Mission, Organizational Structure	16
Three-Year Goals, Strategies and Anticipated Outcomes	18
Conclusions	21
Glossary of Terms	22
Appendix A: Sample Commitment Letter	23

FOREWORD

This document describes the strategic planning process undertaken between September 2010, and February 2011, by the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham (ECAAF). The ECAAF is dedicated to promoting and supporting the healthy growth and development of young children through age eight by strengthening families and advocating for high quality learning experiences. The Alliance brings together several programs traditionally funded through the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care now under the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant. This grant supports the Parent-Child Home Program and Educator and Provider Support and collaborates and coordinates with the Mental Health Consultation and Access Management Information and Referral (Child Care Resources and Referral) programs as well as other community stakeholders.

Built on last year's comprehensive needs assessment and with support from the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), ECAAF brought together a dynamic and committed group of community early childhood providers, professional development providers, town and community resource support professionals and parents to develop a three-year strategic plan. This group, known as the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) was charged with creating a plan built upon the Strengthening Families Framework that outlines a practical set of strategies to improve programs and services for Framingham families with children prenatal through age eight. The SPG identified the following core components to drive our planning process:

- Improve community access to the network of early childhood programs and services, especially for hard to reach populations in Framingham;
- Increase collaboration among all early childhood providers to ensure seamless comprehensive services and programs to families with children through age eight;
- Expand the Leadership Council of the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham to improve governance, increase meaningful pathways for community stakeholder input and initiate sustainability planning.

In addition to these local considerations, ECAAF also sought to align with EEC's Strategic Plan "Putting Children and Families First", dated February 2009. The three year strategic directions outlined by EEC in 2009 include; improving and supporting quality in early education and care programs and services, increasing and promoting family support, access and affordability, ensuring a diverse and competent workforce, communicating the value of early education and care to all stakeholders and the general public and building the infrastructure to support achieving the vision. We believe the following document will show strong alignment to the statewide plan.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We deeply appreciate the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care for funding to support our strategic planning process. We would also like to acknowledge the contribution of the following Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham members for their participation in the strategic planning process. Their energy, expertise and willingness to come together to explore common goals and create collaborative solutions were essential to the development of this plan.

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The Strategic Planning Process was developed and monitored by the Planning Team:
Anna Carollo Cross, Sharon Kerr, Joanne DeOliveira, Jane Cohen DeHaven and Dodi Swope

The Strategic Planning Process was staffed by:
Jane Cohen DeHaven, Coordinator, Early Childhood Alliance and Dodi Swope, Strategic Planning Consultant

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the past ten years, Framingham has experienced growth in the number and diversity of its young families. This growth, combined with inconsistent funding for local early education and care programs has created challenges for young families and the committed community of providers that serve them. In the fall of 2009, the Early Childhood Alliance was created; built from a core group of long time committed early education and care leaders and newly engaged community partners. As a first step, the Alliance completed a needs assessment¹ to identify specific needs of young families in our community.

Our findings included:

- Insufficient affordable child care, informal play spaces and parent support resources to meet the current need
- Long waiting lists at available programs
- Families find the system and process for accessing care cumbersome and confusing; there is no one central doorway for parents
- Disparity in access, often due to socio-economic or linguistic factors, results in pockets of young children with less school readiness as they enter Kindergarten
- The resulting disparities in school readiness have long range impact on school and future life success

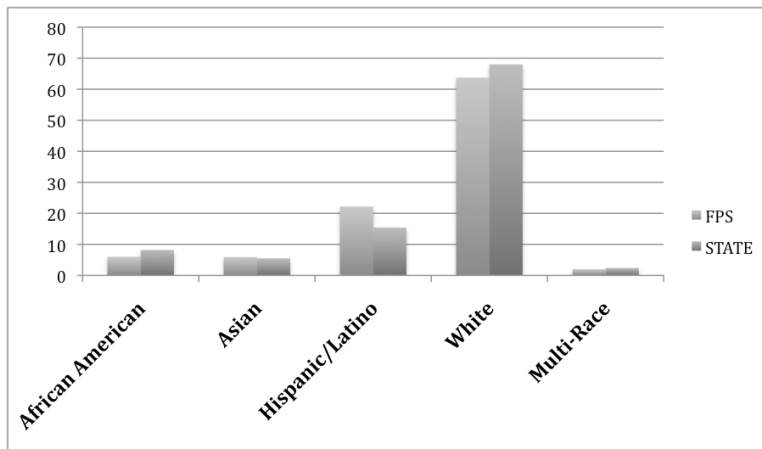
Over the past six months, the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham completed a strategic planning process to address these challenges. A strategic planning group made up of early education and care and professional development providers, health care and community resource and safety net providers, parents, advocates, and funders worked to develop a three year plan to positively impact the lives of young families in our community. At the core of our plan is the development of a centrally located “One Stop Shop” for all young families in the community. This “home in our community” will provide a central doorway for parents of children through age eight to access education and care programs, parent education and support services, and provide a place to meet informally. This “home” will also provide the early education and care community a place to collaborate and coordinate services, share learning and resources, and work to impact policies and build sustainability for early childhood programs.

Looking to the future, our greatest need is a centrally located appropriate space in the community to bring together our early education and care network. We are looking to expand our partnerships with community organizations and funders to build the resources needed to implement this plan. We look to explore multiple housing options including sharing office and play space as well as effective cooperative staffing models, collaborative funding and fundraising strategies to build and sustain our “One Stop Shop.”

¹ *The Needs Assessment Summary Report and Slideshow are available at:*
http://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/ecaf_home.cfm

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

According to the 2000 Census, the population of Framingham is 66,910. The population is 79% white, 5% African American, 5% Asian and 11% Hispanic². A growing Brazilian population may not be captured here due to the age of census data, and the way census data is categorized (many Brazilians identify as white/non Hispanic). The chart below shows this year’s Framingham Public School student demographics, further illustrating the changing demographics over the past ten years.



	FPS	STATE
African American	6	8.2
Asian	5.9	5.5
Hispanic/Latino	22.	15.4
White	63.	68
Multi-Race	2	2.4

For students enrolled in the Framingham Public Schools³;

- 34% report their first language is not English compared to state’s 16%.
- 17% have limited English proficiency, compared to state’s 7%.
- 33% are Low-income compared to the state’s 34%
- 7% receive reduced lunches in school vs. 5% statewide
- Our special needs population is higher than the state as well: 21% vs. 17%.

Each year we register 600-700 new kindergarteners; over the past few years we have seen the number of registrations increase significantly, this year topping 700. According to the Parent Information Center⁴, 20%- 30% of these children come to kindergarten with no preschool experience.

Framingham is a community with a long history of commitment to accessible quality early education and care. Over the last two decades a group of early childhood providers and community partners with significant expertise in child and family development have

² Community Profile; Town of Framingham <http://www.framinghamma.gov/index.aspx?nid=59> accessed 3/4/11

³ MA Department of Education School District Profiles; Framingham <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=01000000&orgtypecode=5&> accessed 3/4/11

⁴ Framingham Public Schools Parent Information Center <http://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/parentinfo.cfm>

consistently collaborated to ensure the best possible programs and services for our young families. This is a flexible and resilient group of community leaders; many have worked together for several years to navigate the shifting political and economic environment of early education and care. They share a common focus, ensuring access to quality early learning experiences and parent support for young families. It hasn't been easy, funding shifts have made maintaining consistent and accessible quality programs a huge challenge.

We know that when we ensure positive developmental environments for young children in the formative years, and support parents to be the most competent and engaged they can be, the payback is immense and long lasting. We also know that when we fail to do so, costs escalate and the problems generated become increasingly more complex to solve. Inconsistency in federal and state funding in early education and care over the past ten years has led to instability in programs at the local level. Framingham has worked hard to ensure the survival of key programs throughout the waxing and waning of funding. One thing is clear, current funding is simply not sufficient to provide the comprehensive resources needed to give all our young families the benefits of a good start.

In 1993 the Massachusetts Department of Education introduced the Community Partnership for Children grant program (CPC) to support local communities in the development of comprehensive programs and services for children aged 3 to 5 years old. With this funding, the town of Framingham undertook a planning and development process that ultimately created Framingham Family Central (FFC), a community resource center for families with children through age eight that opened in 2000.

- Framingham Family Central's defined mission was to; "continuously seek to expand access to quality parenting support, child care, early childhood education, literacy and other educational opportunities in to families residing in Framingham."
- FFC's primary goal was to assist families with young children (birth-eight years) in gaining access to those community services that support and strengthen their family's innate abilities and ensure their educational and economic success. FFC was committed to assisting families who may experience diverse abilities, linguistic differences, special needs, economic challenges, race, gender or cultural differences.

Early Education and Care Timeline Framingham

- 1993~ MA DOE introduces Community Partnership for Children Grant (CPC)**
- 2000~ Creation of Framingham Family Central (FFC)**
- 2001~ Received PCHP grant**
- 2002~ FFC closes the central location due to budget cuts and moved to the administrative offices of the Framingham Public Schools**
- 2005~ MA Department of Early Education and Care is created**
- 2009~ CPC programs merge under the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grant (CFCE)**
- ~ Early Childhood Alliance is created**
- ~ ECAF undertakes community needs assessment**
- 2010~ ECAF engages in Strategic Planning**

- FFC was housed in a central location easily accessible to the entire community. FFC offered the following services:
 - Bi-monthly family activities in the FFC Play Space,
 - Parent-Child Home Program Story Time,
 - Bi-monthly parenting workshops,
 - Birthday book packets for families,
 - Priority placement in the Framingham Public Schools ESL program,
 - Access to the extensive FFC parenting and children's lending library,
 - Access to computers with literacy, early childhood and other relevant software.
 - Families obtained library cards to the Framingham Public Library and received voter registration information to improve community engagement.

Framingham Family Central worked; young families had an easily accessible place in the community to gather, their children had a safe environment to play together, parents had a place to talk together and offer each other peer support, as well as access to parenting information to learn more effective parenting skills.

When the funding decreased significantly, the center had to close within the two years of operation. The CPC programs moved out of their central location to the administrative building of the Framingham Public Schools located in the far northwest corner of town. Staffing shrunk and services were no longer easily accessible to all the families in Framingham. At the same time, new immigrant families continued to settle in Framingham, and the population of young families continued to grow.

In 2005 the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care was established, and made independent from the Massachusetts Department of Education. The responsibility of the Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP) and the Community Partnership for Children (CPC) now came under this new department with much less available funding. In 2003 funding for the PCHP was cut completely, but due to the commitment of the Framingham Public Schools for this core program, they kept it going until funding was restored.

In 2009, EEC launched a consolidation effort to bring CPC programs, PCHP, the Joint Family Support Program (JFSP) and the MA Family Networks (MFN) funding streams together and renamed the program the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant (CFCE). In alignment with the statewide strategic plan, the goals of this funding are to facilitate collaborations, improve access to high quality programs and develop resources and supports for families and children.

In the fall of 2009, the Framingham CFCE, under the auspices of the Framingham Public Schools launched the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham. The initiative engaged many of our stalwart allies, but added new and diverse community partners, and parents to identify and respond to the current needs of families with children through age eight. The first step was to complete a comprehensive needs assessment to provide a clear picture of local community needs and assets. This needs assessment was completed in June of 2010, and shared widely across the Framingham community. Commissioner Killins joined us at the ECAF end of the year celebration in June of 2010, and encouraged the Early Childhood

Alliance of Framingham to pursue the newly available strategic planning funding available through EEC. We applied for a strategic planning grant in the summer of 2010 and were funded to begin work in September 2010.

Over the course of this history, we have learned several critical lessons:

- For a community as diverse and spread out as ours, we really do need a central space for young families to gather; but we have to make it work over the long term.
- We need a diverse and comprehensive sustainability plan that doesn't rely on one funding source, and brings together existing community resources in a coordinated fashion.
- We also need to actively engage a broader spectrum of community leaders, including elected officials, health care providers, as well as the whole community, in why this investment in our young families is critical.
- Finally, in order to guide this effort, ECAF needs to grow a diverse strong leadership council.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

Needs Assessment Summary

In the fall of 2009, with consultation from the existing Framingham CFCE Leadership Council, a small planning group developed the methods for completing a community needs assessment. Methods included a parent survey, a community provider survey and community stakeholder interviews. We received 248 parent surveys, 57 provider surveys and completed seventeen community stakeholder interviews. The report was completed in June 2010 and presented at the final meeting of the year. The full report and slide show of the assessment results are available at: http://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/ecaf_home.cfm

One of the key findings of the needs assessment was the need for more accessible and affordable child care. Among the challenges reported:

- Families find the voucher system cumbersome
- Long wait lists
- Entry into the system of early education and care is confusing; there is no central doorway to programs and services for parents
- There are simply not enough resources to support the existing need

These challenges lead to the rise of informal child care settings in the community. We have found the quality of these less formal settings hard to measure and inconsistent. The result is children show up for Kindergarten at different levels of readiness. This discrepancy can affect a child's success throughout the early elementary years.

The assessment also revealed a clear need for targeted outreach strategies to ensure the more isolated families in our community are aware of all the local supports available to them. Often these more isolated families are linguistic and cultural minorities, families struggling with economic issues and/or families with children with special needs. Our traditional ways of communicating, such as providing information in written material and through our website, are not always effective with these harder to reach families, and we need to do more. We have identified and engaged some key community partners, such as faith community leaders, community health outreach workers, and local media outlets in reaching out to these hard to reach families and will continue to use these new relationships to bridge our services to the community.

We have traditionally had a strong effective relationship with the Framingham Public Schools because they are the lead agency for the CFCE grant. We identified a need to build on these existing relationships and extend the reach of our services to assure coordination of services and programs for children through age eight in order to ensure a strong continuum of programs, services and supports for the entire age range. The assessment also revealed a need to develop a coordinated system of education and care across early childhood providers, pre-K and K-2 public school settings and community based programs that serve this population.

Resources are quite stretched across our community and the need for more coordinated funding from a variety of sources is quite evident. Framingham needs a thoughtful and realistic sustainability plan that addresses the needs/resource gap in order to provide for all families with children through age eight. Working across the community with partners in health care, social services, health promotion and youth development and faith communities, to name a few, will help us build a stronger network of coordinated services. Our priority is to ensure limited resources are put to best use by strengthening and securing collaborations and partnerships, and to reach out to potential funders and elected officials to advocate for increased resources.

Strengthening Families Assessment

Through the auspices of the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), all Coordinated Family and Community Engagement (CFCE) grantees were requested to complete the Strengthening Families Assessment tool. This assessment was completed in October 2010 by the CFCE grant program staff.

<i>Strengthening Families Seven Strategies</i>	<i>Framingham Findings</i>
Link Families to Services and Opportunities	Resources are available, but often through multiple different doors, making navigation difficult
Recognize and Respond to Early Warning Signs of Child Abuse and Neglect	We have a good safety net, but a more coordinated interdisciplinary team approach would improve our response.
Respond to Crisis	We have a strong response network but need to identify and strengthen engagement with less formal settings such as unlicensed ‘family, friend and neighbor’ care providers and informal cultural networks of support
Value and Support Parents	Parent support is inconsistent; depending on the child care setting and the resources available in that setting Economic status and language capacity also impact parents access to available support
Facilitate Friendship and Mutual Support	Parents lack informal community spaces to meet, engage in peer support and build family friendships
Strengthening Parenting	Parent support programs are available, but are not sufficient to meet the demand and need of our culturally diverse community
Facilitate Children’s Social and Emotional Development	We have quality early education and care programs, but need to maintain and build our workforce through continuing professional development We need to improve accessibility to professional development programs to ensure a workforce that responds to the ever changing needs of our community

What became apparent when completing the Strengthening Families Self Assessment was that our own Early Childhood Needs Assessment findings and recommendations support continued improvement of our implementation of these 7 strategies. Additionally, the larger need that was highlighted throughout the Strengthening Families Assessment was there is no one central space for groups and other family activities in Framingham. As the CFCE moved onto the Strategic Planning process, the same challenge was found---not having a “One Stop Shop” for families with young children through age eight.

SETTING A STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

Methodology and Process

At the initiation of the strategic planning process, twenty-six ECAF members were chosen to comprise the Strategic Planning Group (SPG). Each member committed to work together over the next six months to develop a three-year strategic plan for the Alliance. This commitment was documented in a commitment letter signed by every member of the group (see attachment A for sample letter). A small Planning Team, comprised of FPS staff, ECAF coordinator and planning consultant worked between sessions to develop planning agendas and materials as well as document the on-going process with session planning notes. Planning took place over six months with full SPG sessions each month.



Throughout the process, the on-going personal outreach initiated by the ECAF Coordinator ensured continued energy and member engagement as we moved through the planning sessions. The Coordinator also ensured that SPG members who had difficulty attending planning sessions had other avenues for input, allowing us to be informed by a diversity of ideas and community perspectives.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

As an initial step of the strategic planning process, the SPG completed a SWOT analysis to assist us in developing an effective strategy, establishing goals and defining a three-year implementation plan. SWOT stands for:

- **Strengths** are internal characteristics, qualities, and capacities that are doing well and contribute to ECAF accomplishments.
- **Weaknesses** are internal qualities that need to be improved.
- **Opportunities** refer to external activities or trends that ECAF may benefit from, connect with or take advantage of to grow or enhance its performance.
- **Threats** are external activities or trends that threaten the current and future success of the Alliance.

Identified ECAF Strengths: The Alliance has broad representation from the community, as well as individual and agency expertise in early childhood development, education and care and family support. The Alliance has shown bravery and commitment in the face of challenges, and consistently stood up for the needs of young families in Framingham. The Alliance encompasses a diversity of perspectives reflective of multiple segments of the community. Alliance members are able to articulate value of early childhood education and care and speak for the early childhood community in Framingham.

Identified ECAF Weaknesses: The Alliance suffers from poor visibility, we are not known in the larger community. There is a need to increase our public presence as the group that understands and advocates for young families. Part of our challenge in visibility is our location, which lacks easy accessibility and is not at all visible in the community. Staff at Alliance agencies are stretched too thin, due to scarce resources, and this impacts communication between member organizations as well as their participation in the alliance. Additionally there is, at times, tension between partners due to competition for limited funding. The Alliance also lacks full representation of the diverse community of Framingham and needs to reach out to new members; particularly we need to seek greater gender, cultural, age and language diversity as well as inclusion of community members and families with special needs.

Identified ECAF Opportunities: There is renewed energy and interest in the importance of providing all young families the benefit of a good beginning. Federal, state and local policy makers are engaged in new discussions about the importance of early education and care, which we hope will mean increased support for programs and services. This is an important moment to promote the message that addressing the needs of young children and their families prevents larger issues from developing, and that this is cost effective over the long term. There are also opportunities to engage new and diverse funding sources in developing a comprehensive response to the needs of our young families. All funders are interested in outcome and quality measurement, ECAF is well positioned to be a coordinated data source for community level evaluation to ensure quality programs and services. Shifts in education, including the move for universal pre-school and in health care, including the move to the medical home model create opportunities for greater community collaboration among Alliance members.

Identified ECAF Threats: By far the largest threat identified is funding instability. The continued challenge of interaction between the traditional silos representing the multiple players who work with young families (such as EEC/DESE, DTA, DPH, DCF, Medical providers, public schools and community providers) is also a threat, but one the ECAF is beginning to impact. Limited funding, which translates into limited staff time and multiple competing priorities are also identified as threats.

Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham Vision and Mission and Structure

In order to ensure ECAF has a strong foundation to meet its goals; the SPG reviewed the ECAF Vision, Mission and Organizational Structure. Since a vision statement had not yet been created, a small action team developed one with input from the SPG. The SPG then reviewed and accepted the vision statement, reviewed the current ECAF mission, and adopted the following organizational structure for inclusion in this strategic plan.

- ***Vision***

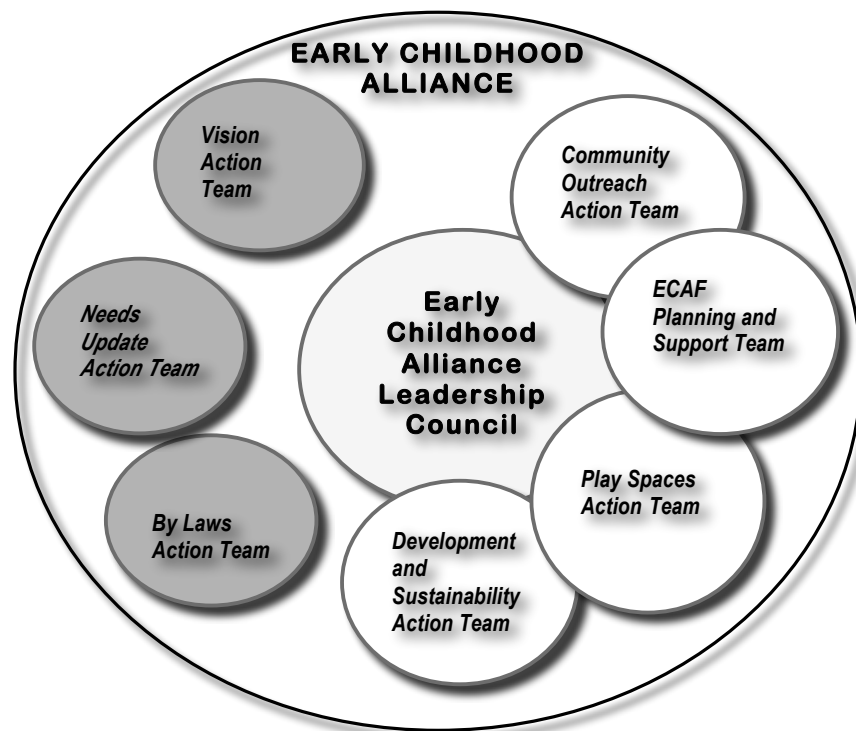
- Framingham is a welcoming community for families and professionals that provides comprehensive resources and support for the healthy growth and development of our children.

- ***Mission***

- The Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham (ECAF) is dedicated to promoting and supporting the healthy growth and development of young children from prenatal to age eight by strengthening families and advocating for high quality learning experiences.
- The Alliance fulfills its mission by ensuring:
 - Early learning experiences for children prenatal to age eight
 - School Readiness
 - Early Childhood Resources and Information
 - Family Support and Education
 - Professional development for Early Childhood Educators
 - Community Advocacy of Early Childhood Issues

Organizational Structure of Early Childhood Alliance

The Early Childhood Alliance includes members across the Framingham community with an interest in working towards improved early education and care programs and services for families with children through age eight. The Alliance is lead by the Leadership Council representing a broad cross section of community leaders, program staff parents and community support systems as well as higher education and workforce development partners. Short term Action Teams are formed around the current work and tasks of the Alliance and last for as long as needed. Some provide a 'burst' of work, for example the Vision Action Team, or work over a more long-term timeline such as the Development and Sustainability Action Team. This structure allows ECAF members to participate in accordance with their capacity, both in terms of skills and time.



In the above graphic, the darkest circles represent Action Teams that are not currently active, and the white circles represent those that are currently engaged. Over the past year's planning process short term Action Teams were created to do the between meeting work to ensure the planning continued to move forward smoothly. These groups were the By-Laws Action Team (who drafted By-Laws for the ECAF), the Vision Action Team (Drafted a vision statement for the SPG to adopt), and the Needs Assessment Update Action Team (who updated our Needs Assessment by adding data on youth six to eight). They did the required work and disbanded. Ongoing Action Teams include the ECAF Planning and Support Team, the Community Outreach Action Team, the Play Spaces Action Team and the Development/Sustainability Action Team. These groups continue to meet as needed to move the current work and tasks of the Alliance forward. As the work evolves, the Alliance anticipates that the action team structure will change and adapt as needed.

Strategic Goals, Strategies and Anticipated Outcomes

Year One Goals:

FY 2011 to 2012

Internal: Build the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham's capacity to develop and run a "One Stop Shop" for all families with children through age eight.

Strategies:

- Update and streamline information for parents and providers, creating a virtual "One Stop Shop"
- Create strong communication pathways between community members and providers via listserv, website
- Activate volunteers to assist with community outreach, language translation and interpretation and leading play groups

External: Increase community awareness, buy in and sense of urgency for a "One Stop Shop" to meet the needs of families with children through age eight in the Framingham community.

Strategies:

- Develop public awareness materials to create a sense of urgency about Early Childhood needs
- Keep needs assessment data up to date

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Alliance capacity is strengthened by engaging community allies and developing a strong volunteer base
- The Framingham community is aware of the current local conditions regarding early education and care and supports ECAF's improvement efforts

Year Two Goals:

FY 2012 to 2013

Internal: Maintain core ECAF information coordination, outreach and resource action strategies and support fund development work.

Strategies:

- Continue regular public awareness activities through media, e-newsletter, website
- Continue to provide "real time" data on early childhood needs and resources
- Develop funding plan; identify funders, complete proposals

External: Engage community partners including schools, healthcare providers, business community and local funders in supporting the development of the "One Stop Shop."

Strategies:

- Formalize relationships with community stakeholders; schools, hospitals, chamber, rotary, youth serving organizations
- Build relationships with funders with aligned priorities

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Expand community commitment to supporting the “One Stop Shop” by increasing formal partners throughout the community
- A development plan that engages multiple aligned funders and supporters for the “One Stop Shop”

Year Three Goals:

FY 2013 to 2014

Internal: Develop organizational structure including continuity procedures, staffing and operating policies and on-going sustainability plan.

Strategies:

- Develop staffing model; consider cooperative model with staffing and resources shared by ECAF members
- Develop continuity procedures and commitments for staff, volunteer and collaborative partners

External: Activate funding, secure space and build out to meet the identified criteria for the “One Stop Shop.”

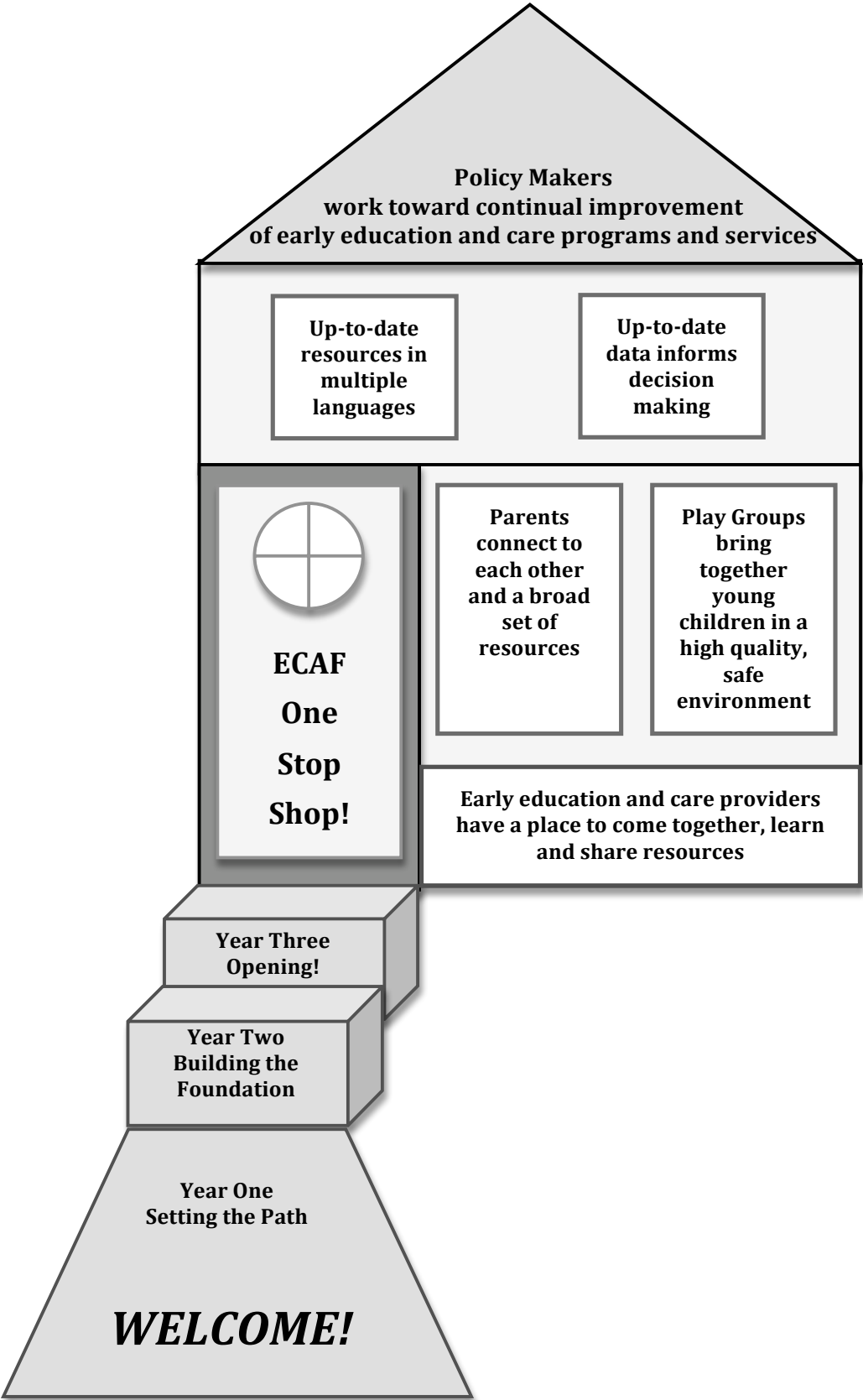
Strategies:

- Finalize funding/capital campaign, long term sustainability plan
- Continually update needs and resources
- Plan and hold Grand Opening of “One Stop Shop”!

Anticipated Outcomes:

- Required funding is secured
- Effective organizational structure and staffing in place
- “One Stop Shop” opens!

In Three Years, we envision a centrally located “One Stop Shop” for families with children through age eight to access parent support and education, play opportunities for their children and resources they need to provide a strong foundation for the whole family. This central community space will also provide early education and care providers increased opportunities for interagency communication, collaborative professional development and shared resources.



CONCLUSIONS

The Framingham early education and care community has continuously worked to address growing needs of young families. This strategic plan is the culmination, not only of these past two years, but also of the many years that lead up to the formal initiation of this plan. We believe the timing is right for us to initiate this effort, in spite of the challenges of the current economic climate. We know the investment in young families is essential to the health and well-being of our children, their readiness for school and their future educational and life success. We know this investment has long term impact on the overall health and well being of our entire community. Framingham continues to see growth in the number and diversity of families with children through age eight and our early education and care resources must keep up with this growth. The Alliance has identified a critical need to coordinate all existing community assets, and activate new resources to best meet the growing needs of these families. ECAF brings experience in the development of a successful community center for families of young children, and has learned valuable lessons in how to create a more sustainable model for the future. This strategic plan initiates the next phase to ensure all Framingham families with children through age eight have a place in the community to connect to the programs, services and resources that support their continued education, health and well-being.

GLOSSARY

CFCE – Coordinated Family and Community Engagement

CPC – Community Partnership for Children

DCF – Department of Children and Family Services

DESE – Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

DPH – Department of Public Health

DTA - Department of Transitional Assistance

ECAF - Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham

EEC - Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

FFC – Framingham Family Central

FPS – Framingham Public Schools

JFSP – Joint Family Support Program

MFN – Massachusetts Family Network

PCHP – Parent-Child Home Program

SPG – Strategic Planning Group

Medical/ Health Care Providers – Hospitals, private and public health care agencies and private practices

Public Schools - Publicly funded educational institutions

Community Providers – Human service organizations and early childhood education programs in the local community



EARLY CHILDHOOD ALLIANCE
Uniting for young children.....the heart of our community
Framingham, MA

Leadership Council Strategic Planning Group for Fiscal Year 2011

Commitment Letter

October 20, 2010

Dear Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham,

By signing below, I _____ agree to participate in the Strategic Planning Group over the coming year as an active and engaged member of the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham Leadership Council.

I understand that this coming year the Leadership Council will be involved in a Strategic Planning Process and as a Leadership Council member I commit to:

- Attending the seven meetings described in the attached calendar, or ensuring an appropriate replacement from my agency/organization
- Fully engaging in the strategic planning process to ensure a broad set of perspectives is integrated into the plan
- Sharing knowledge, data and experience from my organization, service or practice working on behalf of families with children birth to 8 in Framingham
- Raising awareness and advocacy to address the needs of families with children birth to 8 and those who provide vital services and support to them
- Actively participate in Action Teams as assigned and assist in member recruitment for Action Teams
- Be a liaison to my agency/organization or constituency to support and further the goals of the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham.

Signature and Date