

Kansas City Early Learning Commission

Universal Early Learning Plan

Early Learning Commission (“ELC”), a Missouri nonprofit corporation which has received a 501(c)(3) ruling from the Internal Revenue Service, exists for the purpose of designing and implementing a universal early learning program for all 3- and 4-year old children living within the boundaries of the Kansas City Public School District. To accomplish this mission, ELC has developed an operating plan (the “ELC Plan”), components of which, as currently proposed, are offered below.

I. Funding Mechanism. In order to create a comprehensive universal early learning program (the “ELC Program”), the Board of the Kansas City Public Schools (“KCPS”) shall approve placing a ballot measure before the voters that would increase the KCPS property tax mill levy from \$4.95 up to, but not to exceed, \$6.00. The mill levy increase, which will not exceed \$1.05, shall be assessed on all real property within the boundaries of the KCPS district pursuant to existing state, county and local laws governing the assessment and collection of such taxes. Under the ELC Plan, a contractual agreement shall be entered into between ELC and KCPS, and a similar contractual agreement shall be entered into between ELC and each public charter school operating within the KCPS boundaries (“Charter Schools”) (such contractual agreements hereinafter collectively referred to as the “Contract”).

- A. Proposed Ballot. The proposed ballot measure shall be placed before the voters on either the June 2016 or August 2016 ballot, to be determined by ELC.
- B. Sunset Provision. The property tax mill levy increase shall contain a five-year sunset provision.
- C. Use of Revenue. All tax revenue collected as a result of the mill levy increase will be used to fund the ELC Program, subject to adjustment as provided in the Contract. All such revenue collected, either by KCPS directly or by the Charter Schools which receive increased state aid based on the mill levy increase through their weighted average daily attendance (“WADA”) payments from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (“DESE”), shall be remitted to ELC for use in in the ELC Program according to the terms outlined in the Contract. ELC shall use all such funds for the administration and funding of the ELC Program.

II. Governance and Oversight.

- A. Early Learning Commission. The ELC Program shall be administered and governed by ELC. Responsibilities of ELC shall include, but not be limited to, the following: accounting, independent audit, budgeting, compliance, ethics, finance, infrastructure, legal services, public meetings, annual reporting, staffing, vendor management, fund disbursement and oversight of the Quality Review Commission, pursuant to ELC's By-laws.
1. ELC-Approved Parameters. ELC will approve the parameters of the ELC Program, initially proposed as a full day (8 hours), full year (12 months) comprehensive early education program, incorporating one of a number of approved curricula.
 2. Quality Program Requirements. The ELC Program will be delivered by qualified teachers and staff in accordance with state licensing requirements and applicable laws, as well as in accordance with locally designed and approved quality program requirements, as recommended by to ELC by the Quality Review Commission described below.
 3. Prospective Providers. Prospective providers may include charter schools, private schools, KCPS and other private providers. ELC program funding will not be made available to providers which charge fees or tuition in excess of ELC funding per student, at ELC's discretion.
- B. Quality Review Commission. ELC shall establish and maintain the Quality Review Commission ("QRC"), a separate quality-assurance body whose purpose is to ensure that the ELC Program is delivered by high quality providers, teachers and staff in high quality facilities, and to ensure that the ELC Program has sufficient capacity to meet the needs of eligible children living within the KCPS boundaries. Responsibilities of QRC include, but are not limited to, the following:
1. Quality Assurance. QRC shall establish comprehensive, data-driven requirements to ensure the high quality of the ELC Program providers, their teachers and facilities. Such quality requirements will determine a provider's eligibility to participate in the ELC Program and thus its ability to receive funding from ELC on a per-student basis. QRC will use a research-based

program monitoring tool to assess program performance periodically throughout the year.

2. Capacity-Building Grant Program.

(a) QRC shall establish and administer a capacity-building grant program (the “QRC Grant Program”) in order to ensure the ELC Program can serve the highest number of eligible children possible living within the KCPS boundaries. Prospective providers may apply for grants under the QRC Grant Program in order to (i) assist them in meeting the QRC quality requirements necessary to attain eligibility for funding under the ELC Program; or (ii) if the provider already meets QRC requirements, to assist the provider in expanding the number of quality seats it then offers.

(b) Such grant-making authority shall be performed at the sole discretion of QRC and QRC shall be responsible for auditing providers to ensure compliance with QRC Grant Program requirements.

(c) Given the limited capacity to serve 3- and 4-year old children in the present system, the goal of the QRC Grant Program will be to significantly increase the number of quality early learning program seats located within the KCPS boundaries to ensure an appropriate geographic distribution of providers adequately addressing the needs of minority, low-income and special-needs students.

3. Assessment and Tracking. QRC shall be responsible for supporting the adoption of a state approved child assessment system by all eligible providers in the early learning program, and monitoring providers for timely and accurate administration of the child assessment system.

4. Program Assistance. QRC shall be responsible for assisting and guiding providers in ELC Program participation by sharing information and expertise and by interfacing with third-party stakeholders such as foundations, research institutes and universities who have special expertise in the area of early childhood education.

5. Teacher Development. QRC shall be responsible for promoting the development, training and recruitment of teachers for employment within the

boundaries of the KCPS district in order to increase the number of qualified teachers for the ELC Program. The QRC Grant program may establish or choose to contract with an existing early learning scholarship program to promote the growth of prospective teachers entering the field of early childhood education.

- III. Intent – ELC is a nonprofit corporation and as such shall maintain compliance with state and federal laws and regulations governing its nonprofit status. No appropriations, deposits, payments, or remittances shall inure to the benefit of its trustees.

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