



March 28, 2017

Marty Elquist
CCR&R Program Director
Children's Cabinet
1090 S. Rock Blvd.
Reno, NV 89502

Dear Marty:

I am pleased to respond to your invitation to propose how we can assist the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council (NECAC) in updating its strategic plan in order to achieve a coordinated system of support for children birth through grade three.

Our objectives will be to:

1. Ensure Advisory Council agreement on its vision of impact on the lives of children.
2. Reach agreement on specific goals to achieve progress toward the vision, focusing on early learning and development, family support and child health.
3. Develop a strategic action plan that addresses these goals and areas of focus, aligns them for greatest impact, ensures clarity on who is responsible for their implementation, and identifies where additional funding will be required.
4. Translate the plan into a proposal to address key funding needs.

Project Team Background

I will be the lead consultant on this assignment, assisted by DCA Senior Consulting Associate Bradley Bauler and working in partnership with Deborah Loesch-Griffin, president of Turning Point, Inc. and her Associate, Jen McClendon, who will serve as members of our team. Together, we can draw upon the considerable knowledge we have gained about Nevada's early childhood needs, assets, activities and opportunities, as well as national experience in improving systems of support for early childhood education and development.

My organization, **DCA**, is dedicated to helping leaders create authentic, durable partnerships to achieve life-improving progress on a large scale. We have 26 years of experience in assisting cross-sector collaboration to advance causes at the global, national, state and local level. We also have extensive experience in mobilizing funding and creating sustainability in support of this work.

The basis of our work is Cause Development®, a framework pioneered by DCA to approach issues as causes that inspire deep and sustained involvement, focus on measurable, large scale results and create



the systems and support necessary for their achievement. The methodology reflects the principles of Collective Impact, Results-based Accountability and goal-oriented social investment.

Early childhood education has been one of DCA's major areas of focus for the past 15 years. We are currently assisting the development of a regional Campaign for Grade-Level Reading coalition and plan under contract with the United Way for Northern Nevada and the Sierra. Midway through the project, we have engaged leaders from every sector with a role to perform, gained understanding of the region's assets and challenges, and developed partnerships in three areas of focus: ensuring children's school readiness, providing support to families with young children, and enhancing summer learning.

Examples of other assignments include the following:

- DCA served as a principal consultant to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation's SPARK initiative, a national effort to create support and seamless transitions in early childhood education through partnerships of K-12 school systems, community-based early childhood education and care providers, and parents.
- DCA assisted the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation in creating a statewide plan to improve early childhood education with the involvement of early childhood, philanthropic, public sector, business sector, health and advocacy leaders from throughout the state.
- DCA led the development of an early childhood and family literacy coalition for Miami-Dade County and an early childhood education strategic plan for Miami-Dade Public Schools.
- DCA led the development of Broward County, Florida's first early childhood strategic plan and recently assisted the County in developing a strategic plan focused on ensuring that children are literacy proficient by the end of grade 3.
- DCA served as lead planner for the development of Thrive In Five, a partnership to ensure that all Boston children enter the early grades ready to succeed. Thrive In Five established collaborative systems to strengthen teaching, support parents, and identify and address health or social issues that would impede children's ability to learn.

DCA also has extensive experience in efforts to achieve major objectives related to postsecondary attainment, workforce development and economic opportunity and improving health. This has enabled us to approach our early childhood assignments with a holistic perspective.

Our work uses the following tools:

- ✓ **Research** to understand the "landscape" in which progress can take place;
- ✓ **Leadership assistance** to gain agreement on goals, roles and strategies;
- ✓ **Strategy development** to gain clarity of action and implement proven practices;
- ✓ **Organizational development** to create strong internal capacity and partnership structures;



- ✓ **Partnership development** to engage and align organizational capacities in shared purpose;
- ✓ **Communication strategies** to support advocacy and behavior change; and
- ✓ **Resource mobilization** to attract sustainable support from private and public sectors.

Turning Point, Inc. (TPI) has over 28 years of experience in program evaluation, strategic planning and organizational development services as well as training, coaching and technical assistance to organizations and collaborations, with an emphasis on Nevada and California.

TPI specializes in partnership approaches to providing services to individuals, groups, organizations and coalitions. It approaches partnership evaluation, facilitation, or training as an empowerment process, in which participants have an opportunity to define the questions, receive informal and formal feedback, and make decisions about program processes and directions.

Additionally, TPI has a rich experience in family support and community youth development, and community-school partnerships related to integrative learning and community health and wellness. Examples of TPI projects include the following:

- Currently, TPI is the lead organization and is collaborating with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill’s FirstSchool team, the University of Washington’s National P-3 Center, and the Center for Program Evaluation at the University of Nevada, Reno to provide services to the State of Nevada under RFP 2108, “Nevada Ready – B-3.” The team is supporting the development of practices, policies, and systems for using data to promote effective B-3 learning communities, B-3 leadership, and connections between policy, practice, and research, as well as between leaders, educators, and providers across the B-3 continuum.
- TPI has worked on a number of state-based early childhood learning initiatives with Nevada’s Department of Health and Human Services and Department of Education to evaluate NDE’s Teaching Strategies GOLD pilot, collaborate with the Council of Chief State School Officers in gathering data on Nevada’s Early Learning Needs Assessment, provide coaching on reflective supervision to Nevada’s Home Visiting Network, and conduct needs assessments and/or provide training and technical assistance to Nevada’s Head Start Association, Early Intervention Services, Child Care Licensing, Women’s Wellness, the Statewide Mental Health and Disability Resources Consortium, REAL Choice Systems Change, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Healthy Communities Project, Public Health/Emergency Preparedness, Nevada 2-1-1, and Tobacco Control.
- TPI supported the Healthy Communities project in Tahoe-Truckee through a needs assessment study to prepare for: 1) a tri-coalition regional environmental approach to reducing obesity, improving child and family health, and increasing access to fresh produce and nutritional foods in Western Nevada; and 2) a walkability-bikeability initiative.
- Since 2013, Turning Point has also served the Healthy Communities Coalition of Lyon, Storey and Mineral Counties to design, plan and implement integrated, coordinated school-based, school-



linked comprehensive health services systems to insure access and health homes for rural residents, especially the most vulnerable. She serves as the convener of the Health and Wellness Hub and provides oversight and evaluation support for their Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant.

- Deborah Loesch-Griffin was a founding board member of the Nevada After School Network and has provided facilitation, organizational mentoring, and sustainability planning to launch this statewide organization.

Our Approach To The Assignment

DCA will be the prime contractor for this assignment, responsible for project management and results. Deborah Loesch-Griffin and Jen McClendon of Turning Point will serve as members of our team and we will work in close partnership with them on all aspects of the assignment.

Landscape Review and Initial ECAC Input

Time frame: First six weeks

1. Our team will review the Council's current strategic plan, subcommittees, areas of focus, and preliminary ("straw man") goals in order to understand work that has been done to date. We will relate this with what we have learned in the context of our current Nevada early childhood assignments, such as issues and needs that have been identified, existing plans, areas where there are opportunities for collaboration, standout assets and practices, and evidence of public will for change. We will also do research to identify and understand other major initiatives to improve early childhood outcomes in Nevada.
2. We will translate the above information into a matrix that provides a clear, concise overview of activities, assets and potential opportunities for impact. The document will highlight where the Council may be able to partner or align with other major efforts.
3. We will interview members of the Council to gain their input on the landscape of need, activity and opportunity in Nevada. We will discuss how this relates to NECAC's purpose, vision and preliminary goals. We will also invite comment on key issues that should be addressed through our subsequent facilitation activities.
4. We will translate the results of this inquiry into a presentation for our initial meeting with the Council.

NOTE: If there will be a scheduled meeting of the Council near the outset of our assignment, we would be pleased to attend and review the planning process. During the visit, we would conduct individual, in-person interviews of Council members as their schedules permit.

Council Retreat

Time frame: Between weeks 6-8



We will facilitate a half-day retreat of the full Council, during which we will:

1. Briefly review the planning process and invite questions and input.
2. Review the landscape of need, activity and opportunity in Nevada, highlighting Council member input from the interview process.
3. Review the ECAC role and vision to ensure consensus on these foundations.
4. Focus in-depth attention on the preliminary goals and supporting objectives in the context of the Nevada landscape assessment. Do they meet SMART criteria (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound – a construct used regularly by DCA)? Is any modification required in order to respond to changing circumstances, align with existing initiatives, capitalize on existing assets, or better relate to ECAC interests or capacities? If so, what should those modifications be? We will work to ensure consensus.
5. Discuss how the results of these decisions will influence the work of the ECAC subcommittees and agree on a planning process and schedule.

We will produce a summary of the retreat results to share with Council members.

Subcommittee Facilitation

Time Frame: Weeks 8-16

We will facilitate the work of subcommittees to develop strategic action plans focusing on early learning and development, family support and child health. In so doing, we will help them address the following questions:

- What strategies offer the greatest promise in achieve the goals and supporting objectives we have set?
- Based on our understanding of the landscape of early childhood system-building activity in Nevada, where should the ECAC play a key support role in advancing promising strategies? What should be the nature of that role? Who should take the lead in managing this work? What systemic changes should be sought, and what would be the benefits for children and their families?
- Where are *new* efforts required to address strategic gaps in ways that can lead to a more coordinated system of support for children birth through grade three? What role should the ECAC perform in developing and advancing such efforts? Who should take the lead in managing this work? What systemic changes should be sought, and what would be the benefits for children and their families?



- How will state ECAC members be involved in these efforts? How will local Advisory Councils be involved? Who else will be needed to perform prominent roles, and how will they be engaged?
- What are the funding implications? Where are there opportunities to harness existing resources for greater effect? Where are there opportunities to align with other resource development efforts? Where will the ECAC need to seek *new* infusions of funding? Where may there be opportunities for public funding? Where will philanthropy be needed?
- What should our initial steps be? What will we seek to accomplish within the next six, 12, 18 and 24 months?
During the facilitation process, our team will confer to ensure that the emerging plans are mutually reinforcing but not duplicative. We will capture the results in a shared template and also articulate how the strategies will support the impact goals, supporting objectives, and development of a stronger overall system of support for young children and their families.

Strategic Plan Update and Presentation

Time Frame: Weeks 17-20

We will draft the strategic plan update in two forms:

1. A PowerPoint presentation that presents the results in ways that can be easily shared with other audiences.
2. A written presentation. *If needed, we will adapt that presentation into a proposal that can be used to seek funding to address needs arising from the strategic plan.* DCA has extensive experience in resource development, which remains a central component of our work. If, as expected, this project identifies areas where new infusions of funding will make a major impact, it will make sense to incorporate them into the strategic plan and present the plan in a way a potential funder can readily understand.

We will present the products to the full Council in a meeting in which we will take input on any refinements that may be required. Also during this meeting, we will discuss strategies to communicate the plan publicly and to pursue additional resources that may be required. We will translate this input into final documents.

Project Management and Budget

I will be DCA's lead consultant on this project, responsible for managing all of its components, serving as lead strategist, facilitator and writer, and responsible for final products. DCA Senior Consulting Associate Bradley Bauler, Deborah Loesch-Griffin and Jen McClendon will assist with assessment of the Nevada early childhood system-building landscape, facilitation of full-group and subcommittee planning sessions, and strategy development. DCA Associate Anne Ten Eyck will assist project management and research.



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As the project description indicates, we anticipate the process will take five months, though it may be accelerated if the ECAC member interviews and subcommittee meetings can take place in a more condensed time frame.

The project costs are as follows, with fees based on the projected staff time involved in each component of the assignment:

Activities and Associated Fees

Landscape Review and Initial ECAC Input

- Initial review of Nevada early childhood education plans and development of matrix of objectives, key areas of focus, and interrelationships. Possible meeting with ECAC to review the planning process
DCA fee: \$7,700
- Advance interviews of Advisory Council members and leaders associated with other Nevada early childhood education plans
DCA fee: \$8,500

Council Retreat

- Onsite presentation of landscape review and ECAC input, plus facilitation on ECAC role, vision and goals; includes preparation and follow-up summary
DCA fee: \$4,000

Subcommittee Facilitation

- Anticipated three meetings each for three groups, including preparation, facilitation and capture of results
DCA fee: \$17,250

Development of updated strategic plan/funding proposal

- Presentation and narrative, translated into a funding proposal if needed
DCA fee: \$10,000

Final group meeting

- Presentation, discussion facilitation and integration of input into final strategic plan products
DCA fee: \$4,500

Project management

- Scheduling, activity tracking, project planning, billing, staff and client strategy meetings, client discussions
DCA fee: \$3,050

Total DCA Fee: \$55,000

Potential Travel Budget: \$6,000



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We are grateful to have the opportunity to submit our proposal, and welcome further discussion to ensure that our approach fully meets your needs. We are excited about the possibility of building on our early childhood work in Nevada and serving you on this important assignment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen Greeley".

Stephen Greeley
President
DCA, Inc.